



MUSIC ON SHERIDAN'S LINE OF BATTLE.

## FIVE FORKS AND THE PURSUIT OF LEE.

BY HORACE PORTER, BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL, U. S. A.

IT was 9 o'clock in the morning of the 29th of March, 1865. General Grant and the officers of his staff had bidden good-bye to President Lincoln and mounted the passenger car of the special train that was to carry them from City Point to the front, and the signal was given to start; the train moved off, Grant's last campaign had begun. Since 3 o'clock that morning the columns had been in motion and the Union Army and the Army of Northern Virginia were soon locked in a death-grapple. The President remained at City Point, where he could be promptly informed of the progress of the movement.

The military railroad connecting headquarters with the camps south of Petersburg was about thirteen miles long, or would have been if it had been constructed on a horizontal plane, but as the portion built by the army was a surface road, up hill and down dale, if the rise and fall had been counted in, its length would have defied all ordinary means of measurement. Its undulations were so striking that a train moving along it looked in the distance like a fly crawling over a corrugated washboard. The general sat down near the end of the car, drew from his pocket the flint and slow-match that he always carried, which, unlike a match, never missed fire in a gale of wind, and was soon wreathed in the smoke of the inevitable cigar. I took a seat near him with several other officers of the staff, and he at once began to talk over his plans in detail. They had been discussed in general terms before starting out from City Point. It was his custom, when commencing a movement in the field, to have his staff-officers understand fully the objects he wished to accomplish, and what each corps of the army was expected to do in different emergencies, so that these officers, when sent to distant points of the line, might have a full comprehension of the general's intentions, and so that, when communication with him was impossible or difficult, they might be able to instruct the subordinate commanders intelligently as to the intentions of the general-in-chief.

For a month or more General Grant's chief apprehension had been that the enemy might suddenly pull out from his intrenchments and fall back into the interior, where he might unite with General Joe Johnston against Sherman and force our army to follow Lee to a great distance from its base. General Grant had been sleeping with one eye open and one foot out of bed for many weeks, in the fear that Lee would thus give him the slip. He did not dare delay his movements against the enemy's right until the roads became dry enough to permit an army to move comfortably, for fear Lee would himself take advantage of the good roads to start first. Each army, in fact, was making preparations for either a fight or a foot-race — or both. Sheridan, with his cavalry command, had been ordered to move out in the direction of Dinwiddie Court House, and to be ready to strike the enemy's right and rear. It was the intention, as soon as he could take up a good position for this purpose, to reënforce him with a corps of infantry, and cut off Lee's retreat in the direction of Danville, in case we should break through his intrenched lines in front of Petersburg, and force him from his position there.

The weather had been fair for several days, and the roads were getting in good condition for the movement of troops; that is, as good as could be expected, through a section of country in which the dust in summer was generally so thick that the army could not see where to move, and the mud in winter was so deep that it could not move anywhere. The general, in speaking of what was expected of Sheridan, said: "I had a private talk with Sheridan after I gave him his written instructions at City Point. When he read that part of them which directed him, in certain contingencies, to proceed south along the Danville railroad and cooperate with Sherman by operating in Joe Johnston's rear, he looked so unhappy that I said to him, as I followed him out of the tent, that that part of the instructions was put in only as a blind, so that if he did not meet with entire success the people of the

North, who were then naturally restless and apt to become discouraged, might not look upon a temporary check as an entire defeat of a definite plan,—and that what I really expected was that he would remain with the armies operating against Lee, and end matters right here. This made him happy, and he has started out perfectly confident of the success of the present movement." Referring to Mr. Lincoln, he said: "The President is one of the few visitors I have had who has not attempted to extract from me a knowledge of my plans. He not

James, Parke and Wright holding our works in front of Petersburg, Ord extending to the intersection of Hatcher's Run and the Vaughan road, Humphreys stretching beyond Dabney's Mill, Warren on the extreme left reaching as far as the junction of the Vaughan road and the Boydton plank-road, and Sheridan at Dinwiddie Court House. The weather had become cloudy, and toward evening rain began to fall. It fell in torrents during the night and continued with but little interruption all the next day. The country was densely wooded, and the



UNION ARTILLERY AT PETERSBURG PROTECTED BY MANTELETS. FROM A WAR-TIME SKETCH.

only never asked them, but says it is better he should not know them, and then he can be certain to keep the secret. He will be the most anxious man in the country to hear the news from us, his heart is so wrapped up in our success, but I think we can send him some good news in a day or two." I never knew the general to be more sanguine of victory than in starting out on this campaign.

When we reached the end of the railroad we mounted our horses, which had been carried on the same train, started down the Vaughan road, and went into camp for the night in a field just south of that road, close to Gravelly Run. That night (March 29th) the army was disposed in the following order from right to left: Weitzel in front of Richmond, with a portion of the Army of the

ground swampy, and by evening of the 30th whole fields had become beds of quicksand in which horses sank to their bellies, wagons threatened to disappear altogether, and it seemed as if the bottom had fallen out of the roads. The men began to feel that if any one in after years should ask them whether they had been through Virginia, they could say, "Yes, in a number of places." The roads had become sheets of water; and it looked as if the saving of that army would require the services, not of a Grant, but of a Noah. Soldiers would call out to officers as they rode along: "I say, when are the gun-boats coming up?" The buoyancy of the day before was giving place to gloom, and some began to fear that the whole movement was premature. }

} In his "Memoirs" (C. L. Webster & Co.) General Sheridan says that after the troops began to move he received the following letter from General Grant, whereupon he started at once for Grant's headquarters:

"HEADQUARTERS, ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,  
GRAVELLY RUN, March 30th, 1865.

"MAJOR-GENERAL SHERIDAN: The heavy rain of to-day will make it impossible for us to do much until it dries up a little, or we get roads around our rear repaired. You may,

therefore, leave what cavalry you deem necessary to protect the left, and hold such positions as you deem necessary for that purpose, and send the remainder back to Humphreys's Station [on the military railroad], where they can get hay and grain. Fifty wagons loaded with forage will be sent you in the morning. Send an officer back to direct the wagons back to where you want them. Report to me the cavalry you will leave back, and the position you will occupy. Could not your cavalry go back by the way of Stony Creek depot and destroy or capture the store of supplies there? — U. S. GRANT  
Lieutenant-General."

EDITORS.

While standing in front of the general's tent on the morning of the 30th, discussing the situation with several others on the staff, I saw General Sheridan turning in from the Vaughan road with a staff-officer and an escort of about a dozen cavalymen, and coming toward our headquarters camp. He was riding his white pacer, a horse which had been captured from General Breckinridge's adjutant-general at Missionary Ridge. But, instead of striking a pacing gait now, it was at every step driving its legs knee-deep into the quicksand with the regularity of a pile-driver. As soon as Sheridan dismounted, he was asked with much eagerness about the situation on the extreme left. He took a decidedly cheerful view of matters, and entered upon a very animated discussion of the coming movements. He said he could drive in the whole cavalry force of the enemy with ease, and if an infantry force were added to his command he would strike out for Lee's right and either crush it or force him so to weaken his intrenched lines that the troops in front of them could break through and march into Petersburg. He warmed up with the subject as he proceeded, threw the whole energy of his nature into the discussion, and his cheery voice, beaming countenance, and impassioned language showed the earnestness of his convictions.

"How do you propose to supply your command with forage if this weather lasts?" he was asked by one of the group.

"Forage?" said Sheridan; "I'll get all the forage I want. I'll haul it out if I have to set every man in the command to corduroying roads, and corduroy every mile of them from the railroad to Dinwiddie. I tell you I'm ready to strike out tomorrow and go to smashing things." And, pacing up and down, he chafed like a hound in the leash. We told him this was the kind of talk we liked to listen to at headquarters, and while General Grant fully coincided in these views it would still further confirm him in his judgment to hear such words as had just been spoken; we urged Sheridan to go and talk in the same strain to the general-in-chief, who was in his tent with General Rawlins. Sheridan, however, objected to obtruding himself unbidden upon his commander. Then we resorted to a bit of strategy. One of us went into the general's tent and told him Sheridan had just come in from the left and had been telling us some matters of much interest, and suggested that he be invited in and asked to state them. This was assented to, and Sheridan was told the general wanted to hear what he had to say. Sheridan then went in and began to speak to General Grant as he had been speaking to the staff. Several persons soon after came into the tent, and General Sheridan stepped out and accompanied General Ingalls to the latter's tent. A few minutes later General Grant went to this tent, General Ingalls came out, and Grant and Sheridan fully discussed the situation. In spite of the opposition which had arisen in some quarters to continuing offensive operations, owing to the state of the weather and the deplorable condition of the roads, General Grant decided to press the movement against the enemy with all vigor.

After his twenty-minutes talk with Grant, Sheridan mounted his horse, and, waving us a good-bye with his hand, rode off to Dinwiddie. The next morning, the 31st, he reported that the enemy had been hard at work intrenching at Five Forks and to a point about a mile west of there. Lee had been as prompt as Grant to recognize that Five Forks was a strategic point of great importance, and, to protect his right, had sent Pickett there with a large force of infantry and nearly all the cavalry. The rain continued during the night of the 30th, and on the morning of the 31st the weather was cloudy and dismal.

General Grant had expected that Warren would be attacked that morning, and had warned him to be on the alert. Warren advanced his corps to ascertain with what force the enemy held the White Oak road and to try to drive him from it; but before he had gone far he met with a vigorous assault. When news came of the attack General Grant directed me to go to the spot and look to the situation of affairs there. I found Ayres's division had been driven in, and both he and Crawford were falling back upon Griffin. Miles, of Humphreys's corps, was sent to reënforce Warren, and by noon the enemy was checked. As soon as General Grant was advised of the situation, he directed General Meade to take the offensive vigorously. Miles made a movement to the left and attacked in flank the troops in front of Warren, and the enemy soon fell back. General Grant had now ridden out to the front, and hearing that he was at Mrs. Butler's house near the Boydton plank-road, I joined him there. It was then a little after 1 o'clock. He had in the meantime ordered the headquarters camp to be moved to Dabney's Mill, on a cross-road running from the Boydton plank to the Vaughan road, and about two miles from Meade's headquarters, which were near the crossing of the Vaughan road and Hatcher's Run. The general was becoming apprehensive lest the infantry force that had moved against Warren might turn upon Sheridan, who had only cavalry with which to resist, as the weather had rendered it impracticable thus far to send him a corps of infantry as intended, and the general-in-chief was urgent that a strong forward movement should be made by the Fifth Corps for the purpose of deterring the enemy from detaching infantry from that portion of his line. This advance was made later in the afternoon, and with decided success. When this movement had been decided upon, General Grant directed me to go to Sheridan and explain what was taking place in Warren's and in Humphreys's front, and have a full understanding with him as to further operations in his vicinity. I rode rapidly down the Boydton plank-road, and soon came to Gravelly Run. Hearing heavy firing in the direction of the Five Forks road, I hurried on in that direction. Crossing by the Brooks road from the Boydton plank to the Five Forks road, which runs north from Dinwiddie, I saw a portion of our cavalry moving eastward, pressed by a heavy force of the enemy, and it was found that Devin and Davies, after holding on tooth and nail for hours, had

been driven in by the force of superior numbers and were falling back toward the Boydton plank-road. The brigades of Gibbs and J. I. Gregg had rushed in on the right and rear of the enemy, and got in some very good work, but were soon after compelled to fall back toward Dinwiddie. I turned the corner of the Brooks cross-road and the Five Forks road just as the rear of our cavalry was passing it, and encountered one of Sheridan's bands, † under a heavy fire, playing "Nellie Bly" as cheerily as if it were furnishing music for a country picnic.

I found Sheridan a little north of Dinwiddie Court House, and gave him an account of matters on the left of the Army of the Potomac. He said he had had one of the liveliest days in his experience, fighting infantry and cavalry with cavalry only, but that he was concentrating his command on the high ground just north of Dinwiddie, and would hold that position at all hazards. He did not stop here, but becoming more and more animated in describing the situation and stating his views and intentions, he declared his belief that with the corps of infantry he expected to be put under his command he could take the initiative the next morning and cut off the whole of the force that Lee had detached. He said: "This force is in more danger than I am—if I am cut off from the Army of the Potomac, it is cut off from Lee's army, and not a man in it should ever be allowed to get back to Lee. We at last have drawn the enemy's infantry out of its fortifications, and this is our chance to attack it." He begged me to go to General Grant at once and again urge him to send him the Sixth Corps, because it had been under him in the battles in the Valley of Virginia, and knew his way of fighting. I told him, as had been stated to him before, that the Sixth Corps was next to our extreme right, and that the only one which could reach him by daylight was the Fifth. I started soon after for General Grant's headquarters at Dabney's Mill, a distance of about eight miles. I reached there at 7 o'clock P. M., and gave the general a full description of Sheridan's operations. He at once telegraphed the substance of my report to Meade, and preparations soon after began looking to the sending of the Fifth Corps to report to Sheridan. About 7:40 Captain M. V. Sheridan, of Sheridan's staff, brought still later news from Dinwiddie, saying that the cavalry had had more fighting but was holding its position.

It was finally decided that Warren should send Ayres down the Boydton plank and across by the Brooks road, and Griffin and Crawford by the Crump road, which runs from the White Oak road south to J. Boisseau's. [See map, p. 539.] Mackenzie's small division of cavalry was ordered to march to Dinwiddie and report to Sheridan. All haste was urged, in the hope that at daylight the enemy might be caught between Warren's two divisions of infantry on one side and Ayres's division and Sheridan's cavalry on the other, and be badly beaten. It was expected that the infantry

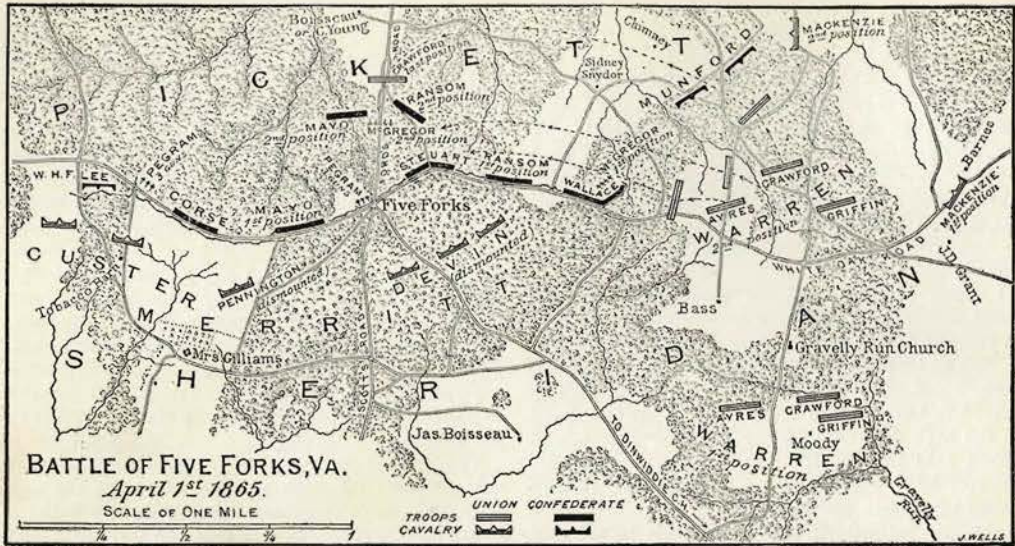
† Sheridan's bands were generally mounted on gray horses, and instead of being relegated to the usual duty of carrying off the wounded and assisting the surgeons,

would reach its destination in ample time to take the offensive at break of day, but now one delay after another was met with, and Grant, Meade, and Sheridan spent a painfully anxious night in hurrying forward the movement. Ayres had to rebuild a bridge over Gravelly Run, which took till 2 A. M. Warren, with his other two divisions, did not get started from their position on the White Oak road till 5 A. M., and the hope of crushing the enemy was hourly growing less. This proved to be one of the busiest nights of the whole campaign. Generals were writing dispatches and telegraphing from dark till daylight. Staff-officers were rushing from one headquarters to another, wading through swamps, penetrating forests, and galloping over corduroy roads, engaged in carrying instructions, getting information, and making extraordinary efforts to hurry up the movement of the troops.

The next morning, April 1st, General Grant said to me: "I wish you would spend the day with Sheridan's command, and send me a bulletin every half-hour or so, advising me fully as to the progress of his movements. You know my views, and I want you to give them to Sheridan fully. Tell him the contemplated movement is left entirely in his hands, and he must be responsible for its execution. I have every confidence in his judgment and ability. I hope there may now be an opportunity of fighting the enemy's infantry outside of its fortifications."

I set out with half a dozen mounted orderlies to act as couriers in transmitting field bulletins. Captain Peter T. Hudson, of our staff, went with me. After traveling again by way of the Brooks road, I met Sheridan, about 10 A. M., on the Five Forks road not far from J. Boisseau's house. Ayres had his division on this road, having arrived about daylight, and Griffin had reached J. Boisseau's between 7 and 8 A. M. I had a full conference with Sheridan. He told me the force in front of him had fallen back early in the morning, that he had pursued with his cavalry and had had several brushes with the enemy, and was driving him steadily back; that he had his patience sorely tried by the delays that had occurred in getting the infantry to him, but he was going to make every effort to strike a heavy blow with all the infantry and cavalry, as soon as he could get them into position, provided the enemy should make a stand behind his intrenchments at Five Forks, which seemed likely. General Warren, who had accompanied Crawford's division, arrived at 11 o'clock and reported in person to Sheridan.

A few minutes before noon Colonel (afterward General) Babcock, of General Grant's staff, came over from headquarters and said to Sheridan: "General Grant directs me to say to you, that if in your judgment the Fifth Corps would do better under one of the division commanders, you are authorized to relieve General Warren, and order him to report to General Grant, at headquarters." General Sheridan replied, in effect, that they were brought out to the front and made to play the liveliest airs in their repertory, with great effect on the spirits of the men.—H. P.



MAP OF THE BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS.

In his official report, General Fitzhugh Lee gives the following account of the battle of Five Forks from the Confederate point of view:

"Our position in the vicinity of Dinwiddle Court House [March 31st] brought us to the rear of the left of the infantry confronting the right of our line of battle at Burgess's Mills, and ascertaining during the night that that force, consisting of the Fifth Corps, had about-faced and was marching to the support of Sheridan and his discomfited cavalry, which would have brought them directly upon our left flank, at daylight on the 1st we commenced moving back to our former position at Five Forks, where Pickett placed his infantry in line of battle. W. H. F. Lee was on his right, one regiment of Munford's command on his left, uniting with the pickets of General Roberts's command, who filled the gap between our position and the right of our main army, then at Burgess's Mills. Rosser was placed just in rear of the center as a reserve, Hatcher's Run intervening between him and our line. Everything continued quiet until about 3 P. M., when reports reached me of a large body of infantry marching around and menacing our left flank. I ordered Munford to go in person, ascertain the exact condition of affairs, hold his command in readiness, and, if necessary, order it up at once. He soon sent for it, and it reached its position just in time to receive the attack. A division of two small brigades of cavalry was not able long to withstand the attack of a Federal corps of infantry, and that force soon crushed in Pickett's left flank, swept it away, and before Rosser could cross Hatcher's Run the position at the

he hoped such a step as that might not become necessary, and then went on to speak of his plan of battle. We all rode on farther to the front, and soon met General Devin, who was considerably elated by his successes of the morning, and was loudly demanding to be permitted to make a general charge on the enemy. Sheridan told him he didn't believe he had enough ammunition, to which Devin replied: "I guess I've got enough to give 'em one surge more."

General Babcock now left us to return to headquarters. About 1 o'clock it was reported by the cavalry that the enemy was retiring to his entrenched position at Five Forks, which was just north of the White Oak road, and parallel to it, his earth-works running from a point about three-quarters of a mile east of Five Forks to a point a mile west, with an angle or crotchet about one hundred yards long thrown back at right angles to his

Forks was seized and held, and an advance toward the railroad made. It was repulsed by Rosser. Pickett was driven rapidly toward the prolongation of the right of his line of battle by the combined attack of this infantry corps and Sheridan's cavalry, making a total of over 26,000 men, to which he was opposed with 7,000 men of all arms. Our forces were driven back some miles, the retreat degenerating into a rout, being followed up principally by the cavalry, whilst the infantry corps held the position our troops were first driven from, threatening an advance upon the railroad, and paralyzing the force of reserve cavalry by necessitating its being stationary in an interposing position to check or retard such an advance. . . . I remained in position on Hatcher's Run, near Five Forks, during the night, and was joined by the cavalry which was driven back the previous afternoon, and by Lieutenant-General [R. H.] Anderson with Wise's and Gracie's brigades, who, leaving the position at Burgess's Mills, had marched by a circuitous route to our relief. Had he advanced up the direct road it would have brought him on the flank and rear of the infantry forming the enemy's right, which attacked our left at Five Forks, and probably changed the result of the unequal contest. Whilst Anderson was marching, the Fifth Corps was marching back, and was enabled to participate in the attack upon our lines the next day, whilst the services of the three infantry brigades (which General Anderson reinforced us by, too late for use) and the five with Pickett, by their absence, increased the disparity between the contending forces upon the next day for the possession of the lines circumvallating Petersburg." EDITORS.

left to protect that flank. Orders were at once given to the Fifth Corps to move up the Gravelly Run Church road to the open ground near the church, and form in order of battle, with Ayres on the left, Crawford on his right, and Griffin in rear as a reserve. The corps was to wheel to the left, and make its attack upon the "angle," and then, moving westward, sweep down in rear of the enemy's entrenched line. The cavalry, principally dismounted, was to deploy in front of the enemy's line and engage his attention, and, as soon as it heard the firing of our infantry, to make a vigorous assault upon his works.

The Fifth Corps had borne the brunt of the fighting ever since the army had moved out on the 29th, and the gallant men who composed it, and had performed a conspicuous part in nearly every battle in which the Army of the Potomac had been engaged, seemed eager once more to cross bayo-

nets with their old antagonists. But the movement was slow, the required formation seemed to drag, and Sheridan, chafing with impatience and consumed with anxiety, became as restive as a racer when he hears the score and is struggling to make the start. He made every possible appeal for promptness, he dismounted from his horse, paced up and down, struck the clinched fist of one hand into the palm of the other, and fretted like a caged tiger. He said at one time: "This battle must be fought and won before the sun goes down. All the conditions may be changed in the morning; we have but a few hours of daylight left us. My cavalry are rapidly exhausting their ammunition, and if the attack is delayed much longer they may have none left." And then another batch of staff-officers were sent out to gallop through the mud and hurry up the columns.

At 4 o'clock the formation was completed, the order for the assault was given, and the struggle for Pickett's intrenched line began. The Confederate infantry brigades were posted from right to left as follows: Terry, Corse, Steuart, Ransom, and Wallace. General Fitzhugh Lee, commanding the cavalry, had placed W. H. F. Lee's two brigades on the right of the line, Munford's division on the left, and Rosser's in rear of Hatcher's Run to guard the trains. I rode to the front in company with Sheridan and Warren, with the head of Ayres's division, which was on the left. When this division became engaged, Warren took up a more central position with reference to his corps. Ayres threw out a skirmish-line and advanced across an open field, which sloped down gradually toward the dense woods, just north of the White Oak road. He soon met with a fire from the edge of this woods, a number of men fell, and the skirmish-line halted and seemed to waver. Sheridan now began to exhibit those traits that always made him such a tower of strength in the presence of an enemy. He put spurs to his horse and dashed along in front of the line of battle from left to right, shouting words of encouragement and having something cheery to say to every regiment. "Come on, men," he cried. "Go at 'em with a will. Move on at a clean jump or you'll not catch one of them. They're all getting ready to run now, and if you don't get on to them in five minutes, they'll every one get away from you! Now go for them." Just then a man on the skirmish-line was struck in the neck; the blood spurted as if the jugular vein had been cut. "I'm killed!" he cried, and dropped on the ground. "You're not hurt a bit," cried Sheridan; "pick up your gun, man, and move right on to the front." Such was the electric effect of his words that the poor fellow snatched up his musket and rushed forward a dozen paces before he fell never to rise again. The line of battle of weather-beaten veterans was now moving right along down the slope toward the woods with a steady swing that boded no good for Pickett's command, earth-works or no earth-works. Sheridan was mounted on his favorite black horse "Rienzi" that had carried him from Winchester to Cedar Creek, and which Buchanan Read made famous for all time by his poem of "Sheridan's

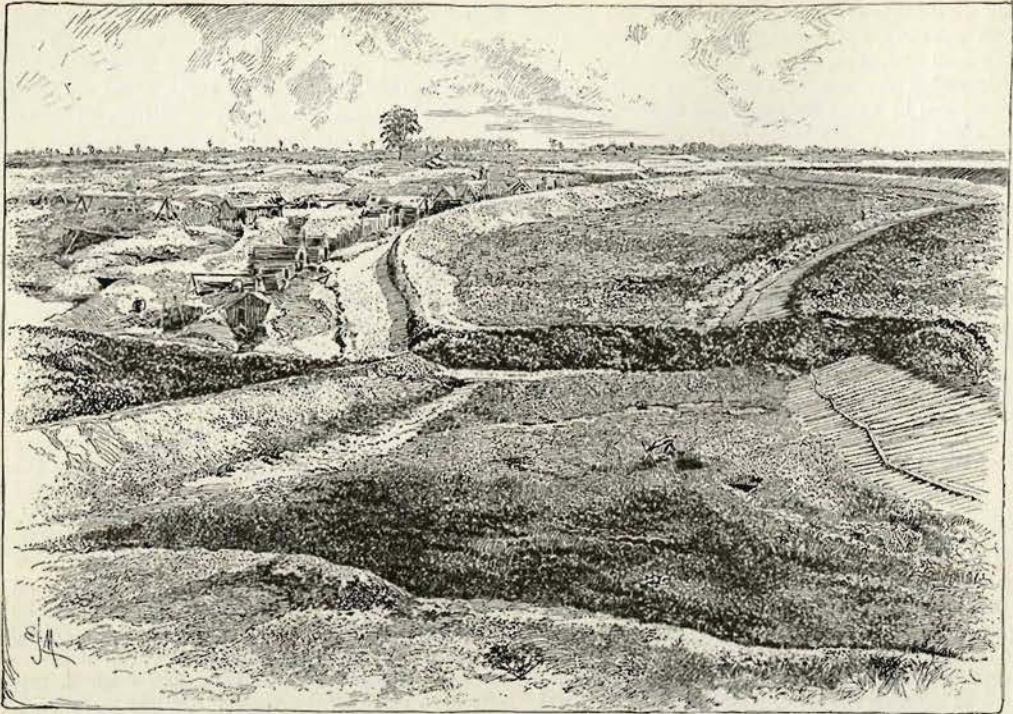
Ride." The roads were muddy, the fields swampy, the undergrowth dense, and "Rienzi," as he plunged and curveted, dashed the foam from his mouth and the mud from his heels. Had the Winchester pike been in a similar condition, he would not have made his famous twenty miles without breaking his own neck and Sheridan's too.

Mackenzie had been ordered up the Crump road with directions to turn east on the White Oak road and whip everything he met on that route. He met only a small cavalry command, and having whipped it according to orders, now came galloping back to join in the general scrimmage. He reported to Sheridan in person, and was ordered to strike out toward Hatcher's Run, then move west and get possession of the Ford road in the enemy's rear.

Soon Ayres's men met with a heavy fire on their left flank and had to change direction by facing more toward the west. As the troops entered the woods and moved forward over the boggy ground and struggled through the dense undergrowth, they were staggered by a heavy fire from the angle and fell back in some confusion. Sheridan now rushed into the midst of the broken lines, and cried out: "Where is my battle-flag?" As the sergeant who carried it rode up, Sheridan seized the crimson and white standard, waved it above his head, cheered on the men, and made heroic efforts to close up the ranks. Bullets were humming like a swarm of bees. One pierced the battle-flag, another killed the sergeant who had carried it, another wounded Captain A. J. McGonnigle in the side, others struck two or three of the staff-officers' horses. All this time Sheridan was dashing from one point of the line to another, waving his flag, shaking his fist, encouraging, threatening, praying, swearing, the very incarnation of battle. It would be a sorry soldier who could help following such a leader. Ayres and his officers were equally exposing themselves at all points in rallying the men, and soon the line was steadied, for such material could suffer but a momentary check. Ayres, with drawn saber, rushed forward once more with his veterans, who now behaved as if they had fallen back to get a "good-ready," and with fixed bayonets and a rousing cheer dashed over the earth-works, sweeping everything before them, and killing or capturing every man in their immediate front whose legs had not saved him.

Sheridan spurred "Rienzi" up to the angle, and with a bound the horse carried his rider over the earth-works, and landed in the midst of a line of prisoners who had thrown down their arms and were crouching close under their breastworks. Some of them called out, "Whar do you want us-all to go to?" Then Sheridan's rage turned to humor, and he had a running talk with the "Johnnies" as they filed past. "Go right over there," he said to them, pointing to the rear. "Get right along, now. Drop your guns; you'll never need them any more. You'll all be safe over there. Are there any more of you? We want every one of you fellows." Nearly 1500 were captured at the angle.

An orderly here came up to Sheridan and said: "Colonel Forsyth of your staff is killed, sir." "It's



VIEW ON THE CONFEDERATE LINES COVERING PETERSBURG. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

no such thing," cried Sheridan. "I don't believe a word of it. You'll find Forsyth's all right." Ten minutes after, Forsyth rode up. It was the gallant General Frederick Winthrop who had fallen in the assault and had been mistaken for him. Sheridan did not even seem surprised when he saw Forsyth, and only said: "There! I told you so." I mention this as an instance of a peculiar trait of Sheridan's character, which never allowed him to be discouraged by camp rumors, however disastrous.

The dismounted cavalry had assaulted as soon as they heard the infantry fire open. The natty cavalymen, with tight-fitting uniforms, short jackets, and small carbines, swarmed through the pine thickets and dense undergrowth, looking as if they had been especially equipped for crawling through knot-holes. Those who had magazine guns created a racket in those pine woods that sounded as if a couple of army corps had opened fire.

The cavalry commanded by the gallant Merritt made a final dash, went over the earth-works with a hurrah, captured a battery of artillery, and scattered everything in front of them. Here Custer, Devin, Fitzhugh, and the other cavalry leaders were in their element, and vied with each other in deeds of valor. Crawford's division had advanced in a northerly direction, marching away from Ayres and leaving a gap between the two divisions. General Sheridan sent nearly all of his staff-officers to correct this movement, and to find General Warren, whom he was anxious to see.

After the capture of the angle I started off toward the right to see how matters were going there. I went in the direction of Crawford's divi-

sion, passed around the left of the enemy's works, then rode due west to a point beyond the Ford road. Here I met Sheridan again, just a little before dark. He was laboring with all the energy of his nature to complete the destruction of the enemy's forces, and to make preparation to protect his own detached command from an attack by Lee in the morning. He said he had relieved Warren, directed him to report in person to General Grant, and placed Griffin in command of the Fifth Corps. I had sent frequent bulletins during the day to the general-in-chief, and now dispatched a courier announcing the change of corps commanders and giving the general result of the round-up.

Sheridan had that day fought one of the most interesting technical battles of the war, almost perfect in conception, brilliant in execution, strikingly dramatic in its incidents, and productive of immensely important results.

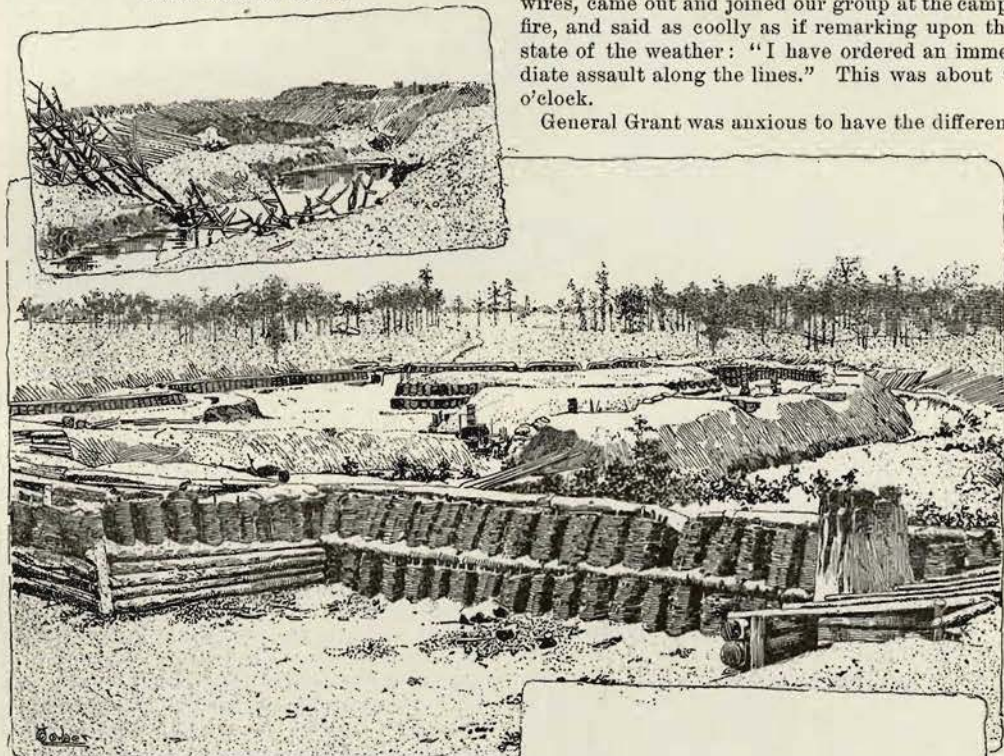
About half-past seven o'clock I started for general headquarters. The roads in places were corduroyed with captured muskets. Ammunition trains and ambulances were still struggling forward for miles; teamsters, prisoners, stragglers, and wounded were choking the roadway. The coffee-boilers had kindled their fires. Cheers were resounding on all sides, and everybody was riotous over the victory. A horseman had to pick his way through this jubilant condition of things as best he could, as he did not have the right of way by any means. I traveled again by way of the Brooks road. As I galloped past a group of men on the Boydton plank, my orderly called out to them the news of the victory. The only response he got

was from one of them who raised his open hand to his face, put his thumb to his nose, and yelled: "No, you don't — April fool!" I then realized that it was the 1st of April. I had ridden so rapidly that I reached headquarters at Dabney's Mill before the arrival of the last courier I had dispatched. General Grant was sitting with most of the staff about him before a blazing camp-fire. He

only part of my recital that seemed to call forth a responsive expression from his usually impassive features. After having listened to the description of Sheridan's day's work, the general, with scarcely a word, walked into his tent, and by the light of a flickering candle took up his "manifold writer," a small book which retained a copy of the matter written, and after finishing several dispatches handed them to an orderly to be sent over the field wires, came out and joined our group at the camp-fire, and said as coolly as if remarking upon the state of the weather: "I have ordered an immediate assault along the lines." This was about 9 o'clock.

General Grant was anxious to have the different

OUTER WORKS OF FORT SEDGWICK.



FORT SEDGWICK, KNOWN AS "FORT HELL," OPPOSITE THE CONFEDERATE FORT MAHONE. FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.

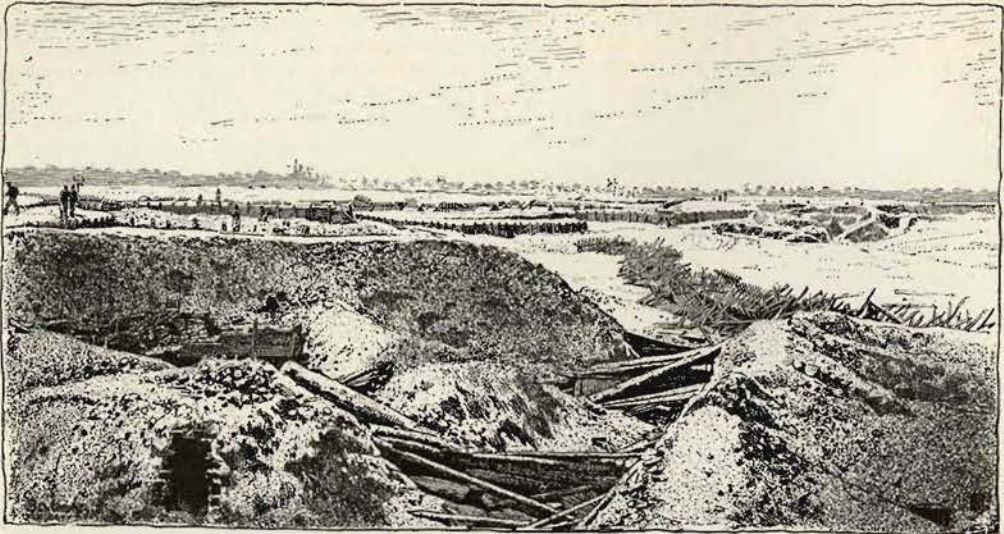
wore his blue cavalry overcoat, and the ever-present cigar was in his mouth. I began shouting the good news as soon as I got in sight, and in a moment all but the imperturbable general-in-chief were on their feet giving vent to wild demonstrations of joy. For some minutes there was a bewildering state of excitement, grasping of hands, tossing up of hats, and slapping of each other on the back. It meant the beginning of the end — the reaching of the "last ditch." It pointed to peace and home. Dignity was thrown to the winds. The general, as was expected, asked his usual question: "How many prisoners have been taken?" This was always his first inquiry when an engagement was reported. No man ever had such a fondness for taking prisoners. I think the gratification arose from the kindness of his heart, a feeling that it was much better to win in this way than by the destruction of human life. I was happy to report that the prisoners this time were estimated at over five thousand, and this was the



BOMB-PROOFS INSIDE FORT SEDGWICK.

commands move against the enemy's lines at once, to prevent Lee from withdrawing troops and sending them against Sheridan. General Meade was all activity and so alive to the situation, and so anxious to carry out the orders of the general-in-chief, that he sent word that he was going to have the troops make a dash at the works without waiting to form assaulting columns. General Grant, at 9:30 P. M., sent a message saying he did not mean to have the corps attack without assaulting columns, but to let the batteries open at once and to feel out with skirmishers; and if the enemy was





INTERIOR VIEW ON THE CONFEDERATE WORKS COVERING PETERSBURG. FROM A WAR-TIME PHOTOGRAPH.

found to be leaving, to let the troops attack in their own way. The corps commanders reported that it would be impracticable to make a successful assault till morning, but sent back replies full of enthusiasm.

The hour for the general assault was now fixed at 4 the next morning. Miles was ordered to march with his division at midnight to reënforce Sheridan and enable him to make a stand against Lee, in case he should move westward in the night. The general had not been unmindful of Mr. Lincoln's anxiety. Soon after my arrival he telegraphed him: "I have just heard from Sheridan. He has carried everything before him. He has captured three brigades of infantry and a train of wagons, and is now pushing up his success." He had this news also communicated to the several corps commanders, in accordance with his invariable custom to let the different commands feel that they were being kept informed of the general movements, and to encourage them and excite their emulation by notifying them of the success of other commanders. A little after midnight the general tucked himself into his camp-bed, and was soon sleeping as peacefully as if the next day were to be devoted to a picnic instead of a decisive battle.

About 3 A. M. Colonel F. C. Newhall, of Sheridan's staff, rode up bespattered with more than the usual amount of Virginia soil. He had the latest report from Sheridan, and as the general-in-chief would, no doubt, want to take this opportunity of sending further instructions as to the morning's operations on the extreme left, he was wakened, and listened to the report from Newhall, who stood by the bedside to deliver it. The general told him of the preparations being made by the Army of the Potomac, and the necessity of Sheridan's looking out for a push in his direction by Lee, and then began his sleep again where he had left off. Newhall then started to take another

fifteen-mile ride back to Sheridan. Every one at headquarters had caught as many cat-naps as he could, so as to be able to keep both eyes open the next day, in the hope of getting a sight of Petersburg, and possibly of Richmond. And now 4 o'clock came, but no assault. It was found that to remove abatis, climb over chevaux-de-frise, jump rifle-pits, and scale parapets, a little daylight would be of material assistance. At 4:45 there was a streak of gray in the heavens which soon revealed another streak of gray formed by Confederate uniforms in the works opposite, and the charge was ordered. The thunder of hundreds of guns shook the ground like an earthquake, and soon the troops were engaged all along the lines. The general awaited the result of the assault at headquarters, where he could be easily communicated with, and from which he could give general directions.

At a quarter past five a message came from Wright that he had carried the enemy's line and was pushing in. Next came news from Parke, that he had captured the outer works in his front, with 12 pieces of artillery and 800 prisoners. At 6:40 the general wrote a telegram with his own hand to Mr. Lincoln, as follows: "Both Wright and Parke got through the enemy's line. The battle now rages furiously. Sheridan with his cavalry, the Fifth Corps, and Miles's division of the Second Corps I sent to him since 1 this morning, is sweeping down from the west. All now looks highly favorable. Ord is engaged, but I have not yet heard the result on his part." A cheering dispatch was also sent to Sheridan, winding up with the words: "I think nothing is now wanting but the approach of your force from the west to finish up the job on this side."

Soon Ord was heard from, having broken through the intrenchments. Humphreys, too, had been doing gallant work; at half-past seven the line in his front was captured, and half an hour later

Hays's division of his corps had carried an important earth-work, with three guns and most of the garrison. At 8:25 A. M. the general sat down to write another telegram to the President, summing up the progress made. Before he had finished it a dispatch was brought in from Ord saying some of his troops had just captured the enemy's works south of Hatcher's Run, and this news was added to the tidings which the general was sending to Mr. Lincoln.

The general and staff now rode out to the front, as it was necessary to give immediate direction to the actual movements of the troops, and prevent confusion from the overlapping and intermingling of the several corps as they pushed forward. He urged his horse over the works that Wright's corps had captured, and suddenly came upon a body of three thousand prisoners marching to the rear. His whole attention was for some time riveted upon them, and we knew he was enjoying his usual satisfaction in seeing them. Some of the guards told the prisoners who the general was, and they became wild with curiosity to get a good look at him. Next he came up with a division of the Sixth Corps flushed with success, and rushing forward with a dash that was inspiring beyond description. When they caught sight of the leader, whom they had patiently followed from the Rapidan to the Appomattox, their cheers broke forth with a will and their enthusiasm knew no bounds. The general galloped along toward the right, and soon met Meade, with whom he had been in constant communication, and who had been pushing forward the Army of the Potomac with all vigor. Congratulations were quickly exchanged, and both went to pushing forward the work. General Grant, after taking in the situation, directed both Meade and Ord to face their commands toward the east, and close up toward the inner lines which covered Petersburg. Lee had been pushed so vigorously that he seemed for a time to be making but little effort to recover any of his lost ground, but now he made a determined fight against Parke's corps, which was threatening his inner line on his extreme left and the bridge across the Appomattox. Repeated assaults were made, but Parke resisted them all successfully, and could not be moved from his position. Lee had ordered Longstreet from the north side of the James, and with these troops reënforced his extreme right. General Grant dismounted near a farm-house which stood on a knoll within a mile of the enemy's extreme line, and from which he could get a good view of the field of operations. He seated himself at the foot of a tree, and was soon busy receiving dispatches and writing orders to officers conducting the advance. The position was under fire, and as soon as the group of staff-officers was seen the enemy's guns began paying their respects. This lasted for nearly a quarter of an hour, and as the fire became hotter and hotter several of the officers, apprehensive of the general's safety, urged him to move to some less conspicuous position, but he kept on writing and talking without the least interruption from the shots falling around him, and apparently not noticing what a target

the place was becoming. After he had finished his dispatches, he got up, took a view of the situation, and as he started toward the other side of the farm-house said, with a quizzical look at the group around him: "Well, they do seem to have the range on us." The staff was now sent to various points of the advancing lines, and all was activity in pressing forward the good work. By



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL RICHARD H. ANDERSON, C. S. A.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

noon, nearly all the outer line of works was in our possession, except two strong redoubts which occupied a commanding position, named respectively Fort Gregg and Fort Whitworth. The general decided that these should be stormed, and about 1 o'clock three of Ord's brigades swept down upon Fort Gregg. The garrison of 300 [under Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Duncan] with two rifled cannon made a desperate defense, and a most gallant contest took place. For half an hour after our men had gained the parapet a bloody hand-to-hand struggle continued, but nothing could stand against the onslaught of Ord's troops, flushed with their morning's victory. By half-past two 57 of the brave garrison lay dead, and about 250 had surrendered. Fort Whitworth was at once abandoned, but the guns of Fort Gregg were opened upon the garrison as they marched out, and the commander [Colonel Joseph M. Jayne] and sixty men were surrendered.

About this time Miles had struck a force of the enemy at Sutherland's Station on Lee's extreme right, and had captured two pieces of artillery and nearly a thousand prisoners. At 4:40 the general, who had been keeping Mr. Lincoln fully advised of the history that was so rapidly being made that day, sent him a telegram inviting him to come out the next day and pay him a visit. A

prompt reply came back from the President, saying: "Allow me to tender you and all with you the nation's grateful thanks for the additional and magnificent success. At your kind suggestion, I think I will meet you to-morrow."

Prominent officers now urged the general to make an assault on the inner lines and capture Petersburg that afternoon, but he was firm in his resolve not to sacrifice the lives necessary to accomplish such a result. He said the city would undoubtedly be evacuated during the night, and he would dispose the troops for a parallel march westward, and try to head off the escaping army. And thus ended the eventful Sunday.

The general was up at daylight the next morning, and the first report brought in was that Parke had gone through the lines at 4 A. M., capturing a few skirmishers, and that the city had surrendered at 4:28 to Colonel Ralph Ely. A second communication surrendering the place was sent in to Wright. The evacuation had begun about 10 the night before, and was completed before 3 on the morning of the 3d. Between 5 and 6 A. M. the general had a conference with Meade, and orders were given to push westward with all haste. About 9 A. M. the general rode into Petersburg. Many of the citizens, panic-stricken, had escaped with the army. Most of the whites who remained staid indoors, a few groups of negroes gave cheers, but the scene generally was one of complete desertion. Grant rode along quietly with his staff until he came to a comfortable-looking brick house, with a yard in front, situated on one of the principal streets, and here he and the officers accompanying him dismounted and took seats on the piazza. A number of the citizens soon gathered on the sidewalk and gazed with eager curiosity upon the commander of the Yankee armies.

Soon an officer came with a dispatch from Sheridan, who had been reinforced and ordered to strike out along the Danville railroad, saying he was already nine miles beyond Namozine Creek and pressing the enemy's trains. The general was anxious to move westward at once with the leading infantry column, but Mr. Lincoln had telegraphed that he was on his way, and the general, though he had replied that he could not wait for his arrival, decided to prolong his stay until the President came up. Mr. Lincoln, accompanied by his little son "Tad," dismounted in the street and came in through the front gate with long and rapid strides, his face beaming with delight. He seized General Grant's hand as the general stepped forward to greet him, and stood shaking it for some time and pouring out his thanks and congratulations with all the fervor of a heart that seemed overflowing with its fullness of joy. I doubt whether Mr. Lincoln ever experienced a happier moment in his life. The scene was singularly affecting and one never to be forgotten. He then said:

"Do you know, General, I have had a sort of sneaking idea for some days that you intended to do something like this, though I thought some time ago that you would so manoeuvre as to have Sherman come up and be near enough to cooperate with you."

"Yes," replied the general, "I thought at one time that Sherman's army might advance so far as to be in supporting distance of the Eastern armies when the spring campaign against Lee opened, but I have had a feeling that it is better to let Lee's old antagonists give his army the final blow and finish up the job. If the Western armies were even to put in an appearance against Lee's army, it might give some of our politicians a chance to stir up sectional feeling in claiming everything for the troops from their own section of country. The Western armies have been very successful in their campaigns, and it is due to the Eastern armies to let them vanquish their old enemy single-handed."

"I see, I see," said Mr. Lincoln, "but I never thought of it in that light. In fact, my anxiety has been so great that I didn't care where the help came from so the work was perfectly done."

"Oh," General Grant continued, "I do not suppose it would have given rise to much of the bickering I mentioned, and perhaps the idea would not have occurred to any one else. I feel sure there would have been no such feeling among the soldiers, but there might have been among our politicians. While I would not have risked the result of the campaign on account of any mere sentiment of this kind, I felt that our troops here are amply able to handle Lee."

Mr. Lincoln then began to talk about the civil complications that would follow the destruction of the Confederate armies in the field, and showed plainly the anxiety he felt regarding the great problems in statecraft that would soon be thrust upon him. He intimated very plainly, however, in a rambling talk of nearly half an hour, that thoughts of mercy and magnanimity were uppermost in his heart.

At 12:30 the general wrote a telegram to Weitzel at Richmond, asking news from him, and showed it to the President before sending it. The general hoped that he would hear before he parted with the President that Richmond was in our possession, but after the interview had lasted about an hour and a half, the general said he must ride on to the front and join Ord's column, and took leave of the President, who shook his hand cordially, and with great warmth of feeling wished him God-speed and every success.

The general and staff had ridden as far as Sutherland's Station, about nine miles, when a dispatch from Weitzel overtook him, which had come by a roundabout way. It read: "We took Richmond at 8:15 this morning. I captured many guns. Enemy left in great haste. The city is on fire in two places. Am making every effort to put it out." Although the news was expected, there were wild shouts of rejoicing from the group who heard it read. The general, who never manifested the slightest sign of emotion either in victories or defeats, merely said: "I am sorry I did not get this before we left the President. However, I suppose he has heard the news by this time," and then added: "Let the news be circulated among the troops as rapidly as possible."

Grant and Meade both went into camp at Sutherland's Station that evening, the 3d. The Army of



CAPTURE OF GUNS AND THE DESTRUCTION OF A CONFEDERATE WAGON-TRAIN AT PAINEVILLE, APRIL 5, BY DAVIES'S CAVALRY BRIGADE OF CROOK'S DIVISION. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.

The wagon-train was escorted by Gary's cavalry with five guns. General Humphreys, in "The Virginia Campaign," says it is believed that "the papers of General

Robert E. Lee's headquarters, containing many valuable reports, copies of but few of which are now to be found, were destroyed by the burning of these wagons."

the Potomac caught a few hours' sleep, and at 3 o'clock the next morning was again on the march. The pursuit had now become unflagging, relentless. Grant put a spur to the heel of every dispatch he sent. Sheridan "the inevitable," as the enemy had learned to call him, was in advance thundering along with his cavalry, followed by Griffin and the rest of the Army of the Potomac, while Ord was swinging along toward Burkeville to head off Lee from Danville, to which point it was naturally supposed he was pushing in order to unite with Joe Johnston's army. The 4th was another active day; the troops found that this campaign was to be won by legs, that the great walking-match had begun, and success would attend the army that should make the best distance record. General Grant marched this day with Ord's troops. Meade was sick, and had to take at times to an ambulance, but his loyal spirit never flagged, and his orders breathed the true spirit of the soldier. That night General Grant camped at Wilson's Station, on the South Side railroad, twenty-seven miles west of Petersburg. The next morning he sent a dispatch to Sherman in North Carolina, giving him an account of the situation and instructions as to his future movements, and winding up with the famous words, "Rebel armies are now the only strategic points to strike at." On the 5th he marched again with Ord's column, and at noon reached Nottoway Court House, about ten miles east of Burkeville, where he halted for a couple of hours. A young staff-officer here rode up to

General Ord, in a state of considerable excitement, and said to him: "Is that a way-station?" This grim old soldier, who was always jocular, replied with great deliberation: "This is Nott-o-way Station." The staff collected around General Grant on the front porch of the old town tavern, and while we were examining maps and discussing movements, a dispatch came from Sheridan, saying he had captured six guns and some wagons, and had intercepted Lee's advance toward Burkeville, that Lee was in person at Amelia Court House, etc. This news was given to the passing troops, and lusty cheers went up from every throat. They had marched about fifteen miles already that day, and now struck out as if they were good for fifteen more, and swore they were going to beat the record of the cavalry. We continued to move along the road which runs parallel to the South Side railroad till nearly dark, and had reached a point about half-way between Nottoway and Burkeville. The road was skirted by a dense woods on the north side, the side toward the enemy. There was a sudden commotion among the headquarters escort, and on looking around I saw some of our men dashing up to a horseman in full rebel uniform, who had suddenly appeared in the road, and they were in the act of seizing him as a prisoner. I recognized him at once as one of Sheridan's scouts, who had before brought us important dispatches; said to him: "How do you do, Campbell?" and told our men he was all right and was one of our own people. He told us he had

had a hard ride from Sheridan's camp, and had brought a dispatch for General Grant. By this time the general had recognized him, and had stopped in the road to see what he had brought. Campbell then took from his mouth a wad of tobacco, broke it open, and pulled out a little ball of tin-foil. Rolled up in this was a sheet of tissue paper on which was written the famous dispatch so widely published at the time, in which Sheridan



CAPTAIN JOHN R. TUCKER, C. S. N.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

described the situation at Jetersville, and added: "I wish you were here yourself."

The general said he would go at once to Sheridan, and dismounted from his black pony "Jeff Davis," which he had been riding, and called for his big bay horse "Cincinnati." He stood in the road and wrote a dispatch, using the pony's back for a desk, and then, mounting the fresh horse, told Campbell to lead the way. It was found we would have to skirt the enemy's lines, and it was thought prudent to take some cavalry with us, but there was none near at hand, and the general said he would risk it with our mounted escort of fourteen men. Calling upon me and two or three other officers to accompany him, he started off. It was now after dark, but there was enough moonlight to enable us to see the way without difficulty. After riding nearly twenty miles, following cross-roads through a wooded country, we struck Sheridan's pickets about half-past ten o'clock, and soon after reached his headquarters.

Sheridan was awaiting us, thinking the general would come after getting his dispatch. A good supper of coffee and cold chicken was spread out, and it was soon demonstrated that the night ride had not impaired any one's appetite.

When the general-in-chief had learned fully the

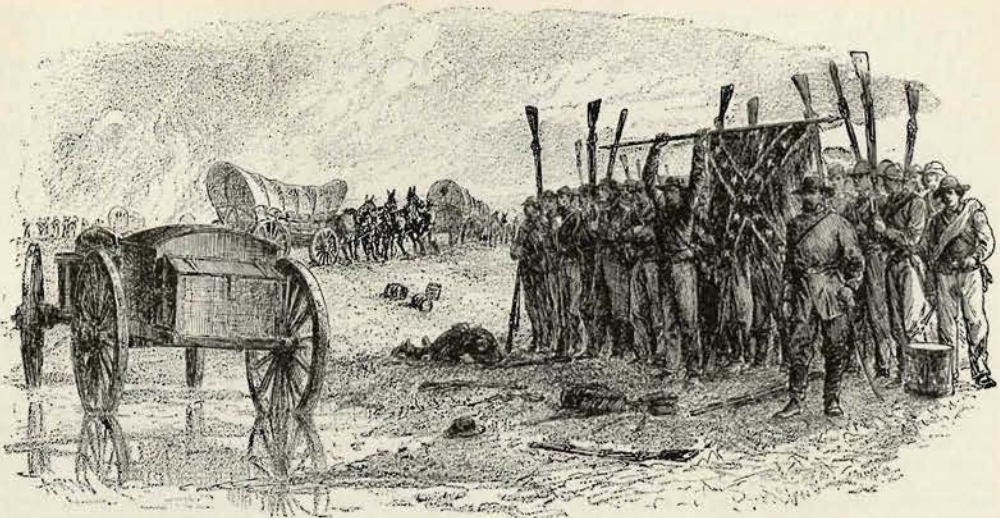
situation in Sheridan's front, he first sent a message to Ord to watch the roads running south from Burkeville and Farmville, and then rode over to Meade's camp near by. Meade was still suffering from illness. His views differed somewhat from General Grant's regarding the movements of the Army of the Potomac for the next day, and the latter changed the dispositions that were being made so as to have the army unite with Sheridan's troops in swinging round toward the south, and heading off Lee in that direction. The next day, the 6th, proved a decided field-day in the pursuit. It was found in the morning that Lee had retreated during the night from Amelia Court House, and from the direction he had taken, and the information received that he had ordered rations to meet him at Farmville, it was seen that he had abandoned all hope of reaching Burkeville and was probably heading for Lynchburg. Ord was to try to burn the High Bridge and push on to Farmville. Sheridan's cavalry was to work around on Lee's left flank, and the Army of the Potomac was to make another forced march and strike the enemy wherever it could reach him.

I spent a portion of the day with Humphreys's corps, which attacked the enemy near Deatonville and gave his rear-guard no rest. I joined General Grant later and with him rode to Burkeville, getting there some time after dark.

Ord had pushed out to Rice's Station, and Sheridan and Wright had gone in against the enemy and had fought the battle of Sailor's Creek, capturing six general officers and about seven thousand men, and "smashing things" generally.

Ord had sent Colonel Francis Washburn, of the 4th Massachusetts Cavalry, with two infantry regiments to destroy High Bridge and return to Burkeville Station, but becoming apprehensive for their safety, owing to the movements of the enemy, he sent Colonel Theodore Read of his staff with eighty cavalymen to recall the command. Read advanced as far as Farmville, and on his return found Washburn's troops confronting Lee's advance. The enemy were now between Ord and this little command of less than six hundred infantry and cavalry. Finding himself thus cut off, the gallant Read resolved to sacrifice the command in a heroic effort to delay Lee's march, and repeatedly charged the advancing columns. He was soon mortally wounded and not long after Washburn fell. Most of the men were killed or wounded, and the rest finally surrendered. Their heroic act had delayed Lee's advance long enough to be of material service in aiding his pursuers to capture a large part of his wagon trains. The next day, the 7th, Lee crossed the Appomattox at High Bridge and fired the bridge after his passage, but Humphreys arrived in time to extinguish the fire before it had made much progress, and followed Lee to the north side of the river.

General Grant started from Burkeville early the next morning, the 7th, and took the direct road to Farmville. The columns were crowding the roads, and the men, aroused to still greater efforts by the inspiring news of the day before, were sweeping along, despite the rain that fell, like trained



THE CAPTURE OF EWELL'S CORPS, APRIL 6, 1865. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.

In his official report General Ewell gives the following account of the battle of Sailor's Creek and the capture of his corps:

"On crossing a little stream known as Sailor's Creek, I met General Fitzhugh Lee, who informed me that a large force of cavalry held the road just in front of General [R. H.] Anderson, and was so strongly posted that he had halted a short distance ahead. The trains were turned into the road nearer the river, while I hurried to General Anderson's aid. General [John B.] Gordon's corps turned off after the trains. General Anderson informed me that at least two divisions of cavalry were in his front, and suggested two modes of escape—either to unite our forces and break through, or to move to the right through the woods and try to strike a road which ran toward Farmville. I recommended the latter alternative, but as he knew the ground and I did not, and had no one who did, I left the dispositions to him. Before any were made the enemy appeared in rear of my column in large force preparing to attack. General Anderson informed me that he would make the attack in front, if I would hold in check those in the rear, which I did until his troops were broken and dispersed. I had no artillery, all being with the train. My line ran across a little ravine which leads nearly at right angles toward Sailor's Creek. General G. W. C. Lee was on the left with the Naval Battalion, under Commodore [John R.] Tucker, behind his right. Kershaw's division was on the right. All of Lee's and part of Kershaw's divisions were posted behind a rising ground that afforded some shelter from artillery. The creek was perhaps 300 yards in their front, with brush pines between and a cleared field beyond it. In this the enemy's artillery took a commanding position, and, finding we had none to reply, soon approached within 800 yards and opened a terrible fire. After nearly half an hour of this their infantry advanced, crossing the creek above and below us at the same time. Just as it attacked, General Anderson made his assault, which was repulsed in five minutes. I had ridden up near his lines with him to see the result, when a staff-officer, who had followed his troops in their charge, brought him word of its failure. General Anderson rode rapidly toward his command. I returned to mine to see if it were yet too late to try the other plan of escape. On riding past my left I came suddenly upon a strong line of the enemy's skirmishers advancing upon my left rear. This closed the only avenue of escape: as shells and even bullets were crossing each other from front and rear over my troops, and my right was completely enveloped, I surrendered myself and staff to a cavalry officer who came in by the same road General Anderson had gone out on. At my request he sent a messenger to General G. W. C. Lee, who was nearest, with a note from me telling him he was surrounded, General Anderson's attack had failed, I had surrendered, and he had better do so, too, to prevent useless loss of life, though I gave no orders, being a prisoner. Before the messenger reached him General [G. W. C.] Lee had been captured, as had General Kershaw, and the whole

of my command. My two divisions numbered about 3000 each at the time of the evacuation; 2800 were taken prisoners, about 150 killed and wounded. The difference of over 3000 was caused mainly by the fatigue of four days' and nights' almost constant marching, the last two days with nothing to eat. Before our capture I saw men eating raw fresh meat as they marched in the ranks. I was informed at General Wright's headquarters, whither I was carried after my capture, that 30,000 men were engaged with us when we surrendered, namely, two infantry corps and Custer's and Merritt's divisions of cavalry."

General J. Warren Keifer, in a pamphlet on the battle of Sailor's Creek, says:

"General A. P. Hill, a corps commander in General Lee's army, was killed at Petersburg, April 2d, 1865, and this, or some other important reason, caused General Lee, while at Amelia Court House, to consolidate his army into two corps or wings, one commanded by Lieutenant-General Longstreet and the other by Lieutenant-General Ewell.

"The main body of the Confederate army had passed by toward Sailor's Creek. Pursuit with such troops as were up was promptly ordered by General Sheridan and conducted by General Horatio G. Wright, who commanded the Sixth Corps. The enemy's rear-guard fought stubbornly and fell back toward the stream. The Second Division of his corps, under General Frank Wheaton, arrived and joined the Third Division in the attack and pursuit. The main body of the cavalry, under General Merritt, was dispatched to intercept the Confederate retreat. General Merritt passed east and south of the enemy across Sailor's Creek, and again attacked him on the right rear. By about 5 p. m. the Confederate army was forced across the valley of Sailor's Creek, where it took up an unusually strong position on the heights immediately on the west bank of the stream. These heights, save on their face, were mainly covered with forests. There was a level bottom, wholly on the east bank of the creek, over which the Union forces would have to pass before reaching the stream, then swollen beyond its banks by recent rains, and which washed the foot of the heights on which General Ewell had rested the divisions of his army, ready for an attack if made, and with the hope that under cover of night the whole Confederate army might escape in safety to Danville.

"The pursuing troops were halted on the face of the hills skirting the valley, within the range of the enemy's guns, and lines were adjusted for an assault. Artillery was put in position on these hills, and a heavy fire was immediately opened. An effort was made to get up General G. W. Getty's division of the Sixth Corps, and a portion of the Second Brigade of the Third Division, which had been dispatched to attack a battery on the right, but the day was too far spent to await their arrival. After a few moments' delay, General Wright, as directed by General Sheridan, ordered an immediate assault to be made, by the infantry, under the cover of the artillery fire. Colonel Stagg's brigade of cavalry was, at the

pedestrians on a walking-track. As the general rode among them he was greeted with shouts and hurrahs, on all sides, and a string of sly remarks, which showed how familiar swords and

same time, ordered by General Sheridan to attack and, if possible, flank the extreme right of the enemy's position. General Merritt's cavalry divisions (First and Third) simultaneously attacked the Confederate army on its right and rear. Without waiting for reserves to arrive in sight, the two divisions of the Sixth Corps descended into the valley, and in single line of battle (First Division on the left and the Third on the right) moved steadily across the plain in the face of a destructive fire of the enemy, and, with shouldered guns and ammunition-boxes also, in most cases, over the shoulder, waded through the flooded stream. Though the water was from two to four feet deep, the stream was crossed without a halt or waver in the line. Many fell on the plain and in the water, and those who reached the west bank were in more or less disorder. The order to storm the heights was promptly given by the officers accompanying the troops, and it was at once obeyed. The infantry of the Sixth Corps began firing for the first time while ascending the heights, and when within only a few yards of the enemy. His advance line gave way, and an easy victory seemed about to be achieved by the Union forces. But before the crest of the heights was reached General Ewell's massed troops, in heavy column, made an impetuous charge upon and through the center of the assaulting line. The Union center was completely broken, and a disastrous defeat for the Union army was imminent. This large body of the Confederate infantry became, by reason of this success, exposed to the now renewed fire from General Wright's artillery remaining in position on the hills east of the stream.

"The right and left wings of the charging Union line met with better success, and each drove back all in its front, and,

bayonets become when victory furnishes the topic of their talk.

[For the continuation of this narrative see page 729.]

wholly disregarding the defeat of the center, persisted in advancing, each wheeling as upon a pivot, in the center of the line—then held by the Confederate masses. These masses were soon subjected to a terrible infantry fire upon both flanks as well as by the artillery in front. The swollen stream forbade a Confederate advance to attack the unguarded artillery. General Merritt and Colonel Stagg's cavalry, in a simultaneous attack, overthrew all before them on the right and rear. The Confederate officers gallantly struggled to avert disaster, and bravely tried to form lines to the right and left to repel the flank attacks. This latter proved impossible. The troops on the flanks were pushed up to within a few feet of the massed Confederates, which rendered any re-formation or change of direction by them out of the question, and speedily brought hopeless disorder. A few were bayoneted on each side. Flight was impossible, and nothing remained to put an end to the bloody slaughter but for them to throw down their arms and become captives. As the gloom of approaching night settled over the field, covered with dead and dying, the fire of artillery and musketry ceased, and General Ewell, together with eleven of his general officers [including Kershaw, G. W. C. Lee, Barton, Du Bose, Hunton, and Corse], and about all his gallant army that survived, were prisoners. Commodore Tucker and his Marine Brigade, numbering about 2000, surrendered to me a little later. They were under cover of a dense forest, and had been passed by in the first onset of the assault. Of the particular operations of the cavalry the writer of this, of his personal knowledge, knows little; but no less praise is due it than to the infantry. In this battle more men were captured in actual conflict without negotiation than on any other field in America."



CONFEDERATES DESTROYING THE RAILROAD FROM APPOMATTOX TOWARD LYNCHBURG, AND ARTILLERYMEN DESTROYING GUN-CARRIAGES, AT NIGHTFALL, SATURDAY, APRIL 8. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.

## GENERAL WARREN AT FIVE FORKS, AND THE COURT OF INQUIRY.

ON May 11th, 1865, General G. K. Warren, who was then in command of the Department of the Mississippi, addressed a letter to the "New York Times," in which he said:

"The operations of the enemy on the 31st of March made it necessary for me to send a portion of my corps during the night to support General Sheridan's cavalry, which had been forced back to near Dinwiddie Court House. One of my divisions was thus compelled to march all night, after having fought all day, and the rest of the corps moved toward the enemy that confronted the cavalry at daybreak.

"Our presence on the flank and rear of the enemy compelled him to fall back rapidly to the vicinity of the Five Forks, and General Sheridan, on advancing with the cavalry, found him slightly entrenched there. This force proved to be a complete division of the enemy's infantry, and all the cavalry of Lee's army.

"I received an order from General Meade, after joining General Sheridan, to report to him for duty, which I did, and the corps was halted by his direction at the point where we joined him, about 8 A. M. [April 1st]. At 1 P. M. I was directed to bring up the corps to Gravelly Run Church, a distance of about two and three-fourths miles from where they had been halted, and there form with two divisions in front and one in reserve, so as to move with the whole corps, and attack and turn the enemy's left flank on the White Oak road.

"My line was formed accordingly: Ayres on the left, in three lines of battle; Crawford on the right, in three lines of battle; and Griffin's division in reserve in masses. This occupied till 4 P. M. The forward movement then began. General Ayres's division became first engaged, wheeling to the left, from facing north to facing west, as it advanced. General Crawford's division also wheeled to the left on General Ayres's as on a pivot, but owing to the nature of the ground and forests, and the greater distance to gain, he lost his connection with General Ayres.

"Into the interval thus left General Griffin's division was placed. These two divisions steadily drove in the enemy's left flank. General Crawford's division moved on westward till it gained the road leading north from the center of the enemy's position, when it was wheeled to the south, and attacked the troops that were endeavoring to hold this road as an outlet for escape.

"All the divisions now closed in upon the enemy capturing the artillery that was attempting to move north, and nearly all the infantry, which their movements had thrown in the greatest confusion. I successively followed the operations of my divisions from left to right, being with General Crawford when the position was taken.

"While these movements above described were going on, the cavalry engaged the enemy along his whole front, which was facing south. The enemy still maintained the right of his line, confronting the cavalry, after we had swept away his left and center; but the Fifth Corps, crowding along the line, without waiting to reform, captured all who remained, as it swept along. I was with the extreme advance in the last movement, and was relieved while there at 7 P. M., the battle being then over, and not even a fugitive enemy in sight. . . .

"I personally sought of General Sheridan a reason for his order; but he would not, or could not, give one, and

General Warren resigned his volunteer commission May 27, 1865; he died Aug. 8, 1882, at Newport, R. I.

In his "Memoirs" (C. L. Webster & Co., 1885), General Grant says:

"I was so much dissatisfied with Warren's dilatory movements in the battle of White Oak road, and in his failure to reach Sheridan in time, that I was very much afraid that at the last moment he would fail Sheridan. He was a man of fine intelligence, great earnestness, quick perception, and could make his dispositions as quickly as any officer, under difficulties where he was forced to act. But I had before discovered a defect which was beyond his control, that was very prejudicial to his usefulness in emergencies like the one just

declined to do so. I obeyed the order to report to General Grant that night, and was by him assigned to the command of the defenses at City Point and Bermuda Hundred. After the evacuation of Richmond and Petersburg I was given the command of the troops at the latter place and along the Southside Railroad, belonging to the Army of the Potomac. When these troops were relieved by troops from the Army of the James, I was left in Petersburg awaiting orders. I then addressed a letter, dated April 9th, to General Rawlins, chief-of-staff, soliciting an investigation. On the 22d of April I sent another, requesting permission to publish the first one, for the reasons set forth therein. On the 2d of May I telegraphed Colonel Bowers, adjutant-general, to ascertain if these had been received, and he answered, they were received, the latter during General Grant's absence. Orders have been sent you [me] to report here, when you can see the general."

"On May 3d I received by telegraph an extract from General Orders No. 78, of May 1st, assigning me to the command of the Department of the Mississippi. I at once proceeded to Washington, and, after a personal interview with General Grant, received, on the 6th of May, an answer to my communications of the 9th and 22d of April, authorizing my publishing them, and stating the reasons for not granting me the investigation sought."

A court of inquiry was finally granted to General Warren on the 9th of December, 1879, by President Hayes. As finally constituted, the court consisted of Brevet Major-Generals C. C. Augur and John Newton, and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Loomis L. Langdon, recorder. The inquiry related to four imputations contained in the final reports of Grant and Sheridan.

*First.* General Grant wrote: ¶

"On the morning of the 31st [of March] General Warren reported favorably to getting possession of the White Oak road, and was directed to do so. To accomplish this he moved with one division, instead of his whole corps, resulting in a repulse."

The court exonerated Warren, but held that he "should have been with his advanced divisions," and "should have started earlier to the front."

*Second.* General Sheridan says:

"Had Warren moved according to the expectations of the lieutenant-general there would appear to have been but little chance for the escape of the enemy's infantry in front of Dinwiddie Court House."

The court found that "it was not practicable for the Fifth Corps to have reached Sheridan at 12 o'clock on the night of March 31st," as Grant had expected; but that Warren should have moved Griffin and Crawford at once, as ordered.

*Third.* General Sheridan says:

"General Warren did not exert himself to get up his corps as rapidly as he might have done, and his manner gave me the impression that he wished the sun to go down before dispositions for the attack could be completed."

before us. He could see every danger at a glance before he had encountered it. He would not only make preparations to meet the danger which might occur, but he would inform his commanding officer what others should do while he was executing his move.

"I had sent a staff-officer to General Sheridan to call his attention to these defects, and to say that as much as I liked General Warren, now was not a time when we could let our personal feelings for any one stand in the way of success; and if his removal was necessary to success, not to hesitate. It was upon that authorization that Sheridan removed Warren. I was very sorry that it had been done, and regretted still more that I had not long before taken occasion to assign him to another field of duty."



The court found that there was no unnecessary delay in the march of the Fifth Corps, and that General Warren took the usual methods of a corps commander to prevent delay; and that "his actions do not appear to have corresponded with such [a] wish" as that imputed to him.

*Fourth.* Sheridan says:

"In the engagement portions of his line gave way, when not exposed to a heavy fire, and simply for want

of confidence on the part of the troops, which General Warren did not exert himself to inspire."

The court found that Warren was exerting himself to remedy the divergence of Crawford and Griffin, after Ayres changed front to the left, and "thinks this was for him the essential point to be attended to, which also exacted his whole efforts to accomplish."

On the 21st of November, 1881, President Arthur directed "that the findings and opinion be published." No other action was taken.—EDITORS.

#### LEE'S REPORT OF THE SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX.

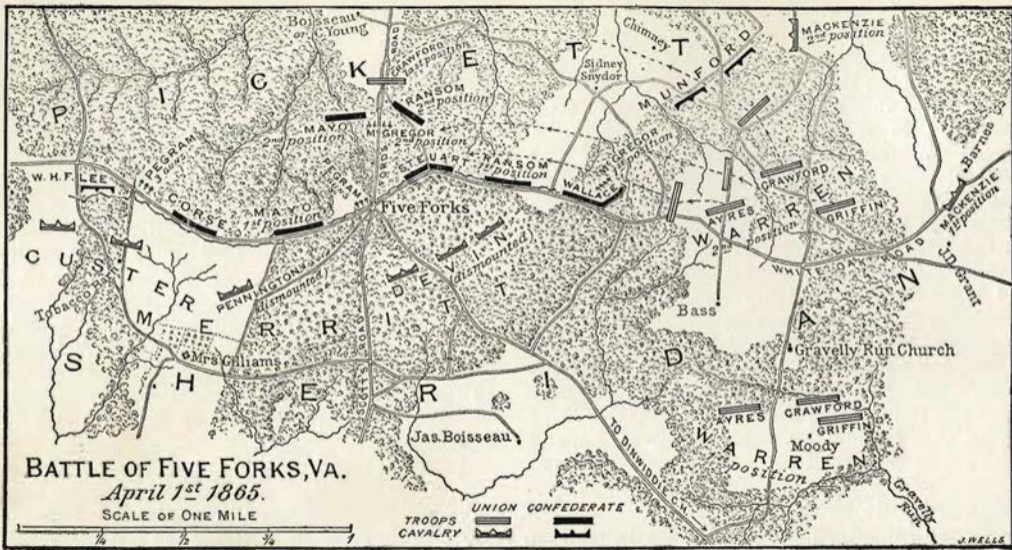
On the 12th of April, 1865, from "Near Appomattox Court House," General R. E. Lee made the following report to Mr. Davis:

"MR. PRESIDENT: It is with pain that I announce to Your Excellency the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. The operations which preceded this result will be reported in full. I will therefore only now state that upon arriving at Amelia Court House on the morning of the 4th with the advance of the army, on the retreat from the lines in front of Richmond and Petersburg, and not finding the supplies ordered to be placed there, nearly twenty-four hours were lost in endeavoring to collect in the country subsistence for men and horses. This delay was fatal, and could not be retrieved. The troops, wearied by continual fighting and marching for several days and nights, obtained neither rest nor refreshment, and on moving on the 5th, on the Richmond and Danville railroad, I found at Jetersville the enemy's cavalry, and learned the approach of his infantry and the general advance of his army toward Burkeville. This deprived us of the use of the railroad, and rendered it impracticable to procure from Danville the supplies ordered to meet us at points of our march. Nothing could be obtained from the adjacent country. Our route to the Roanoke was therefore changed, and the march directed upon Farmville, where supplies were ordered from Lynchburg. The change of route threw the troops over the roads pursued by the artillery and wagon trains west of the railroad, which impeded our advance and embarrassed our movements. On the morning of the 6th General Longstreet's corps reached Rice's Station on the Lynchburg railroad. It was followed by the commands of Generals R. H. Anderson, Ewell, and Gordon, with orders to close upon it as fast as the progress of the trains would permit or as they could be directed on roads farther west. General Anderson, commanding Pickett's and B. R. Johnson's divisions, became disconnected with Mahone's division, forming the rear of Longstreet. The enemy's cavalry penetrated the line of march through the interval thus left, and attacked the wagon-train moving toward Farmville. This caused serious delay in the march of the center and rear of the column, and enabled the enemy to mass upon their flank. After successive attacks Anderson's and Ewell's corps were captured or driven from their position. The latter general, with both of his division commanders, Kershaw and Custis Lee, and his brigadiers, were taken prisoners. Gordon, who all the morning, aided by General W. F. Lee's cavalry, had checked the advance of the enemy on the road from Amelia Springs and protected the trains, became exposed to his combined assaults, which he bravely resisted and twice repulsed; but the cavalry having been withdrawn to another part of the line of march, . . . the enemy, massing heavily on his [Gordon's] front and both flanks, renewed the attack about 6 P. M., and drove him from the field in much confusion. The army continued its march during the night, and every effort was made to reorganize the divisions which had been shattered by the day's operations; but, the men being depressed by fatigue and hunger, many threw away their arms, while others followed the wagon-trains and embarrassed their progress. On the morning of the 7th rations were issued to the troops as they passed Farmville, but the safety of the trains requiring

their removal upon the approach of the enemy all could not be supplied. The army, reduced to two corps under Longstreet and Gordon, moved steadily on the road to Appomattox Court House; thence its march was ordered by Campbell Court House, through Pittsylvania, toward Danville. The roads were wretched and the progress slow. By great efforts the head of the column reached Appomattox Court House on the evening of the 8th, and the troops were halted for rest. The march was ordered to be resumed at 1 A. M. on the 9th. Fitz Lee, with the cavalry, supported by Gordon, was ordered to drive the enemy from his front, wheel to the left, and cover the passage of the trains, while Longstreet, who from Rice's Station had formed the rear-guard, should close up and hold the position. Two battalions of artillery and the ammunition wagons were directed to accompany the army, the rest of the artillery and wagons to move toward Lynchburg. In the early part of the night the enemy attacked Walker's artillery train near Appomattox Station on the Lynchburg railroad, and were repelled. Shortly afterward their cavalry dashed toward the Court House, till halted by our line. During the night there were indications of a large force massing on our left and front. Fitz Lee was directed to ascertain its strength, and to suspend his advance till daylight if necessary. About 5 A. M., on the 9th, with Gordon on his left, he moved forward and opened the way. A heavy force of the enemy was discovered opposite Gordon's right, which, moving in the direction of Appomattox Court House, drove back the left of the cavalry and threatened to cut off Gordon from Longstreet, his cavalry at the same time threatening to envelop his left flank. Gordon withdrew across the Appomattox River, and the cavalry advanced on the Lynchburg road and became separated from the army. Learning the condition of affairs on the lines, where I had gone under the expectation of meeting General Grant to learn definitely the terms he proposed in a communication received from him on the 8th, in the event of the surrender of the army, I requested a suspension of hostilities until these terms could be arranged. In the interview which occurred with General Grant in compliance with my request, terms having been agreed on, I surrendered that portion of the Army of Northern Virginia which was on the field, with its arms, artillery, and wagon-trains, the officers and men to be paroled, retaining their side-arms and private effects. I deemed this course the best under all the circumstances by which we were surrounded. On the morning of the 9th, according to the reports of the ordnance officers, there were 7892 organized infantry with arms, with an average of 75 rounds of ammunition per man; the artillery, though reduced to 63 pieces with 93 rounds of ammunition, was sufficient. These comprised all the supplies of ordnance that could be relied on in the State of Virginia. I have no accurate report of the cavalry, but believe it did not exceed 2100 effective men. The enemy was more than five times our numbers. If we could have forced our way one day longer it would have been at a great sacrifice of life, and at its end I did not see how a surrender could have been avoided. We had no subsistence for man or horse, and it could not be gathered in the country. The supplies ordered to Pamplin's Station from Lynchburg could not reach us, and the men, deprived of food and sleep for many days, were worn out and exhausted."



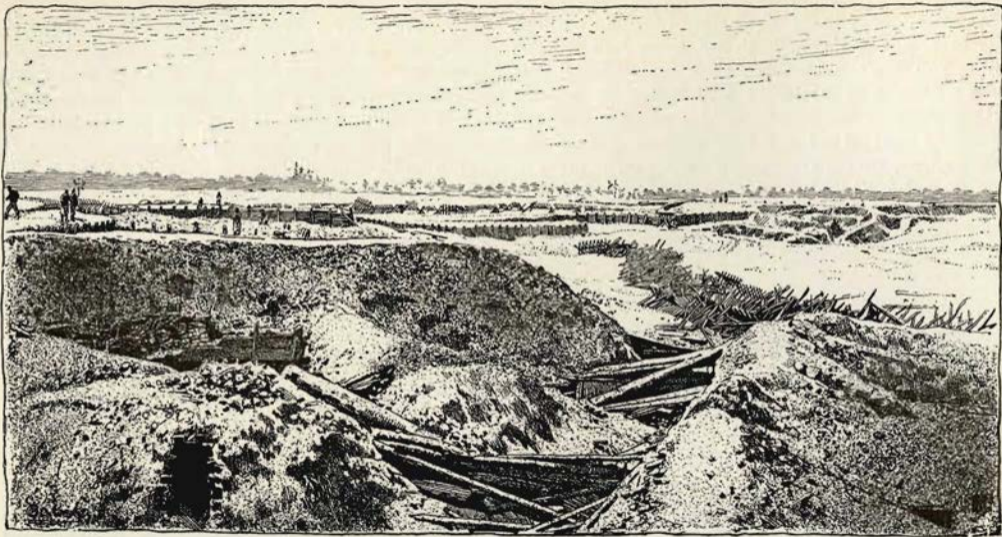
UNION ARTILLERY AT PETERSBURG PROTECTED BY MANTELETS. FROM A WAR-TIME SKETCH.



MAP OF THE BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS.



VIEW ON THE CONFEDERATE LINES COVERING PETERSBURG. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.



INTERIOR VIEW ON THE CONFEDERATE WORKS COVERING PETERSBURG. FROM A WAR-TIME PHOTOGRAPH.



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL RICHARD H. ANDERSON, C. S. A.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.



CAPTURE OF GUNS AND THE DESTRUCTION OF A CONFEDERATE WAGON-TRAIN AT PAINEVILLE, APRIL 5, BY DAVIES'S CAVALRY BRIGADE OF CROOK'S DIVISION. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.



THE CAPTURE OF EWELL'S CORPS, APRIL 6, 1865. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.





CONFEDERATES DESTROYING THE RAILROAD FROM APPOMATTOX TOWARD LYNCHBURG, AND ARTILLERYMEN DESTROYING GUN-CARRIAGES, AT NIGHTFALL, SATURDAY, APRIL 8. FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.