

REAR-GUARD FIGHTING AT SAVAGE'S STATION,
AND THE ENGAGEMENT, THE FOLLOWING DAY (JUNE 30), AT WHITE OAK BRIDGE.



WOODBURY'S BRIDGE ACROSS THE CHICKAHOMINY. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH, 1862.)

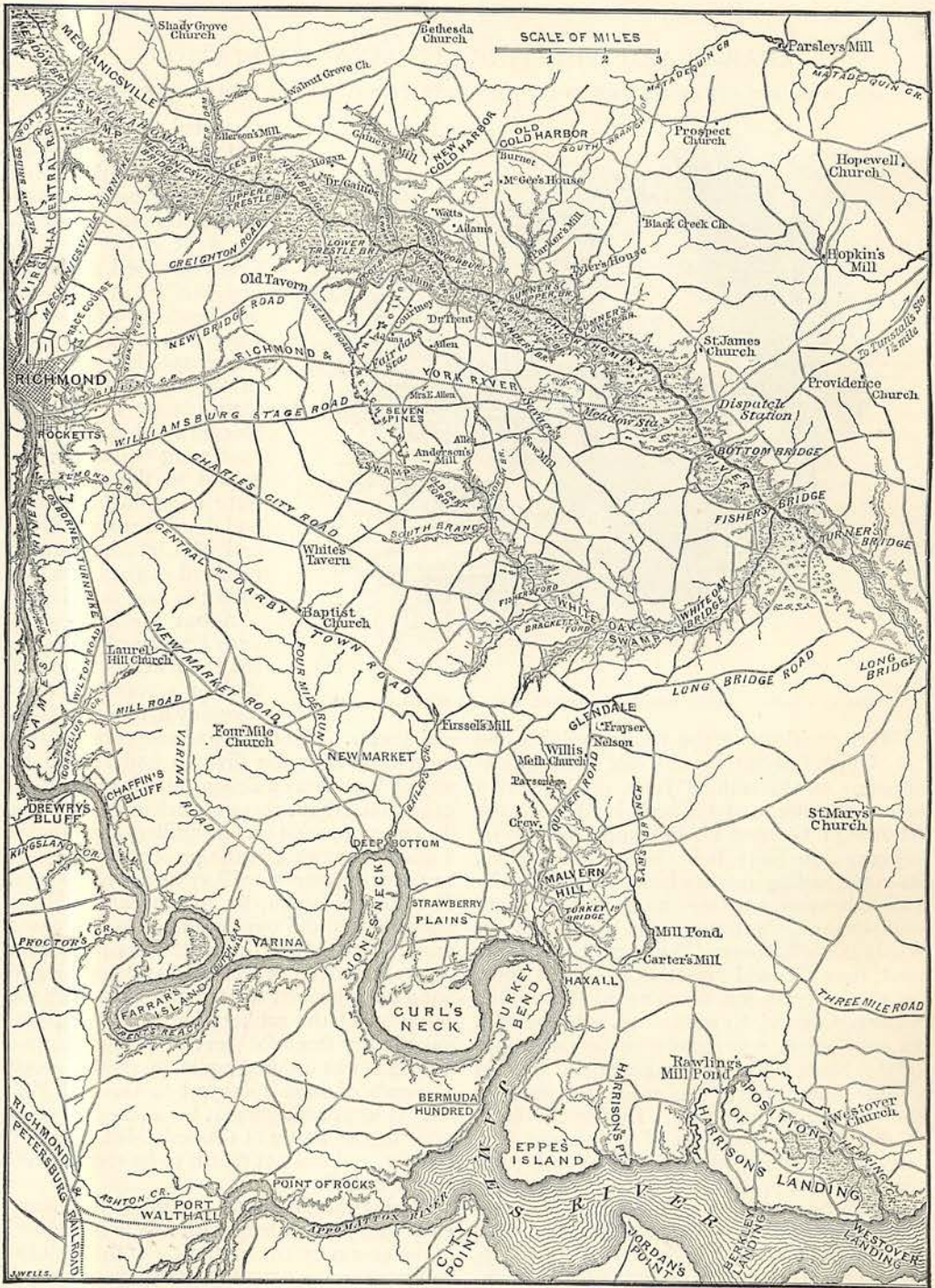
THE positions of the troops holding the Union line on the south side of the Chickahominy on the 26th of June, 1862 (the day before the battle of Gaines's Mill), were the following: General W. F. Smith's division of my corps, the Sixth, held the right of the line, its right resting on the hill overlooking the Chickahominy, and my other division, General Slocum's, was next on the left. Going towards the left, General Sumner's corps came next, then General Heintzelman's, and then, on the extreme left reaching to White Oak Swamp, General Keyes's corps. On the 26th an epaulement was thrown up by the troops of the Sixth Corps in a wheat-field in front of our lines, which was ready for guns on the morning of the 27th. During the night of the 26th five batteries of the reserve artillery, under the command of Colonel (now General) Getty, were collected in rear of the epaulement, ready to take position in it and commence a heavy artillery fire on the enemy's line in front of Golding's Farm. (See map, page 453. Golding's is near the Chickahominy on the extreme right of the Union intrenched line.) Five days' rations, cold tea in the cantens, etc., etc., had been issued, so that everything was ready to follow up the

projected bombardment, which it was presumed would commence on the morning of the 27th. But on the evening of the 26th the fight at Beaver Dam Creek occurred, and General McClellan called at my headquarters on his way to confer with General Porter as to his operations of the next day. I was then absent at General Slocum's headquarters, conferring with him in regard to the attack we were expecting to make, and therefore missed General McClellan, so that I received no word from him until the next morning.

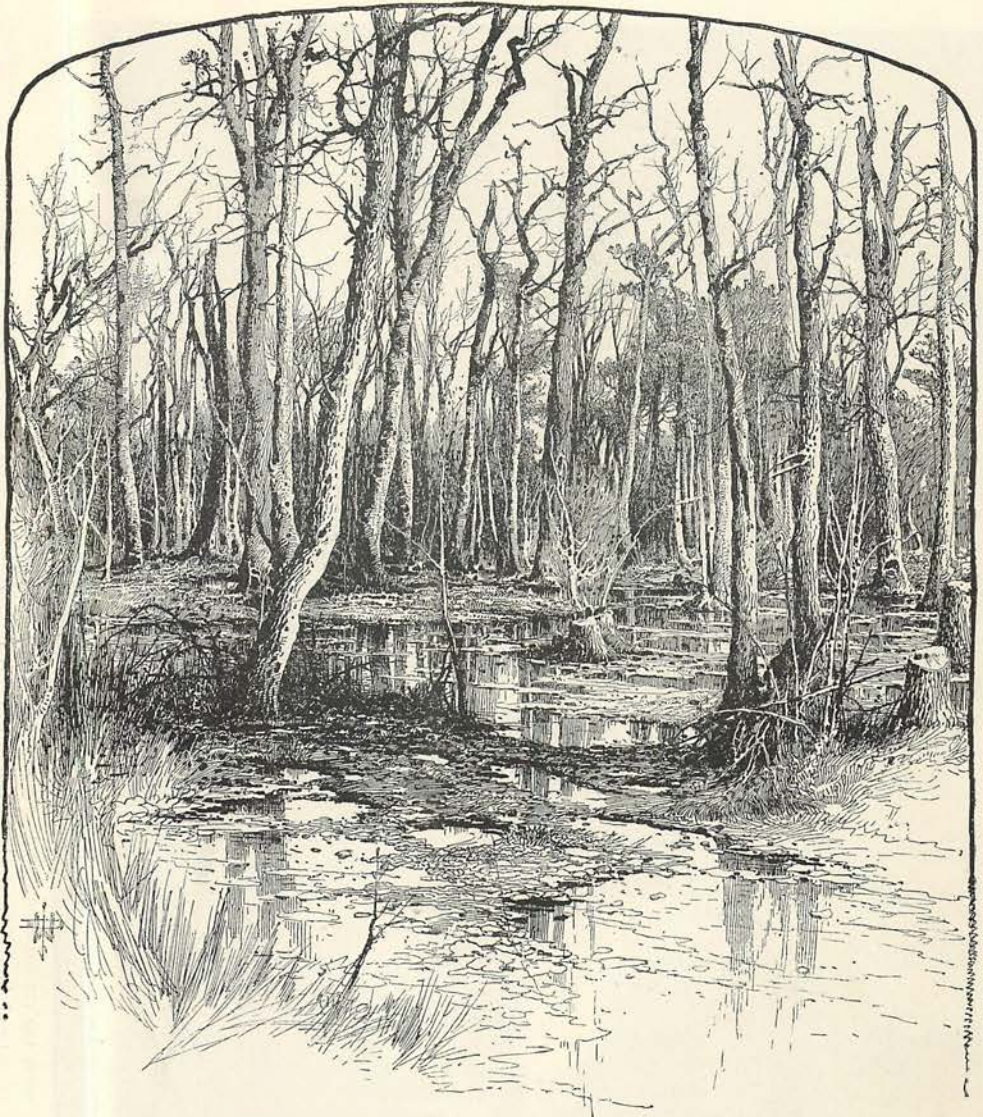
About daylight on the 27th I received orders to send General Slocum's division across the Chickahominy to report to Gen-

eral Porter. This order was countermanded a short time after the division had started by way of Woodbury's Bridge, and it returned to its station. About 10:30 o'clock in the morning the enemy opened on our artillery with theirs, doubtless unaware of the presence of the five batteries of reserve artillery mentioned above. The fire was kept up for an hour, and as theirs slackened, so did ours, until both sides ceased firing. Two hours before the bombardment began I received orders not to do anything to bring on a general engagement, and after the cessation of the artillery fire everything was quiet in our front for several hours. At two o'clock I was ordered again to send General Slocum's division to report to General Porter. It went accordingly, became engaged at once in the battle of Gaines's Mill, lost very heavily, and did not return to its station until after nightfall.

During the afternoon several of the heavy guns with us were used with effect on columns of the enemy on the north side of the Chickahominy moving against General Porter, causing them to fall back and seek some other route of attack. The range was about two and one-half miles. About sundown General Hancock's brigade, which held the extreme right of Gen-



REGION OF THE SEVEN DAYS' FIGHTING.

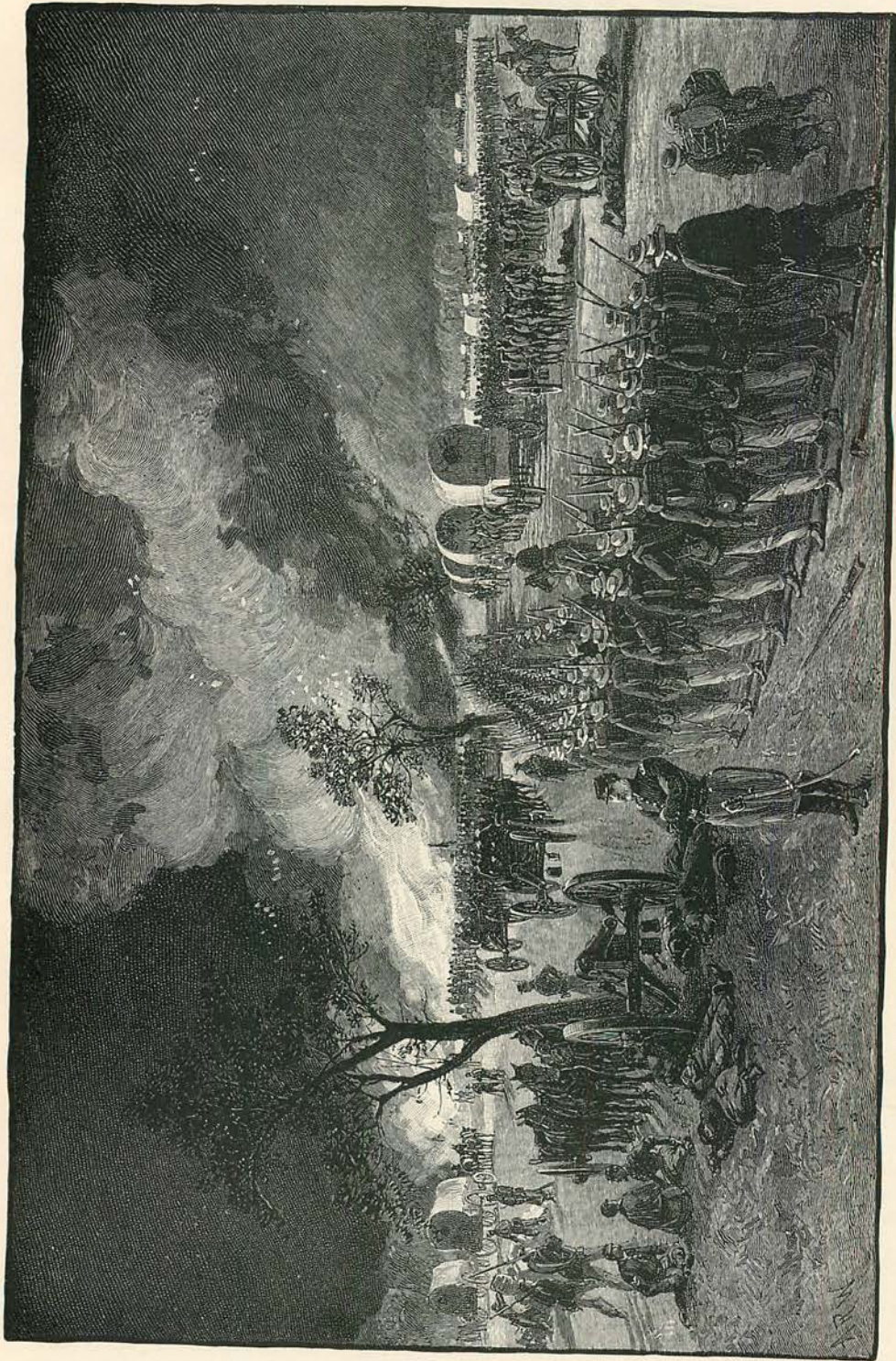


A SAMPLE OF THE CHICKAHOMINY SWAMP. (FROM PHOTOGRAPH, 1862.)

eral Smith's line, was attacked furiously by the enemy. It was nearly dark when the fight began, and the combatants were not fifty yards apart; but General Hancock was, as usual, equal to the occasion, and the enemy was driven back. This fight was preceded by a severe artillery fire from the enemy, which, however, was soon silenced. This day's operations of Smith's division were known as "the action at Golding's Farm."

The position held by General Smith's division was about one and one-half miles from the Gaines's Mill field; and possibly because the interval was filled with dense timber, not a gun of the Gaines's Mill battle was heard by the troops in our vicinity.

The next morning, the 28th of June, General Smith's division was moved to the rear and left of the clearing of Golding's Farm; General Slocum's division remaining to the rear and right of Smith, where it had taken position the night before. During this retrograde movement the enemy kept up a lively cannonade from the left, front, and right, doing wonderfully little harm. That evening the corps commanders were assembled at McClellan's headquarters at the Trent house. The commanding general announced to us his purpose to begin a movement to the James River on the next day, and each corps commander was furnished with a map on which were laid



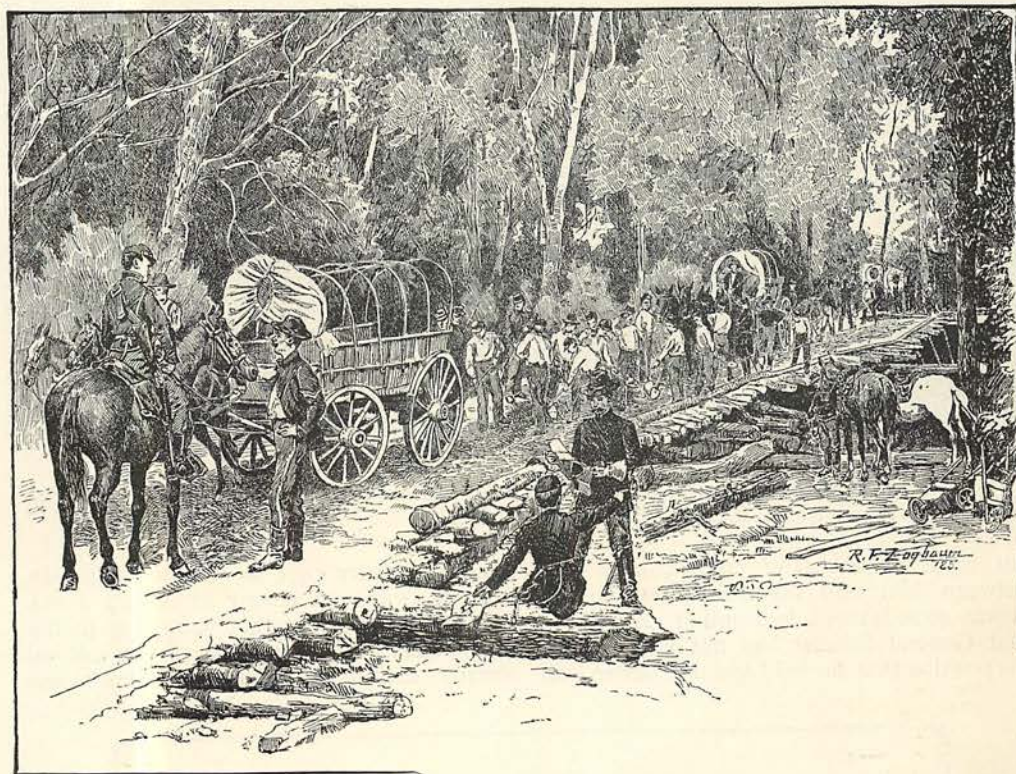
THE RETREAT FROM THE CHICKAHOMINY. (FROM A SKETCH MADE ON THE FIELD AT THE TIME BY A. R. WAUD.)

[The scene is near McClellan's headquarters at Dr. Trent's farm, before daylight on Sunday, June 29; the Sixth Corps (Franklin's) is falling back; the fires are from the burning of commissary stores and forage; the artillery in position covers the approaches from the Chickahominy, the artillerymen resting underneath the guns; the 11th regiment in the middle ground is the 16th New York, who wore straw hats in this campaign, and were, partly in consequence, such conspicuous targets for the enemy that in the Seven Days' fighting they lost 228 men.—EDITHOK.]

down the positions that the respective corps were to hold until the next evening, when all the troops remaining near their present positions were to move across the White Oak Swamp *en route* for the James. The assembly broke up about two o'clock in the morning, and each corps commander had all the information necessary to determine his action for the 29th, should nothing unforeseen occur.

The relative position of the Sixth Corps

the White Oak bridge than the intrenched line in front of Fair Oaks and Golding's Farm (described above), and was nearly parallel. It was much shorter than the old line, its left reaching nearly to the swamp, and its right to the brink of the Chickahominy hills. This second line was about three-quarters of a mile in front of Savage's Station on the York River Railroad, which had been the depot for unloading and storing supplies for the troops that held the old line, and where had been



UNION TROOPS BUILDING THE CORDUROY APPROACHES TO GRAPEVINE BRIDGE. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH, 1862.)

[It was mainly by this bridge that the Union troops were withdrawn the night after the battle of Gaines's Mill.]

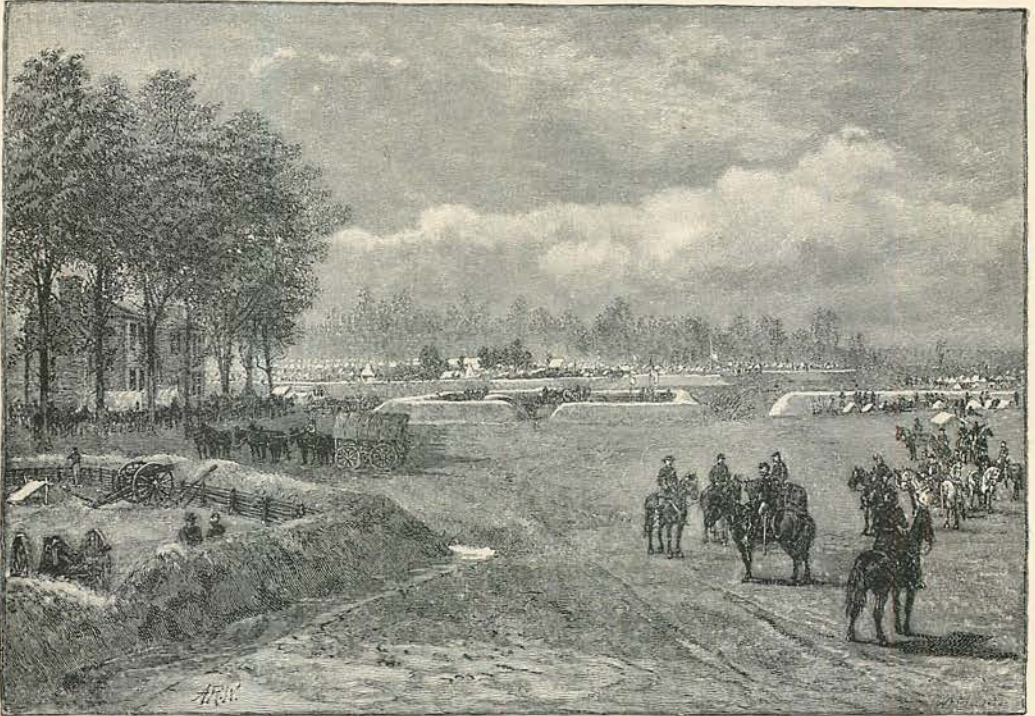
was not changed. General Smith's division was still to have its right on the Chickahominy, extending down the river, where it was to touch the left of General McCall's division, which, however, played no part in holding the line on June 29th, as it crossed White Oak Swamp early in the day.

General Slocum's division was to be at Savage's Station, in reserve. Then came General Sumner's corps and General Heintzelman's. General Keyes's was to cross the White Oak Swamp at once. General Porter's corps had already crossed the swamp, and was under orders to press forward to a position on the James River.

This new line was about two miles nearer

gathered in tents two thousand five hundred sick and wounded, most of the latter from Gaines's Mill.

General Slocum's and General Smith's divisions both moved to their new positions before daylight of Sunday, the 29th of June — the day of the fighting at Savage's Station. As General Slocum's division had suffered so severely in the battle of Gaines's Mill, and had not yet recovered from its exhaustion, General McClellan ordered it to cross White Oak Swamp at once, and it accordingly left its position. Through some inadvertence I was not informed of this change of plan; so when I joined General Smith early in the morning, I found him in his proper position,

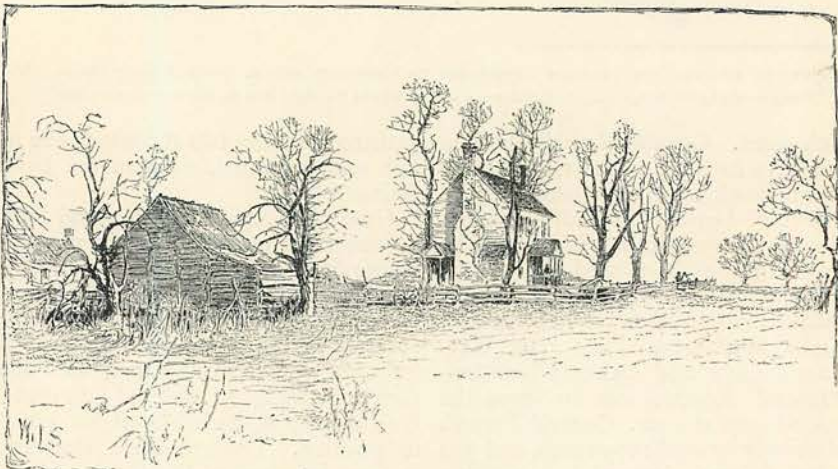


THE SECOND LINE OF UNION WORKS AT FAIR OAKS STATION, LOOKING SOUTH. (FROM SKETCH MADE ON THE FIELD BY A. R. WAUD.)

[On the day of the battle of Gaines's Mill the Confederates made demonstrations along the front of McClellan's left wing, of which Fair Oaks Station was the center. After the battle of Seven Pines this position had been greatly strengthened, as may be seen by comparing the above picture with the sketches of the same position in the *May CENTURY*.—EDITOR.]

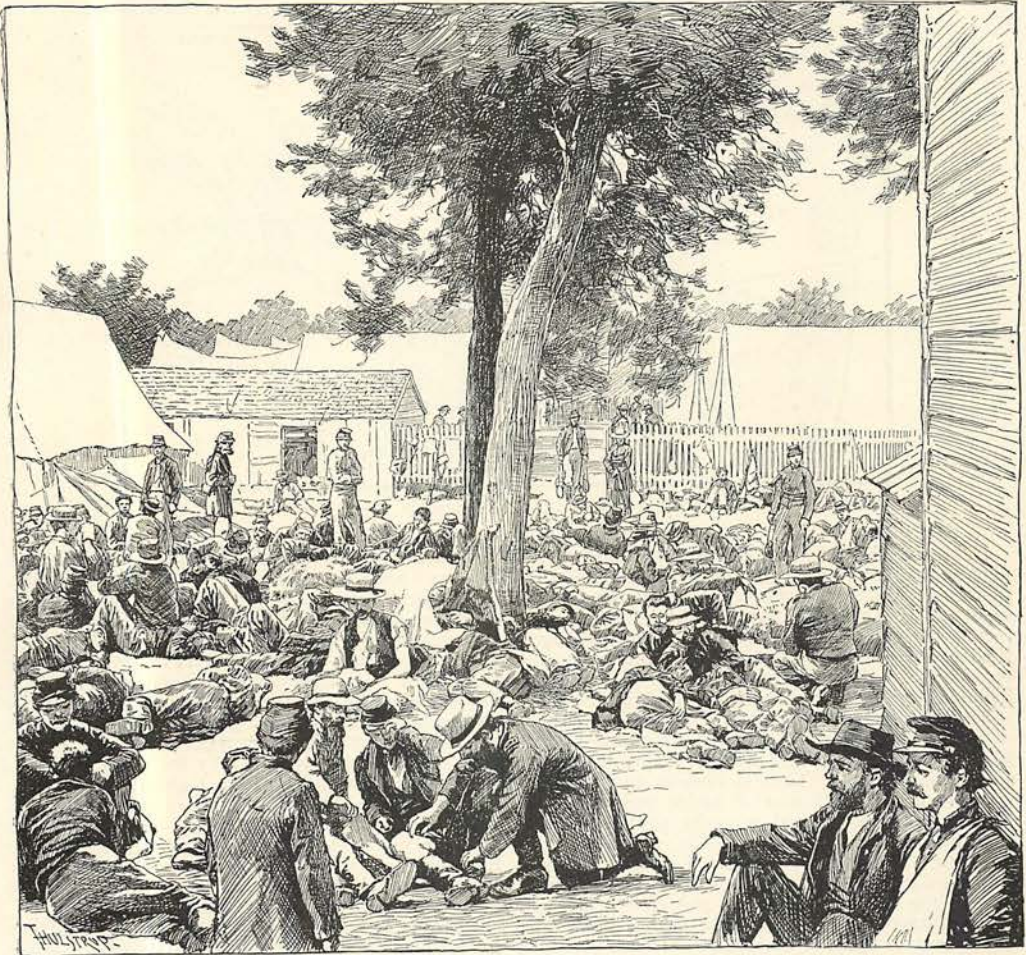
but with an interval of more than a mile between him and the troops on the left. It was soon learned, by sending out cavalry, that General Sumner had not moved from the position that he held the day before, and

was, at the very time we learned this fact, engaged with the enemy at Allen's Farm. It was also apparent that straggling parties of the enemy were in front of the interval already mentioned. These circumstances



DR. TRENT'S FARM-HOUSE. (PRESENT ASPECT.)

[General McClellan's headquarters were in a tent under the two trees at the right. The Chickahominy lies to the left behind the house, and is a little more than half a mile distant.—EDITOR.]

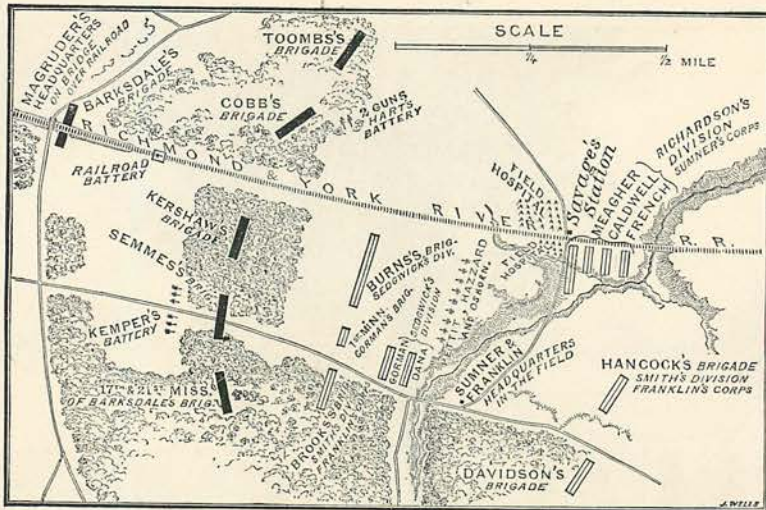


FIELD HOSPITAL AT SAVAGE'S STATION, AFTER THE BATTLE OF GAINES'S MILL. (FROM PHOTOGRAPH.)

showed an alarming state of things, and General Smith and I rode over to Savage's Station to learn something of the positions of other troops. We found no troops in the vicinity except General Meagher's brigade and the Fifteenth Massachusetts Infantry, which had been sent to the station to destroy the stores that had to be abandoned. I at once wrote General Sumner, describing the situation, and informing him that I should move General Smith's division to Savage's Station, the vicinity of which offered a good fighting position, and advising him to bring his corps to that place. He answered the note at once, telling me that he was then engaged with the enemy,

and that as soon as things were quiet he would join me with his corps. Soon after I had sent to General Sumner General Heintzelman rode up, and I told him what I had done. He approved, and said that he would also join us at the station with his corps. He afterwards changed his mind, however, and instead of halting in the wood in front of the station, as we naturally supposed he would, he marched off towards White Oak bridge, hidden from us by the woods, and crossed the swamp, so that we saw him no more that day, supposing, nevertheless, until we were attacked by the enemy, that his troops were in position on a part of our front.* General

* General Heintzelman in his report says: "The whole open space near Savage's was crowded with troops — more than I supposed could be brought into action judiciously." He then states that an aide of the commanding general was with him to point out the road for his crossing. "I ordered the whole of my corps to take this road, with the exception of Osborn's and Bramhall's batteries." These were turned over to General Smith's division.—W. B. F.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE AT SAVAGE'S STATION.

[The order in which the Union troops entered the fight has by request been described for *THE CENTURY* by General William W. Burns, in a letter dated Governor's Island, May 10, 1885, in which he says:

"The enemy appearing in the woods west of Savage's Station, General Sumner sent me forward to occupy the space between the Williamsburg road and the railroad. Thinking that two regiments of my brigade would suffice, I led them forward to the fences, at the edge of the woods on the west side of the clearing, about five hundred yards distant from the ravine on the east side of the clearing. General Sumner had his headquarters east of this wooded ravine and could not observe what was occurring on the west side of the open field.

"When I reached the fences I sent skirmishers through the belt of trees, and found the enemy advancing on the Williamsburg road and on the railroad, where General Lee's famous railroad monitor was slowly approaching. I had to throw back the right company of the right regiment, the Seventy-second Pennsylvania, to rake the monitor. Then I found my two regiments not enough to extend across between the Williamsburg road and the railroad. I sent an aide in haste after my other two regiments, informing General Sumner of the situation. The First Minnesota, of Gorman's brigade, being most handy, was first sent, my two reserve regiments following. While placing the First Minnesota on the left to extend across the Williamsburg road, the battle began. My right flank swept the railroad monitor, which had advanced to the edge of the woods, and it ran back. The battle moved to my left and I discovered that our works east of Seven Pines had been evacuated by Heintzelman. I threw back the left flank of the First Minnesota across the Williamsburg road and sent the Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania of my brigade to prolong the left, to prevent the turning movement of the enemy; at the same time informing General Sumner of the conditions in front. He would not believe that Heintzelman had withdrawn until I sent my last mounted man, urging and demanding reinforcements. The Seventy-first Pennsylvania (also called the First California), of my brigade, arriving, I placed it behind the center of my line where a gap had been made by extending the First Minnesota to the left. General Franklin sent General Brooks's brigade to the left of my line to check the turning movement of the enemy, and Sumner, when

he realized that Heintzelman had withdrawn, sent Gorman's and Dana's brigades to my support in front.

"General Sumner formed the Eighty-eighth New York, of Meagher's brigade, and the Fifth New Hampshire, of Caldwell's brigade, for a charge. A mass of men came up in my rear in full yell. I halted the crowd and asked for their commander. 'I am Captain Quinlan of the Eighty-eighth New York, sir,' exclaimed an officer. I got them into line (about two hundred and fifty men), facing up the Williamsburg road, which was raked by the grape and canister of the enemy's batteries. I gave the command, Double quick—charge! They went in with a hurrah, and the enemy's battery fell back. General McClellan mistakenly gave the credit of that gallant charge to the Sixty-ninth New York. It seems that the Fifth New Hampshire halted before the charge which General Sumner had put in motion reached me.

"I was shot in the face with a minie-ball at the time the enemy broke through the gap in the center. There we had a hand-to-hand encounter, which determined the day in our favor. At nightfall I relieved the first line, its ammunition being exhausted, with the Seventy-first Pennsylvania, the Fifteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, and the Eighty-second New York. My report of the Seven Days' fighting was made at Harrison's Bar in hot July. I was prostrated with my wound, malaria, and twenty-eight days of constant strain, and was unable to write or to collect my thoughts. The battle at Glendale on the 30th of June, the next day after that of Savage's Station, was saved by my brigade, which kept the enemy from piercing the center of the Army of the Potomac; but, like the instance above, history has given the credit to 'General Misunderstanding,' who, in history, fights most battles.—William W. Burns."

Parts of Hazzard's, Pettit's, and Osborn's batteries were engaged on the Union side.

The Confederate infantry north of the railroad (Cobb's, Toombs's, and Anderson's brigades) did not take an active part in the battle. Anderson's brigade is not shown, its position being outside the northern bounds of the map.

The Confederate artillery engaged comprised Kemper's battery, two guns of Hart's battery, and Lieutenant Barry's "32-pounder rifled gun mounted on a rail-car, and protected from cannon-shot by a sloping roof, in front, covered with plates of iron, through which a port-hole had been pierced."—EDITOR.]

Smith's division arrived at the station about noon or shortly after, and took position on the left in a wood. General Sumner's corps, consisting of General Sedgwick's and General Richardson's divisions, arrived about 2 P. M.

There was a cleared field of several acres on the north side of the railroad which was

eral Heintzelman's troops to be; on the left of the Williamsburg road was timber also, and General Smith's division was in position therein. Sumner's corps took position in the clearing between the Williamsburg road and the railroad. It consisted of two divisions of infantry, Sedgwick's and Richardson's. Burns's



BATTLE OF SAVAGE'S STATION. (FROM A SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME BY A. R. WAUD.)

[The 2500 sick and wounded in the field hospitals, and attendants were left behind when the army fell back from Savage's Station, during the night following the engagement. The explosion on the railway is of an ordnance train. Other ordnance trains were set on fire and were run back to Bottom's bridge where they plunged into the Chickahominy.—EDITOR.]

occupied by a camp hospital, containing about twenty-five hundred sick and wounded men. The field was filled with hospital tents laid out in rows, each tent containing fifteen or twenty men on comfortable, clean beds, with the necessary surgeons and attendants. South of the railroad, and between it and the Williamsburg road, was another clearing, east of which was a ravine running obliquely across the railroad, its edges skirted by trees, and the ravine itself filled with undergrowth. This clearing was nearly square, and was about one-third or one-half mile in length and breadth. In front of the ravine were some small hills which made good shelter for the troops; and west of the clearing was timber, where we supposed Gen-

eral Sedgwick's division was in front, Sedgwick's other two brigades being just behind. The three brigades of Richardson's division, Meagher having joined him, were farther to the rear, but more to the right. Three batteries of field artillery, Hazzard's, Pettit's, and Osborn's, were posted towards the left, near the front of the ravine.

The day was hot and sultry and wore away slowly as we waited either to be attacked or at nightfall to start for White Oak bridge. Large quantities of all kinds of quartermasters' and other stores, partly in cars, were burning at the station, and at intervals shells would burst as the fire reached them, jarring the nerves of the tired and expectant men.



THE ARTILLERY ENGAGEMENT AT WHITE OAK BRIDGE. (BY A. R. WAUD, AFTER A SKETCH MADE BY HIM AT THE TIME.)

[Ascending the north slope the road bends to the left, the upper side being skirted by woods along the edge of which the Confederate artillery took position.—EDITOR.]

Shortly before 4 o'clock General Sedgwick and I rode over to the hospital to visit some of our wounded friends, whose condition was found to be as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances. From the hospital we started to make a call upon General Heintzelman, whose supposed position has already been described. As we rode over the open field we saw a group of men come out of a wood on the north of the railroad, but some distance from the place where we expected to find Heintzelman. I thought they were our men, but General Sedgwick looked at them more closely, stopped, and exclaimed: "Why, those men are rebels!" We then turned back in as dignified a manner as the circumstances would permit. But we had hardly started when they opened on us with a field-piece, keeping up a lively and uncomfortable fire. A second piece soon joined the first and they kept up the fire until they were silenced by our batteries. This ludicrous incident prevented what might have been a disastrous surprise for our whole force. A few minutes afterwards, before we had reached our troops, the signal-officers reported the approach of a force of infantry and a railroad car upon which was a rifled cannon, from the direction of Richmond. This artillery car halted in a cut of the railroad a little distance in front of the station, and at once began to shell the troops in the open field, and so about five o'clock the fight was begun. I immediately sought Gen-

eral Sumner, to inform him of the situation and get instructions. He had been fighting at the head of his corps during the morning, and being much exhausted, was asleep when I reached his headquarters. I awoke him, and in a short time he had ordered two regiments of General Burns's brigade to attack at a point in the timber in front near the Williamsburg road, where the enemy's infantry had by this time appeared. These regiments entered the wood, and before they became engaged were joined by the First Minnesota Regiment. General Burns extended his line to the vicinity of the railroad, so that its center was necessarily weak. During this movement the enemy's artillery played with effect upon our troops, but was answered and finally silenced by the three batteries on our side already mentioned.

The enemy made the infantry attack with great fury, and pierced the center of General Burns's line. General Burns was wounded but remained on the field. At this time General Sumner placed himself in front of two regiments and waved his hat. With a cheer they moved forward at double time to the endangered place in General Burns's line, enabling him to rectify it and drive the enemy from his front. Several other regiments joined General Burns's line at about the same time, but the fight was over not long after the charge, and the enemy was driven from the wood. A Confederate battery placed near the Williamsburg road was compelled to withdraw in haste. On

the left General Brooks's brigade of General Smith's division, Sixth Corps, moved forward, with its right on the Williamsburg road, against a force of the enemy that was moving south of that road in the wood skirting the open field. It steadily drove back the enemy, meeting with heavy loss, particularly in the Fifth Vermont Regiment, and darkness ended the fight. General Brooks was wounded in the leg, but did not leave the field. Hancock's and Davidson's brigades were posted some distance to the rear to repel an anticipated attack from the right and rear, but were not engaged. When the fight was over, our troops held the contested ground, and their behavior throughout the fight had been admirable.

The Confederate force engaged in this fight was commanded by General J. B. Magruder, and consisted of Semmes's and Kershaw's brigades, Kemper's battery; and two regiments of Barksdale's brigade opposite our left. Cobb's division and two guns of Hart's battery were north of the railroad to the right of our line. Cobb's infantry was not engaged.

About a half hour after the fight was ended, I suggested to General Sumner that if he had no objection I would carry out the commanding general's orders, so far as I was concerned, and cross the White Oak Swamp with General Smith's division. We were then on the field. His answer was, "No, General, you shall not go, nor will I go—I never leave a victorious field. Why! if I had twenty thousand more men, I would crush this rebellion." I then told him that I would show him a dispatch from General McClellan directing that all of the troops should cross during that night. With some difficulty a candle was found and lighted, and the general read the dispatch. After reading it he exclaimed, with some excitement, "General McClellan did not know the circumstances when he wrote that note. He did not know that we would fight a battle and gain a victory." I was at my wit's end. I knew that General McClellan's arrangements did anticipate a fight exactly like that just over, and that unless the whole force was on the other side of the swamp by the next morning, his movement might be seriously delayed. Moreover, I believed that if we staid where we were, the enemy would be upon us in force enough to defeat us utterly on the next morning, endangering the remainder of the army. Yet, by all military usage I was under General Sumner's orders. At this juncture General Smith asked me to introduce Lieutenant Berry, his aide-de-camp, to General Sumner. After the introduction, Lieutenant Berry told General Sumner that he had seen General McClellan only a short time before, that he knew there

had been a fight, and fully expected that all of the troops would cross the swamp that night. General Sumner was convinced by this statement, and with great reluctance permitted me to continue the movement towards the swamp, he following immediately after.

General Smith's division crossed the White Oak bridge about three o'clock on the morning of June 30th, and went into position on the left of the road leading from the bridge

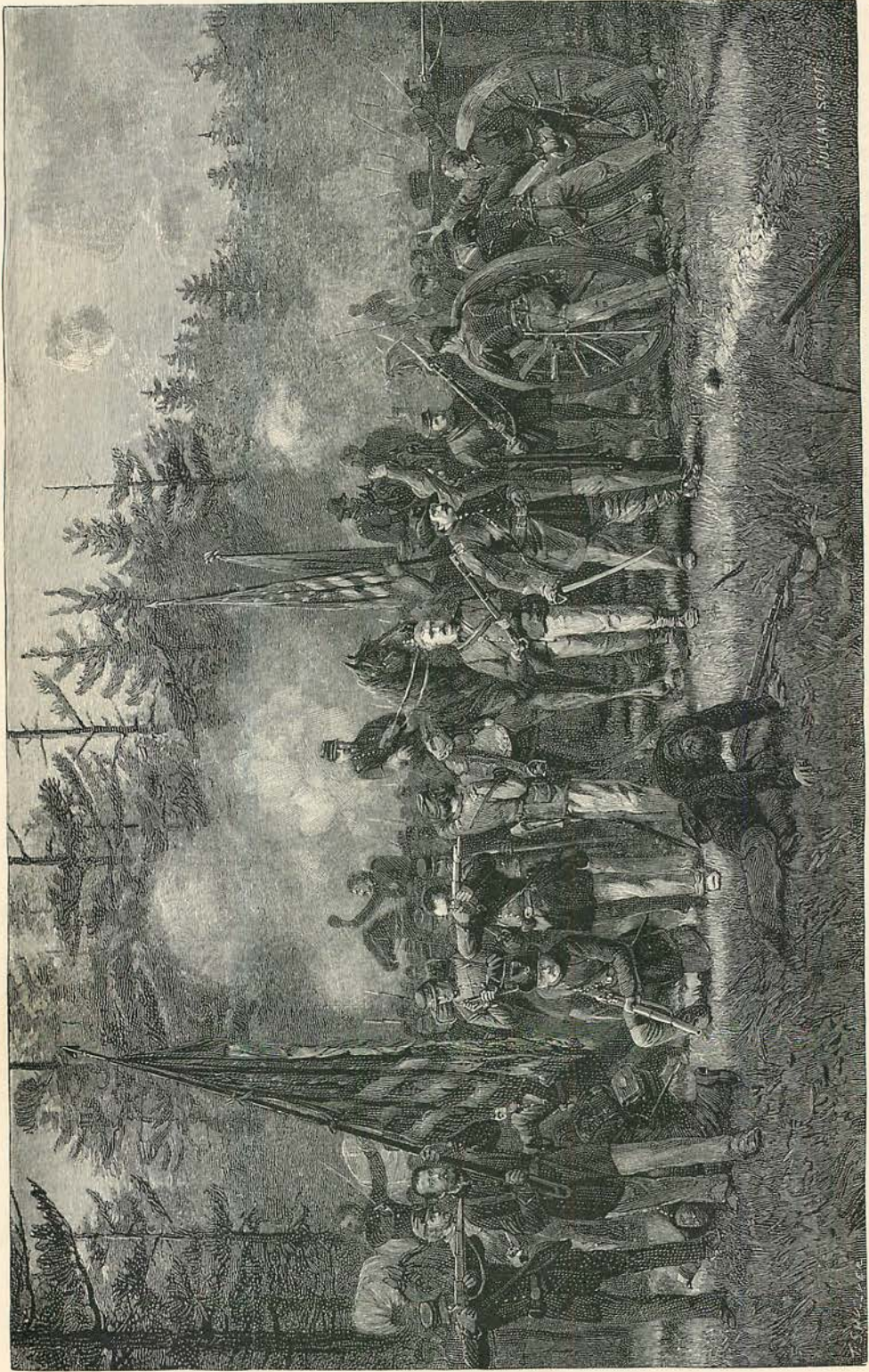


MAJOR-GENERAL W. F. SMITH.

towards the James River. The batteries of the division were already there in position. It faced about so that its left rested upon the road, the division bearing southward from the road. At the same time I reported to McClellan at his headquarters, which were in a clearing not far from the crossing.

The rear of Sumner's corps, Richardson's division, crossed the bridge at ten o'clock in the morning, destroyed it, and took position some distance on Smith's left, nearly in line with him. Both divisions guarded the crossing.

After the fight at Savage's Station was over, Hazzard's battery of Richardson's division was unhitched, its captain not supposing there was to be any further movement that night, and the men and horses went to sleep, as usual when there was opportunity, which was not often in those days. The division, as has been told, moved off, and by accident no notice of the movement was sent to Captain Hazzard. On the next morning he heard reveillé sounded by drums and trumpets from positions that he knew our troops did not hold the evening before. Everything in his vicinity was quiet. He took in the situation at once. He had been left behind, and the enemy might be upon him at any moment. He had the battery quietly hitched up, sent the caissons off in



THE REAR GUARD AT WHITE OAK SWAMP—SHOWING GENERAL W. F. SMITH'S DIVISION. (DRAWN BY JULIAN SCOTT AFTER HIS PAINTING OWNED BY THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB, NEW YORK.)

advance, and bringing up the rear with two guns ready to open on a pursuing force, started off at a walk. When he was clear of the field he ordered the battery to trot; and without harm arrived at the White Oak bridge at that pace just as General Richardson was destroying it. He crossed in safety. He found on the road many stragglers who were coolly wandering along with no suspicion that they were behind everybody, and he, by his warning, was the means of saving many soldiers from a Richmond prison. The pluck and coolness shown in this exploit of Captain Hazzard were admirable. He was killed the next day while doing excellent work with his battery.

As the result of the dispositions made by the commanding general of the troops (a part of whose operations has just been described) a whole day was gained in getting a large part of the army to the James River without serious opposition, and into a proper defensive position; the enormous trains and heavy artillery had been given a start of twenty-four hours, insuring their safe arrival at the river. The rear of the army also had crossed the White Oak Swamp, leaving the way clear to the James River, while at the same time a strong force was ready to protect the movement during its completion.

On the enemy's side, the slowness of Jackson in getting his force to the south side of the Chickahominy (he only arrived at Savage's Station at three o'clock on the morning of June 30th) prevented us from being defeated in the fight of June 29. The 28th and 29th were occupied by Jackson in disposing of the dead and wounded at Gaines's Mill, and in repairing Grapevine bridge.

On the north (the enemy's) side of White Oak Swamp, the road for more than a quarter of a mile approaches the White Oak bridge through low ground, open to artillery fire from the south (our) side. On the right of the enemy looking to the rear, there were hills covered with thick woods approaching the road, forming good cover for artillery, and making it possible for a large force to gather in the wood unseen from our side. The same range of hills continues up the stream, and approaches quite near it at Brackett's Ford about one mile above White Oak bridge. Both of these crossings were passable for artillery, but the bridges had been destroyed by our troops in the morning, after everything had crossed and before the appearance of the enemy.

On our side of the swamp, the ground rises from the bridge, and the road passes along the right, or east, of a ravine and joins the Long Bridge road about one and a quarter miles from the swamp. On the left of the ravine

was a cleared space about a half mile long in the direction of the swamp and running back about the same distance. At the swamp the clearing was fringed with trees and underbrush, and about half-way up the clearing to the left of the ravine was a small farm-house and some slight out-buildings. On the right of the ravine was a similar clearing, extending from the swamp about a furlong back. All other ground in the vicinity was covered with timber and underbrush. (The troops were disposed as shown on the map, page 470.)

The cleared space at this time had in it many wagons of the train, and Colonel R. O. Tyler's First Connecticut Heavy Artillery, which I ordered to the rear at once. Glad enough would I have been to keep this accomplished officer, with his gallant regiment and heavy guns, but we both knew that he was needed at the James River. At about 10:30 in the morning, as near as I can now recollect, I accompanied General McClellan to the intersection of the Charles City and Quaker roads, about two miles from the White Oak bridge. I found General Slocum's division posted somewhat in rear of the intersection of those roads, and in front of the road leading from Brackett's Ford. A small portion of his infantry and one gun were posted near Brackett's Ford. His division formed the right of the force which later in the day fought the battle of Glendale or Frayser's Farm. The small force at Brackett's Ford defeated an attack at that point, some time during the day.

At the junction of the Charles City and Quaker roads General McClellan had a conference with the corps commanders (Sumner, Heintzelman, and Franklin), and when it was ended he went towards the James River. A short time afterwards I received an order directing me to take charge of the force guarding the White Oak bridge, and I immediately started back. I had gone but a short distance when a bombardment commenced in the direction of the bridge, the severity of which I had never heard equaled in the field. The wood through which I was riding seemed torn to pieces with round shot and exploding shells. But the danger was really greater from falling branches than from the shot, which did small damage.

It appears that Jackson, having left Savage's Station early in the morning, arrived at the vicinity of White Oak bridge about noon, without exciting suspicion of his presence on our part, the whole movement being hidden by the woods. Here, masked by the trees, he massed about thirty guns, which opened simultaneously on the troops in the clearings, and on the rear part of the wagon train, which had not yet started from the clearing where it

had passed the night. The troops immediately got under cover of the wood, except Caldwell's brigade, which was guarding Richardson's batteries. It remained in the open ground, and lost many men, but the effect of the firing was otherwise small, except on the wagon train, which was thrown into some confusion, many of the wagons not being hitched up. These were at first abandoned by the drivers, but nearly all got away during the day. One field-piece was dismounted. The batteries were, however, soon in position to return the enemy's fire, which they did with such effect that many of his guns were silenced. It was here that Captain Hazzard, already mentioned, was mortally wounded, ending a brilliant career with a glorious death. Captain, now General, Ayres, who commanded the artillery of Smith's division, used his guns with excellent effect. One of the enemy's batteries came into view near the bridge, but was forced to retire almost immediately. The bombardment lasted with great severity for about a half hour, when it slackened and gradually fell off, opening again at intervals during the day, but never with its original vigor. A cavalry force which was sent over by the enemy just after the height of the bombardment was forced to retire much faster than it advanced.

The development of our defense of the crossing convinced General Jackson that it would be impossible for him to force it. At any rate, he made no attempt during the day to cross his infantry, unless sending sharpshooters across to pick off our pickets may be so considered. The fight at White Oak bridge was entirely with artillery, there being little musketry firing.

About four o'clock the enemy made a movement to our left, threatening Brackett's Ford, where I knew we were very weak. This was met by Dana's and Sully's brigades of Sedgwick's division, sent by General Sumner when he learned of the danger. There was no further movement in that direction after these troops appeared, and they were returned to General Sumner about five o'clock, in time to do good service at Glendale. Towards sundown, at the request of General Sumner, Caldwell's and Meagher's brigades of Richardson's division were also sent to reinforce him.

No other movement was made by General Jackson's force during the day. Our artillery fired at whatever could be seen on the other side, and was answered by theirs, in what seemed a reluctant manner. When the bombardment began, the mules belonging to an engineer ponton train were being watered at the swamp. The noise stampeded them, and they rushed to the rear, going through one of the regiments of Meagher's brigade, and disabling more men

than were hurt in the brigade during the remainder of the day. The mules were seen no more, and the ponton train was deserted. Captain M. T. (now General) McMahan, of my staff, volunteered to burn the train about five o'clock. It was a plucky thing to do, for the train was under the guns of the enemy, who knew its value as well as we did, and the presumption was that he would open his guns on it. But Captain McMahan got ten volunteers, and the train was soon in flames. He found four mules already harnessed, and brought off in triumph the most valuable wagon with this team.

In the house which has been described as about the middle of the left clearing lived an old man with a young wife and a child about two years old. He came to me about ten o'clock and asked if I thought there would be a fight there that day. I told him that there certainly would be. He then asked when I thought it would begin. I thought in about half an hour. "Then," said he, "I will have time to take my wife and child to my brother, who lives about half a mile down the swamp, and get back before it begins."

"Yes," said I, "but why come back at all?"

"Why," said he, "if I don't come back your men will take all my chickens and ducks." So he departed with his wife and child and in a little while returned. General Smith's headquarters were near this house, so it was a fair target for the enemy. Several shots went through it, and one of them took off the leg of the poor old man, who bled to death in a few minutes. He had sacrificed himself for his poultry.

One of the brigadier-generals of the command during a lull in the firing came to my headquarters, leaving his brigade to take care of itself. Finding his stay too long, I had him sent back to his post, and a short time afterwards I was informed that he had been carried off the field on a stretcher, wounded. I thought it my duty to go to the brigade, and find how things were going with it, and asked General Smith to accompany me. We started out, and almost at once the enemy opened on us with great vigor. I looked back, and found to my horror that all my own and General Smith's staff were following us, and that a large cavalry escort belonging to headquarters was also in the procession. The enemy had evidently taken us for a cavalry regiment. Getting rid of them all, we finally arrived at the right of the brigade unharmed. Making inquiry of a staff-officer about the general, he replied, "Oh, no, sir, he is not wounded, he felt unwell and has gone to the wood to lie down and will soon be back." I turned off in great disgust to return, when another officer, looking as neat and clean as if he had just joined the army, stepped up

with the air of a private secretary of some grand official, and touching his hat, said—"Who shall I say called, sir?" General Smith and I did not hear the last of that expedition for a long time.

During the day a staff-officer of General Smith had explored a road towards James River about two miles in rear of that which the troops at Glendale were to take, and found it practicable. About ten in the evening, considering that my instructions to hold the crossing until nightfall had been obeyed, I sent word to General Heintzelman and General Sumner that I should move to the James River by that road. General Richardson, with French's brigade, was instructed to remain, to deceive the enemy as to our movements by firing field-pieces in the direction of the bridge, and then, after an hour, to march. General Naglee was to follow Smith's division. These instructions were carried out, and the command arrived at the James about daylight. The discovery of this road made the concentration of the troops at Malvern Hill a completed manoeuvre by noon of the 1st of July, and was due to the fertile brain of General Smith, who ordered the exploration.

The military results of the defense of White Oak bridge and the battle of Glendale were: 1, The enemy was repulsed at all points, except in the single case of McCall's division at Glendale, which was overpowered by numbers, after it had captured three of the enemy's colors; 2, The trains and heavy artillery arrived in safety at the James River (except those wagons which were destroyed by the bombardment at White Oak bridge, not exceeding fifty out of more than four thousand), the road along which they passed not having been molested by the enemy; 3, The troops arrived in good time at the river, so that they were all in the positions desired by the commanding general, to await the attack at Malvern Hill, long before that attack was made.

General Jackson in his report intimates that his whole command, consisting of three divisions and D. H. Hill's division of five brigades, were all at White Oak bridge on the 30th of June. He says: "It was soon seen that the enemy occupied such a position beyond a thick intervening wood on the right of the road as enabled him to command the crossing. Captain Wooding's battery was consequently recalled." General Lee says: "Jackson having been unable to force the passage of White Oak Swamp, Longstreet and A. P. Hill were without the expected support" at the battle of Glendale. It must be evident to any military reader that Jackson ought to have known of the existence of Brackett's Ford, only one mile above White Oak bridge, and ought to have

discovered the weakness of our defense at that point. He had troops enough to have attacked the ford and the bridge with forces at both points exceeding ours at the bridge, and the two attacks, to say the least, would have embarrassed us exceedingly. Had he made two attacks simultaneously, the result of the day at Glendale and White Oak bridge might have been different. There may be reasons for his inaction in this matter that I do not understand, but as the record now shows, he seems to have been ignorant of what General Lee expected of him, and badly informed about Brackett's Ford. When he found how strenuous was our defense at the bridge, he should have turned his attention to Brackett's Ford also. A force could have been as quietly gathered there as at the bridge; a strong infantry movement at the ford would have easily overrun our small force there, placing our right at Glendale, held by Slocum's division, in great jeopardy, and turning our force at the bridge by getting between it and Glendale. In fact, it is likely that we would have been defeated on that day had General Jackson done what his great reputation seems to make it imperative that he should have done.

A short time after I separated from General McClellan (as mentioned above) at the junction of the Charles City and Quaker roads, I bade farewell to the Prince de Joinville, who told me that he and his nephews were about to leave us and return to Europe. He had always been very friendly, and now expressed many good wishes for my future. Holding my hand in his, he said, with great earnestness, "General, advise General McClellan to concentrate his army at this point, and fight a battle to-day; if he does, he will be in Richmond to-morrow." I was much impressed by his manner and by what he said, and from the purely military point of view the advice may have been good. But it was impracticable for me to adopt the suggestion. General McClellan was then well on his way to the James River, and I had no right to leave my command. It was impossible to concentrate the army there that day early enough to give battle, and had it been possible to risk a general engagement there, it would have been contrary to General McClellan's views as to his responsibility connected with the safety of the army, views which were actuating him in the very movement then taking place. It is likely from what we know now, that had it been possible to follow the Prince's advice, his military forecast might have proved correct. But no one at that hour could have predicted the paralysis of Jackson's large force in our rear for the whole of that day, nor General Lee's ignorance of McClellan's in-

tentions. Had a general engagement taken place, and had we been defeated, the army would have reached the James River, it is true, but instead of getting there as it did, with its *morale* unharmed, and with slight damage to its men and material, it would have been a disorganized mob, and as an army would have perished miserably. General McClellan believed that the destruction of the Army of the Potomac at that time would have been ruin to our cause, and his actions, for which he alone is responsible, were guided by that belief and by the conviction that at any sacrifice, the preservation of that army, *at that time*, was paramount to every other consideration.

I cannot finish without a word as to the conduct of the men. My experience during the period generally known as "the seven days" was with the Sixth and Second corps. During the whole time between June 26th and July 2d, there was not a night in which the men

did not march almost continually, nor a day on which there was not a fight. I never saw a skulker during the whole time, nor heard one insubordinate word. Some men fell by the wayside, exhausted, and were captured; but their misfortune was due to physical inability to go on. They had no food but that which was carried in their haversacks, and the hot weather soon rendered that uneatable. Sleep was out of the question, and the only rest obtained was while lying down awaiting an attack, or sheltering themselves from shot and shell. No murmur was heard; everything was accepted as the work for which they had enlisted. They had been soldiers less than a year, yet their conduct could not have been more soldierly had they seen ten years of service. No such material for soldiers was ever in the field before, and their behavior in this movement foreshadowed that of the successful veterans of Appomattox.

W. B. Franklin.

THE SEVEN DAYS' FIGHTING ABOUT RICHMOND:

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE BATTLE OF FRAYSER'S FARM (JUNE 30, 1862).*



"GIN'L LONGSTREET'S BODY-SARVANT, SAH, ENDU'IN' DE WAH!"

WHEN General Joseph E. Johnston was wounded at the battle of Seven Pines, and General Lee assumed his new duties as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, General Stonewall Jackson was in the Virginia Valley, and the rest of the Confederate troops were east and north of Richmond in front of General George B. McClellan's army, then encamped about the

Chickahominy River, one hundred and fifteen thousand strong, and preparing for a regular siege of the Confederate capital. The situation required prompt and successful action by General Lee. Very early in June he called about him, on the noted Nine-mile road near

Richmond, all his commanders, and asked each in turn his opinion of the military situation. I had my own views, but did not express them, believing that if they were important it was equally important they should be unfolded privately to the commanding general. The next day I called on General Lee, and suggested my plan for driving the Federal forces away from the Chickahominy. McClellan had a small force at Mechanicsville, and farther back, at Beaver Dam Creek, a considerable portion of his army in a stronghold that was simply unassailable from the front. The banks of Beaver Dam Creek were so steep as to be impassable except on bridges. I proposed an echelon movement, and suggested that Jackson be called down from the Valley, and passed to the rear of the Federal right, in order to turn the position behind Beaver Dam, while the rest of the Confederate forces who were to engage in the attack could cross the Chickahominy at points suitable for the succession in the move, and be ready to attack the Federals as soon as they were thrown from their position. After hearing me, General Lee sent General J. E. B. Stuart on his famous ride around McClellan. The dashing horseman with a strong reconnoitering force of cavalry

* The usual spelling is Frazier or Frazer. The authority for the form here adopted is Captain R. E. Frayser, of Richmond.—ED.