



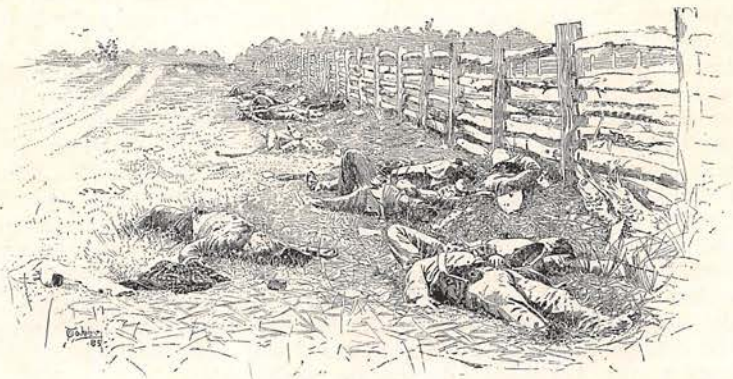
A UNION CHARGE THROUGH THE CORN-FIELD.

HARPER'S FERRY AND SHARPSBURG.

WHEN General Lee began his campaign against Pope I was in command of a division (of three brigades) which was not a part of either of the two corps of the Army of Northern Virginia. I was left on the James for the defense of Richmond, but after the evacuation of Harrison's Landing by the remnants of McClellan's army, the Confederate capital being no longer threatened, I was ordered by the Secretary of War to leave one of my brigades at Richmond, and proceed with the other two to join General Lee in the field. Leaving Daniel's brigade on the James, I marched northward with my old brigade, the strongest and the one which had seen most service, at that time commanded by Colonel Van H. Manning, and with the brigade of General Robert Ransom.

It was our hope that we should overtake General Lee in time to take part in the Second Manassas; but when we reached that field we found it still strewn with the unburied dead of Pope's army, and Lee pushing for the fords of the Upper Potomac. Following him

rapidly, on the night of the 6th of September, my division reached the vicinity of Leesburg, and the next morning crossed the Potomac, at Cheek's Ford, at the mouth of the Monocacy, and about three miles above White's Ford, where Stonewall Jackson had crossed. There I overtook G. B. Anderson's brigade of D. H. Hill's division and crossed into Maryland with it. The next day we reached the neighborhood of Frederick. I went at once to General Lee, who was alone. After listening to my report he said that as I had a division which would often, perhaps, be ordered on detached service, an intelligent performance of my duty might require a knowledge of the ulterior purposes and objects of the campaign.



CONFEDERATE DEAD ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE HAGERSTOWN ROAD OPPOSITE THE CORN-FIELD. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

"Here," said he, tracing with his finger on a large map, "is the line of our communications, from Rapidan Station to Manassas, thence to Frederick. It is too near the Potomac, and is liable to be cut any day by the enemy's cavalry. I have therefore given orders to move the line back into the Valley of Virginia, by way of Staunton, Harrisonburg, and Winchester, entering Maryland at Shepherds-town.

"I wish you to return to the mouth of the Monocacy and effectually destroy the aqueduct of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal. By the time that is accomplished you will receive orders to coöperate in the capture of Harper's Ferry, and you will not return here, but, after the capture of Harper's Ferry, will rejoin us at Hagerstown, where the army will be concentrated. My information is that there are between 10,000 and 12,000 men at Harper's Ferry, and 3000 at Martinsburg. The latter may escape towards Cumberland; but I think the chances are that they will take refuge at Harper's Ferry and be captured.

"Besides the men and material of war which we shall capture at Harper's Ferry, the position is necessary to us, not to garrison and hold, but in the hands of the enemy it would be a break in our new line of communications with Richmond.

"A few days' rest at Hagerstown will be of great service to our men. Hundreds of them are bare-footed, and nearly all of them are ragged. I hope to get shoes and clothing for the most needy. But the best of it will be that the short delay will enable us to get up our stragglers — not stragglers from a shirking disposition, but simply from inability to keep up with their commands. I believe there are not less than from eight to ten thousand of them between here and Rapidan Station. Besides these, we shall be able to get a large number of recruits who have been accumulating at Richmond for some weeks. I have now requested that they be sent forward to join us. They ought to reach us at Hagerstown. We shall then have a very good army"; and he smilingly added: "One that I think will be able to give a good account of itself."

"In ten days from now," he continued, "if the military situation is then what I confidently expect it to be after the capture of Harper's Ferry, I shall concentrate the army at Hagerstown, effectually destroy the Baltimore and Ohio road, and march to this point," placing his finger at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. "That is the objective point of the campaign. You remember, no doubt, the long bridge of the Pennsylvania railroad, over the Susquehanna, a few miles west of Harrisburg. Well, I wish effectually to destroy that bridge, which

will disable the Pennsylvania railroad for a long time. With the Baltimore and Ohio in our possession, and the Pennsylvania railroad broken up, there will remain to the enemy but one route of communication with the West, and that very circuitous, by way of the Lakes. After that, I can turn my attention to Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Washington, as may seem best for our interests."



MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH K. F. MANSFIELD. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

General Mansfield was mortally wounded while making a bold reconnaissance in advance of his left division under Greene, which was in the "East wood" (see A on the map).—EDITOR.

I was very much astonished at this announcement and I suppose he observed it, for he turned to me and said:

"You doubtless regard it hazardous to leave McClellan practically on my line of communication, and to march into the heart of the enemy's country?" I admitted that such a thought had occurred to me.



CHARGE OF IRWIN'S BRIGADE AT THE DUNKER CHURCH. (BY EDWIN FORBES, AFTER HIS SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.)

General Wm. F. Smith, commanding the Second Division of Franklin's corps, went to the assistance of French. On getting into position, for the most part to the right of French, General Smith, in his report, says: "Finding that the enemy were advancing, I ordered forward the Third Brigade (Colonel Irwin's), who, passing through the regular battery then commanded by

Lieutenant Thomas (Fourth Artillery), charged upon the enemy and drove them gallantly until abreast the little church at the point of woods, the possession of which had been so fiercely contested. At this point a severe flank fire from the woods was received." The brigade rallied behind the crest of a slope, and remained in an advanced position until the next day.—EDITOR.

"Are you acquainted with General McClellan?" he inquired. I replied that we had served together in the Mexican war, under General Scott, but that I had seen but little of him since that time.

"He is an able general, but a very cautious one. His enemies among his own people think him too much so. His army is in a very demoralized and chaotic condition, and will not be prepared for offensive operations — or he will not think it so — for three or four weeks. Before that time I hope to be on the Susquehanna."

Our conversation was interrupted at this point by the arrival of Stonewall Jackson, and after a few minutes Lee and Jackson turned to the subject of the capture of Harper's Ferry. I remember Jackson seemed in high spirits, and even indulged in a little mild pleasantry about his long neglect of his friends in "The Valley," General Lee replying that Jackson had "some friends" in that region who would not, he feared, be delighted to see him.

The arrival of a party of ladies from Frederick and vicinity, to pay their respects to Lee

and Jackson, put an end to the conversation, and soon after I took my departure.

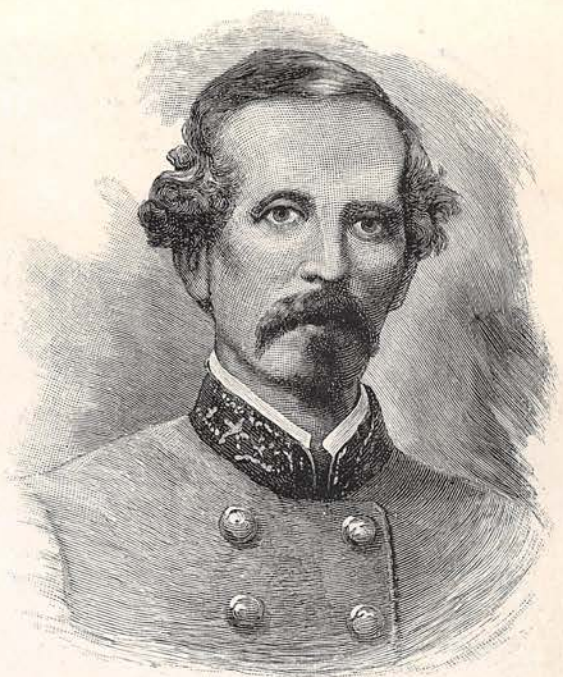
Retracing our steps towards the Potomac, at ten P. M. of the 9th my division arrived at the aqueduct which conveys the waters of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal across the Monocacy. The attempted work of destruction began, but so admirably was the aqueduct constructed and cemented that it was found to be virtually a solid mass of granite. Not a seam or crevice could be discovered, in which to insert the point of a crow-bar; and the only resource was in blasting. But the drills furnished my engineer were too dull and the granite too hard; and after several hours of zealous but ineffectual effort, the attempt had to be abandoned. Dynamite had not then been invented, so we were foiled in our purpose, and about three o'clock A. M. of the 10th, went into bivouac about two miles and a half west of the Monocacy.

Late in the afternoon a courier from General Lee delivered me a copy of his famous "Special Orders 191," directing me to coöperate with Jackson and McLaws in the capture,

of Harper's Ferry. That order contained the most precise and detailed information respecting the position, at its date, of every portion of the Confederate Army,—where it would be during the next five or six days, at least,—and inferentially revealed the ulterior designs of the Confederate commander. Possessed of the information it contained, the Federal general would be enabled to throw the weight of his whole force on that small portion of the Confederate Army then on the northern side of the Potomac, before Jackson, McLaws and Walker could effect the capture of Harper's Ferry and go to its assistance.

General McClellan did get possession, on the 13th of September, of a copy of this order, addressed to General D. H. Hill. In what manner this happened is not positively known. General Bradley T. Johnson says that there is a tradition in Frederick, that General Hill was seen to drop a paper in the streets of that town, which was supposed to be the order in question. The Comte de Paris says it was found in a house in Frederick, which had been occupied by General Hill. But General Hill informed me, two years after the war, that he never received the order, and never knew of its existence until he read it in McClellan's report.*

To whatever circumstance General McClellan owed its possession, it certainly en-



BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM E. STARKE. (FROM A TIN-TYPE.)

In the cannonade which began with dawn of the 17th, General J. R. Jones, commanding the left division of Jackson, was stunned and injured by a shell which exploded directly over his head. General Starke was directed to take command of the division, which he led against Hooker, and a half-hour later he fell pierced by three minie-balls. Of that terrible struggle Stonewall Jackson says in his report: "The carnage on both sides was terrific. At this early hour General Starke was killed. Colonel Douglass commanding Lawton's brigade was also killed. General Lawton, commanding division, and Colonel Walker, commanding brigade, were severely wounded. More than half of the brigades of Lawton and Hays were either killed or wounded, and more than a third of Trimble's, and all the regimental commanders in those brigades, except two, were killed or wounded."—EDITOR.

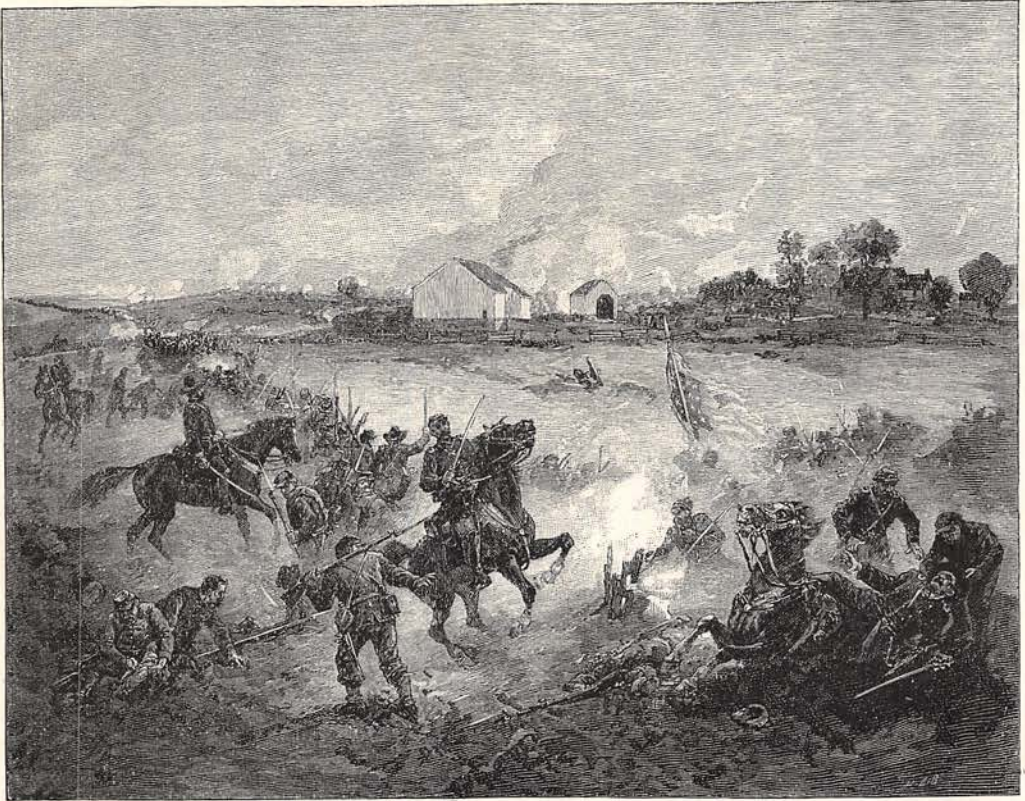
abled him to thwart General Lee's designs for the invasion of Pennsylvania, or a movement upon Washington. But that he obtained all the advantages he might have done, will hardly be contended for by General McClellan's warmest admirer. By the exercise of greater energy he might easily have crushed Lee on the afternoon of the 15th or early on the 16th before the arrival of Jackson from Harper's Ferry. On receiving my copy of the order I was so impressed with the disastrous consequence which might result from its loss, that I pinned it securely in an inside pocket. In speaking with General Longstreet on this subject afterward, he remarked that the same thought had occurred to him and that, as an absolutely sure precaution, he memorized the order and then "chewed it up."

Informed of the presence of a superior Federal force at Cheek's Ford,



AFTER THE BATTLE—POSITION OF THE CONFEDERATE BATTERIES IN FRONT OF DUNKER CHURCH. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

* See General D. H. Hill's statement, page 143 of THE CENTURY for last month.—EDITOR.



SUMNER'S ADVANCE.—FRENCH'S DIVISION CLOSING IN UPON ROULETTE'S BARN AND HOUSE—RICHARDSON'S DIVISION CONTINUING THE LINE FAR TO THE LEFT. (BY FRANK H. SCHELL, AFTER HIS SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.)

where I was ordered to pass the Potomac, and learning that the crossing at the Point of Rocks was practicable, I moved my division to that place and succeeded in landing everything safely on the Virginia shore by daylight of the 11th.

About the same time a heavy rain set in, and as the men were much exhausted by their night march, I put them into bivouac. I would here remark that the Army of Northern Virginia had long since discarded their tents, capacious trunks, carpet bags, bowie knives, mill-saw swords, and six-shooters, and had reduced their "kits" to the simplest elements and smallest dimensions.

Resuming our march on the morning of the 12th, we halted for the night at Hillsboro'. During the night I was sent for from the village inn, by a woman who claimed my attendance on the ground that she was just from Washington, and had very important information to give me. Answering the call, I found seated in the hotel parlor a young woman of perhaps twenty-five, of rather prepossessing appearance, who claimed to have left Washington the morning before, with important

information from "our friends" in the Federal capital, which she could communicate only to General Lee himself, and wished to know from me where he could be found. I saw at once that I had to do with a Federal spy; but as I did not wish to be encumbered with a woman prisoner, I professed ignorance of General Lee's whereabouts, and advised her to remain quietly at the hotel, as I should, no doubt, have some information for her the next morning. Before resuming our march, the next day, I sent her under guard to Leesburg, directing the provost marshal at that place to hold her for three or four days and then release her.

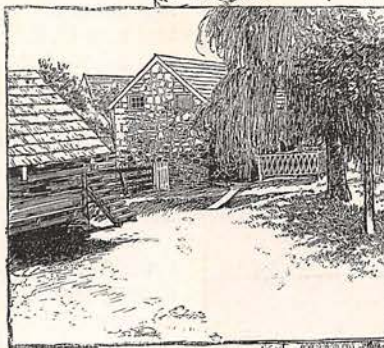
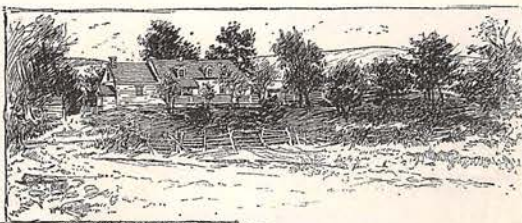
Resuming the march at daylight on the 13th, we reached the foot of Loudoun Heights about ten o'clock. Here I was joined by a detachment of signal men, and Captain White's company of Maryland cavalry. I detached two regiments—the Twenty-seventh North Carolina and Thirtieth Virginia, under Colonel J. R. Cooke, directing him to ascend Loudoun Mountain and take possession of the heights, but in case he found no enemy, not to reveal his presence to the garrison of Har-

per's Ferry. I sent with him the men of the Signal Corps, with orders to open communication if possible with Jackson, whose force ought to be in the neighborhood, coming from the west. I then disposed of the remainder of the division around the point of the mountain, where it abuts on the Potomac.

About two P. M. Colonel Cooke reported that he had taken unopposed possession of Loudoun Heights, but that he had seen nothing of Jackson; yet from the movements of the Federals he thought he was close at hand. By eight o'clock the next morning five long-range Parrott rifles were on the top of the mountain in a masked position, but ready to open fire. About half-past ten o'clock my signal party succeeded in informing Jackson of my position and readiness to attack.

At a reunion of the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia, held at Richmond, on October 23, 1884, in an address delivered by General Bradley T. Johnson, occurs this passage:

"McLaws having constructed a road up Maryland Heights and placed his artillery in position during



ROULETTE'S FARM.

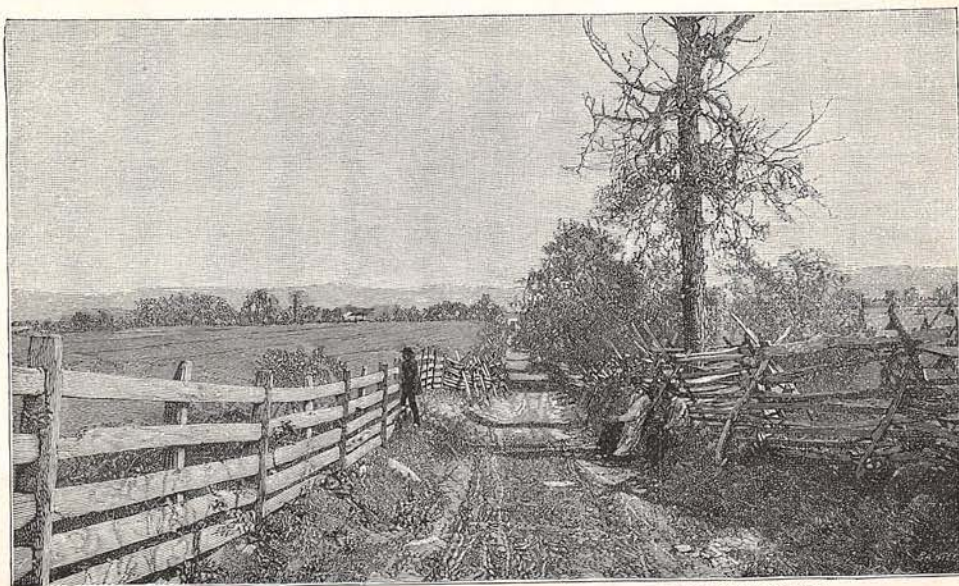
1.—View of William Roulette's farm-house. 2.—Roulette's spring-house, in which Confederate prisoners were confined during the battle. 3.—Roulette's spring, a copious fountain which refreshed many thirsty soldiers of both armies.—EDITOR.



the 14th, while fighting was going on at Crampton's Gap and Turner's Gap, signaled to Jackson that he was ready; whereupon Jackson signaled the order both to McLaws and Walker—"Fire at such positions of the enemy as will be most effective."

I am, of course, ignorant of what Jackson may have signaled McLaws, but it is certain that I received no such order. On the contrary, as soon as he was in-

formed that McLaws was in possession of Maryland Heights, Jackson signaled me substantially the following dispatch: "Harper's Ferry is now completely invested. I shall summon its commander to surrender. Should he refuse I shall give him twenty-four hours



SOUTH-EASTERN STRETCH OF THE SUNKEN ROAD. (FROM A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH.)



THE SUNKEN ROAD, OR "BLOODY LANE."
(FROM A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH.)

This view is from the second bend in the lane, looking toward the Hagerstown pike, the Dunker Church woods appearing in the background. In the foreground Richardson crossed to the left into the corn-field near Piper's house. The house in the middle-ground, erected since the war, marks the scene of French's hard fight after passing Roulette's house.—EDITOR.

to remove the non-combatants, and then carry the place by assault. *Do not fire unless forced to.*"

Jackson at this time had, of course, no reason to suspect that McClellan was advancing in force, and doubtless supposed, as we all did, that we should have abundant leisure to rejoin General Lee at Hagerstown. But about noon I signaled to Jackson that an action seemed to be in progress at Crampton's Gap, that the enemy had made his appearance in Pleasant Valley in rear of McLaws, and that I had no doubt McClellan was advancing in force.

To this message Jackson replied that it was, he thought, no more than a cavalry affair between Stuart and Pleasonton. It was now about half-past twelve, and every minute the sound of artillery in the direction of South Mountain was growing louder, which

left no doubt on my mind of the advance of the whole Federal army. If this were the case, it was certain that General Lee would be in fearful peril, should the capture of Harper's Ferry be much longer delayed. I thereupon asked permission to open fire; but, receiving no reply, I determined to be "forced." For this purpose, I placed the two North Carolina regiments under Colonel (late Major-General, and now U. S. Senator) M. W. Ransom, which had relieved those under Cooke, in line of battle in full view of the Federal batteries, on Bolivar Heights. As I expected, they at once opened a heavy, but harmless, fire upon my regiments, which afforded me the wished-for pretext. Withdrawing the infantry to the safe side of the mountain, I directed my batteries to reply.

It is possible that some of my military readers may question the propriety of my course, and allege that it amounted virtually to disobedience of orders. This I freely admit, yet plead the dire urgency of the case. Had Jackson compromised himself by agreeing to allow the Federal commander twenty-four hours, as he proposed, General Lee would undoubtedly have been driven into the Potomac, before any portion of the Confederate force around Harper's Ferry could have reinforced him. The trouble was, that Jackson could not be made to believe that McClellan's whole army was in movement.

I never knew whether or not Jackson actually made a formal demand for the surrender of the Federal garrison, but I had his own word for it that he intended to do so. Besides, such a course was in harmony with the humanity of his generous nature, and with his



CONFEDERATE DEAD IN THE SUNKEN ROAD. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)



SCENE AT THE RUINS OF MUMMA'S HOUSE AND BARN. (BY FRANK H. SCHELL, AFTER HIS SKETCH MADE AT THE TIME.)

These buildings were fired early in the morning by D. H. Hill's men, who feared they would become a point of vantage to the Union forces. The sketch was made after the advance of French to the sunken road. Presumably, the battery firing upon the Confederate line to the right of that road is the First Rhode Island Light Artillery; for Captain John A. Tompkins of Battery A says, in his report, that he placed his pieces on a knoll "directly in front of some burning ruins," and opened fire upon a battery in front. "At 9:30," he continues, "the enemy appeared upon my right front with a large column, apparently designing to charge the battery. I was not aware of their approach until the head of the column gained the brow of a hill about sixty yards from the right gun of the battery. The pieces

were immediately obliqued to the right and a sharp fire of canister opened upon them, causing them to retire in confusion, leaving the ground covered with their dead and wounded, and abandoning one of their battle-flags, which was secured by a regiment which came up on my right after the enemy had retreated. The enemy now opened a fire upon us from a battery in front, and also from one on the right near the white school-house [Dunker Church]. Two guns were directed to reply to the battery on the right, while the fire of the rest was directed upon the guns in front, which were silenced in about twenty minutes, and one of their caissons blown up." At noon, Captain Tompkins's battery was relieved by Battery G of the same regiment.—EDITOR.

constant practice of doing as little harm as possible to non-combatants.

About an hour after my batteries opened fire, those of A. P. Hill and Lawton followed suit, and near three o'clock those of McLaws. But the range from Maryland Heights being too great, the fire of McLaws's guns was ineffective, the shells bursting in mid-air, without reaching the enemy. From my position on Loudoun Heights my guns had a plunging fire on the Federal batteries, a thousand feet below, and did great execution. By five o'clock our combined fire had silenced all the opposing batteries, except one of two guns east of Bolivar Heights, which kept up a plucky but feeble fire, until night put a stop to the combat.

During the night of the 14th-15th, Major (afterwards brigadier-general of artillery) R. Lindsay Walker, chief of artillery of A. P. Hill's division, succeeded in crossing the Shenandoah with several batteries, and placing them in such a position, on the slope of Loudoun Mountain far below me, as to command



THE SUNKEN ROAD, LOOKING EAST FROM ROULETTE'S LANE.



MAJOR-GENERAL ISRAEL B. RICHARDSON. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

Referring in his report to the incidents accompanying General Richardson's fall, General Caldwell says: "The enemy made one more effort to break my line, and this time the attack was made in the center. Colonel Barlow [General Francis C.], hearing firing to his left, on our old front, immediately moved to the left and formed in line with the rest of the brigade. The whole brigade then moved forward in line, driving the enemy entirely out of the corn-field [see E on the map], and through the orchard beyond, the enemy firing grape and canister from two brass pieces in the orchard to our front, and shell and spherical case-shot from a battery on our right. While leading his men forward under the fire, Colonel Barlow fell dangerously wounded

by a grape-shot in the groin. By command of General Richardson I halted the brigade, and, drawing back the line, re-formed it near the edge of the corn-field. It was now one o'clock P. M. Here we lay exposed to a heavy artillery fire, by which General Richardson was severely wounded. The fall of General Richardson (General Meagher having been previously borne from the field) left me in command of the division, which I formed in line, awaiting the enemy's attack. Not long after, I was relieved of the command by General Hancock, who had been assigned to the command of the division by General McClellan." General Richardson was carried to Pry's house, McClellan's headquarters, where he died November 3d.—EDITOR.

the enemy's works. McLaws got his batteries into position nearer the enemy, and at daylight of the 15th the batteries of our five divisions were pouring their fire on the doomed garrison. The fire of my batteries, however, was at random, as the enemy's position was entirely concealed by a dense fog, clinging to the sides of the mountain, far below. But my artillerists trained their guns by the previous day's experience and delivered their fire through the fog.

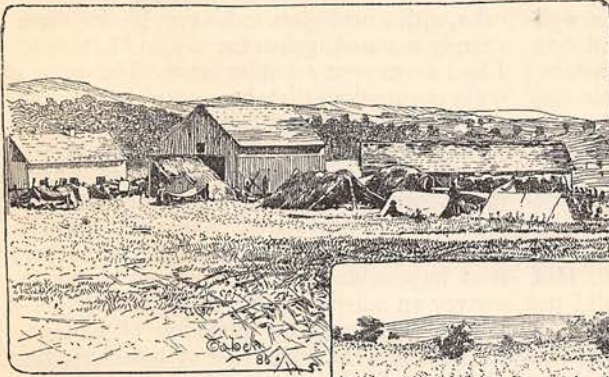
The Federal batteries promptly replied, and for more than an hour maintained a

spirited fire; but after that time it grew more and more feeble, until about eight o'clock, when it ceased altogether, and the garrison surrendered. Owing to the fog I was ignorant of what had taken place, but surmising it, I soon ordered my batteries to cease firing. Those of Lawton, however, continued some minutes later. This happened unfortunately, as Colonel Dixon S. Miles, the Federal commander, was at this time mortally wounded by a fragment of shell while waving a white flag in token of surrender.

It was a pleasing sight to us, perched upon

the top of the mountain, as we looked down upon more than twelve thousand "boys in blue" stacking arms. Such a scene has its pathetic side too; for after the first feeling of exultation has passed, there comes one of sympathy for the humiliation of the brave men, who are no longer enemies, but unfortunate fellow-soldiers.

Some hours later, accompanied by two of my staff, I rode into Harper's Ferry, and we



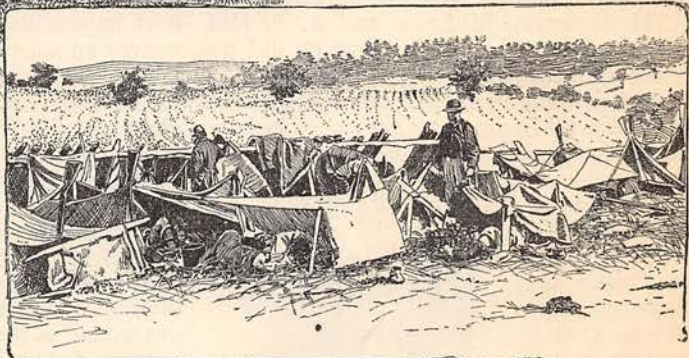
were interested in seeing our tattered Confederates fraternizing in the most cordial manner with their well-dressed prisoners. I was introduced by General A. P. Hill to Federal Brigadier-General White. He explained to me that, although of superior rank to Colonel Miles, he had declined to assume command of the garrison, since he was at Harper's Ferry by accident—"an unfortunate accident too," he added.

I am of the opinion that it would have been practicable for Colonel Miles to have escaped with the infantry of his garrison during the night of the 14th-15th, as did a body of thirteen hundred cavalry, under Colonel "Grimes" Davis.* This enterprising young officer crossed his cavalry to the Maryland side of the Potomac, over the pontoon bridge, and followed the road on the berme side of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, leading north to Sharpsburg. Mention of this very meritorious action is made in neither Federal nor Confederate accounts of the capture of Harper's Ferry that have fallen under my notice.

There is a strong probability that the infantry of the garrison could have done the same. It should be stated that Davis not only escaped capture, but that he passed through Sharpsburg at daylight of the 15th, and in

crossing the Hagerstown and Williamsport road, he destroyed the greater part of Longstreet's reserve ordnance trains. This escape of Davis from Harper's Ferry, and Forrest's escape from Fort Donelson, under very similar circumstances, show what a bold subordinate may achieve after his superior has lost heart.

No sooner had the surrender of Harper's Ferry been assured, than my division took up its line of march to join General Lee. At two A. M. of the 16th my advance overtook the rear of Jackson's force, and about eight o'clock in the morning, after seeing our respective commands safely across the Potomac at the ford below Shepherdstown, Jackson and myself went forward together towards Sharpsburg. As we rode along I mentioned my *ruse* in



CONFEDERATE WOUNDED AT CAPTAIN SMITH'S BARN, WEST OF SHARPSBURG.
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

opening fire on Harper's Ferry. Knowing the strictness of Jackson's ideas in regard to military obedience, I felt a little doubtful as to what he would say. When I had finished my confession he was silent for some minutes, and then remarked: "It was just as well as it was; but I could not believe that the fire you reported indicated the advance of McClellan in force. It seemed more likely to be merely a cavalry affair." Then after an interval of silence, as if to himself, he continued: "I thought I knew McClellan" (they were classmates at West Point), "but this movement of his puzzles me."

A little past the hour of noon of the 16th Jackson and myself reached General Lee's headquarters and reported the arrival of our commands. I am thus particular in noting the incidents of this night march, and the hour of the arrival of my division at Sharpsburg, for the reason that some writers have fallen into the error of mentioning my arrival at Sharpsburg his old army associates, as "Grimes" Davis. He was killed at Beverly Ford, June 9th, 1863.—EDITOR.

* Colonel Benjamin F. Davis of the Eighth New York Cavalry, familiarly known at West Point, and among

as coincident with that of McLaws's division, which was some twenty-two hours later.

The thought of General Lee's perilous situation, with the Potomac River in his rear, confronting, with his small force, McClellan's vast army, had haunted me through the long hours of the night's march, and I expected to find General Lee anxious and careworn. Anxious enough, no doubt, he was; but there was nothing in his look or manner to indicate it. On the contrary, he was calm, dignified, and even cheerful. If he had had a well-equipped army of a hundred thousand veterans at his back, he could not have appeared more composed and confident. On shaking hands with us, he simply expressed his satisfaction with the result of our operations at Harper's Ferry, and of our timely arrival at Sharpsburg; adding that with our reënforcement he felt confident of being able to hold his ground until the arrival of the divisions of R. H. Anderson, McLaws, and A. P. Hill, which were still behind, and which did not arrive until the next day.

At four in the afternoon I received an order from General Lee to move at three o'clock the next morning, and take position with my division on the extreme right of his line of battle, so as to cover a ford of the Antietam, and to lend a hand, in case of necessity, to General Toombs, whose brigade was guarding the bridge over the Antietam, called by Federal writers "Burnside's bridge."

At daybreak on the 17th I took the position assigned me, forming my line of battle on the crest of a ridge in front of the ford just mentioned. The ground, from my position to the creek, distant about five hundred yards, sloped gradually down to the crossing, just below which there was a wooded, bluff-like hill commanding the approach to the ford from the east. Here I posted a battalion of skirmishers.

While these dispositions, after a careful reconnaissance of the ground on both sides of the Antietam, were being made, the booming of artillery, at some distance on my left, warned us that the battle had begun. As the

morning wore on the firing grew heavier and heavier, until Elk Mountain, to the eastward, gave back an incessant echo.

About nine o'clock an order was brought by a staff-officer of General Lee, directing me to hurry to the left to reënforce Jackson, who was being hard pressed. Hastily recalling my skirmishers, I hurried forward, left in front, along the rear of the whole Confederate line of battle. As I passed what is now known as Cemetery Hill, I saw General Lee standing erect and calm, with a field-glass to his eye, his fine form sharply outlined against the sky, and I thought I had never seen a nobler figure. He seemed quite unconscious that the enemy's shells were exploding around and beyond him.

To those who have not been witnesses of a great battle like this, where more than a hundred thousand men, armed with all the appliances of modern science and skill, are engaged in the work of slaughtering each other, it is impossible by the power of words to convey an adequate idea of its terrible sublimity. The constant booming of cannon, the ceaseless rattle and roar of musketry, the glimpses of galloping horsemen and marching infantry, now seen, now lost in the smoke, adding weirdness to terror, all together make up a combination of sights and sounds wholly indescribable.

Opposite the rear of Longstreet's position I overtook General Ripley, of D. H. Hill's division, who, after having had dressed a serious wound in the neck, was returning to the command of his brigade, then hotly engaged. From him I obtained some information of the progress of the battle in the center.

Hurrying on, I was soon met by a staff-officer, who informed me that it was General Jackson's wish that I should go to the assistance of Hood, who was hard pressed and almost out of ammunition, adding that if I found the Federals in possession of the wood on the Hagerstown road, I must drive them out, as it was the key of the battlefield.

He further explained that there was between the wood, just referred to, and the left of D. H. Hill's position, a gap of at least a third of a mile, and that I must leave a part of my command to fill it, and to support the reserve batteries under Colonel Stephen D. Lee which would also occupy the gap. For this purpose I detached the Twenty-seventh North Carolina and Third Arkansas of Manning's brigade, and placed them under the orders of Colonel John R. Cooke, of the former regiment.*

* These are the troops spoken of in General D. H. Hill's report as "Walker's men," who assisted in the repulse of Federal General French, later in the day. [See also General Longstreet's description on page 312]



ON THE LINE OF A SCATTERED FENCE.
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

The single grave indicates, apparently, that some officer, killed outright, was hastily buried by his men during a lull in the fight, the big tree being chosen for a landmark.—EDITOR.

Moving forward, we soon reached the rear of Hood's position, and there forming line of battle with Ransom on the left, we moved forward to Hood's relief, supported by McLaws's division, which at that moment (10:30 A. M.) arrived from Harper's Ferry. By this time the Federals [under Sedgwick] had forced Hood's men out of the wood, and were in possession of the key of the battle-field. To regain this position and restore our line was now the task before us. This we soon accomplished, but only after perhaps the severest struggle of the day.

The Federals contended for every foot of the ground, but, driven from rock to rock, from tree to tree, of the "West Wood," after a bloody struggle of some thirty minutes Sedgwick's forces were pressed back into the open fields beyond, and being there exposed to the fire of S. D. Lee's artillery, broke and fled in great disorder back to the cover of the "East Wood," beyond the Hagerstown road.

My loss in this attack was heavy, including the gallant Colonel Van H. Manning, commanding Walker's brigade, who fell severely wounded. The regiment which suffered most was the Thirtieth Virginia. In the ardor of their pursuit of the enemy through the wood, the Virginians followed three hundred yards into the open, where they were fearfully cut up by the Federal batteries, and only saved themselves from annihilation by a timely retreat to the cover of the wood.

This ended the attempt of the Federals to drive Jackson from his position by infantry attacks. Their artillery, however, continued throughout the day to pour a heavy fire upon it, but with small effect. Our position was a most advantageous one. The space between it and the "East Wood," occupied by the Federals, consisted of meadows and corn-fields, intersected by fences, in passing over which their attacking columns were exposed to the fire of our batteries. Seventy or eighty yards in front of our position, and parallel with it, was a ridge, which, although slight, was sufficient to cover our men while lying down among the trees and bowlders which covered the ground. The projectiles from the Federal batteries, striking this ridge, passed harmlessly over our heads, shattering the branches of the trees and tumbling them down in showers upon our men. Occasionally a shell would explode above us and send its hissing fragments in our midst, but our loss was surprisingly small from this cause.

The Federal infantry assaults having ceased,

As the main body of my division was some distance to the left of the corn-fields where Cooke's regiments were posted, General Palfrey expresses some doubts of General Hill's accuracy.—J. G. W.

about half-past twelve I sought Jackson to report that from the front of my position in the wood, I thought I had observed a movement of the enemy, as if to pass through the gap, where I had posted Colonel Cooke's two regiments. I found Jackson in rear of Barksdale's brigade, sitting on his horse, under an apple-tree, with one leg thrown carelessly over the pommel of his saddle, plucking and eating the fruit. Without making any reply to my report, he asked me abruptly: "Can you spare me a regiment and battery?" I replied that Colonel Hill's Forty-ninth North Carolina, a very strong regiment, was in reserve, and could be spared, and that I could also give him both French's and Branch's batteries, but that they were without long-range ammunition, which had been exhausted at Harper's Ferry.

Jackson then went on to say that General Stuart's cavalry, owing to the nature of the ground, could take no part in the battle and were in the rear, but that Stuart himself had reported for such duty as he could perform.

Jackson added that he wished to make up, from the different commands on our left, a force of four or five thousand men, and give them to Stuart, with orders to turn the enemy's right, and attack him in the rear; that I must give orders to my division to advance to the front, and attack the enemy as soon as I should hear Stuart's guns—and that our whole left wing would move to the attack at the same time. Then, replacing his foot in the stirrup, he said with great emphasis: "We'll drive McClellan into the Potomac."

After giving orders for the regiment and batteries to report to Stuart, I galloped down the line to where I had posted Cooke, but found that General Longstreet, having observed the danger from General French's formidable attack, had ordered Cooke forward, and that together with D. H. Hill's division he was then hotly engaged. Soon returning to my command, I communicated Jackson's order to my brigade commanders and directed them to listen for the sound of Stuart's guns. We all confidently expected to hear the welcome sound by two o'clock, at least; and as that hour approached every ear was on the alert. Napoleon, at Waterloo, did not listen more intently for the sound of Grouchy's fire than did we for Stuart's. Two o'clock came, but nothing was heard of Stuart. Half-past two and then three, and still Stuart made no sign.

About half-past three a staff-officer of General Longstreet brought me an order from that general to advance and attack the enemy in my front. As the execution of this order would materially interfere with Jackson's plans, before beginning the movement I thought it my duty to communicate with

General Longstreet personally. I found him in rear of the position in which I had posted Cooke in the morning, and upon informing him of Jackson's intentions, he withdrew his order.

While we were discussing this subject, Jackson himself joined us with the information of Stuart's failure to turn the Federal right, for the reason that he had found it securely posted on the Potomac. Upon my expressing surprise at this statement, Jackson replied that he also had been surprised, as he had supposed the Potomac much farther away; but he remarked that Stuart had an excellent eye for topography, and it must be as he represented. He added: "It is a great pity,—we should have driven McClellan into the Potomac."

By this time, with staff-officers, couriers, etc., we were a mounted group of some ten or a dozen persons, presenting so tempting a target that a Federal battery, at the distance of five hundred yards, opened fire upon us, but with no other result, strange to say, than the slaughter of the horse of one of my couriers.

The attempt of the Federals to penetrate our center, and its repulse by D. H. Hill, materially assisted by Colonel John R. Cooke's two regiments of my division,* closed infantry operations on our portion of the field for the day. The opposing batteries, however, continued to pound away at each other until dark.

Late in the afternoon the direction of the firing on our extreme right was most alarming,—indicating, as it did, that the Federal left had forced a crossing of the Antietam, and that it must be perilously near our only line of retreat to the Potomac, at Shepherdstown. Could it be that A. P. Hill had come up and had been repulsed? If so, we had lost the day.

We hoped that A. P. Hill was still behind, but within striking distance. Soon the sound of musketry, which had almost ceased, roared out again with increased volume, indicating that fresh troops had been brought up, on one side or the other. For thirty minutes the sound of the firing came steadily from the same direction; then it seemed to recede eastward, and finally to die away almost entirely. We knew then that Hill *was* up; that the Federals had been driven back, and that the Confederate army had narrowly escaped defeat.

As night closed down, the firing along the whole line ceased; one of the bloodiest and most hotly contested battles of the war had been fought. The men of my division—worn

* The gallant conduct of Colonel Cooke on this occasion deservedly won for him promotion to the grade of brigadier general. His losses in this engagement were terrible. In his own regiment, the Twenty-seventh North Carolina, out of twenty-six commissioned officers who went into action, eighteen of them were killed or wounded. In the Third Arkansas the losses were equally as great.—J. G. W.

out by a week's incessant marching and fighting by day and night—dropped down where they were, and could with difficulty be roused, even to take their cooked rations, brought up from our camp in the rear.

But there was little sleep for the infirmiry corps; and all night long with their lanterns they could be seen flashing about the battle-field, searching for and bringing in the wounded, of friend and foe alike. In company with General Barksdale of Mississippi, whose brigade was on my left, I rode over that part of the battle-field where our own troops had been engaged, to see that none of the wounded had been overlooked. While passing along a worm fence, in the darkness, we heard a feeble voice from under our horse's feet: "Don't let your horses t-r-e-a-d on m-e!" We at once pulled up, and peering over the pommels of our saddles into the darkness, we could distinguish the dim outlines of a human form extended across our path. "Who are you?" we inquired. "I belong to the Twentieth Mas-sa-chu-sett's rig-i-ment" [of Sedgwick's division], answered the voice; "I can't move—I think my back's broken." We sent for an ambulance and had the poor fellow cared for. This was one of the very many instances of human suffering we encountered that night.

During the whole of the 18th the two armies rested in face of each other, in the positions which each had occupied at the close of the battle. There was a tacit truce, and Federal and Confederate burying parties passed freely between the lines.

We had fought an indecisive battle, and although we were, perhaps, in as good a condition to renew the struggle as the enemy, General Lee recognized the fact that his ulterior plans had been thwarted by this premature engagement, and after a consultation with his corps commanders he determined to withdraw from Maryland. At dark on the night of the 18th the rearward movement began; and a little after sunrise of the next morning the entire Confederate army had safely recrossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown.

Detained in superintending the removal of a number of the wounded of my division, I was among the last to cross the Potomac. As I rode into the river I passed General Lee, sitting on his horse in the stream, watching the crossing of the wagons and artillery. Returning my greeting, he inquired as to what was still behind. There was nothing but the wagons containing my wounded, and a battery of artillery, all of which were near at hand, and I told him so. "Thank God!" I heard him say as I rode on.

John G. Walker.