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ARMY HISTORY

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Issue Cover: *The Battle of Chancellorsville* by Frederick Chapman / Courtesy of the Civil War Museum of Philadelphia

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

In the Fall 2016 issue of *Army History*, we offer two engaging articles that examine very interesting topics. The first article, by Nathan Marzoli, dissects the activities of the 12th New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry Regiment at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Utilizing an array of primary sources, Marzoli is able to reconstruct the regiment's activities and positions on 3 May 1863, during some of the most intense fighting of the war. Due to the confusing nature of the battle, and because many of the unit's officers were wounded or killed, the 12th's actions and exact locations during this time have been lost to history. The regiment's account is absent from the official records and its brigade and division commanders were either absent during the fighting or were killed before they could submit a report. Marzoli endeavors to fill this gap, and in doing so, provides a gripping narrative of a regiment that participated in a pivotal moment during the battle while taking horrendous casualties.

The second article looks at a lesser-known aspect of the Mexican War. While Bvt. Brig. Gen. Zachary Taylor's army was camped on the beaches of Corpus Christi, Texas, in July 1845 it conducted numerous courts-martial in an effort to stem a growing discipline problem. Brig. Gen. Charles Pede, the commanding general and commandant of the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, examines the American military legal system that was showcased at Corpus Christi, highlighting the brutality of the punishments, the differences with today's court-martial, and some of the surprising similarities with our Army's current legal process. General Pede's access to the original disciplinary records of Taylor's army, housed in the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School library, offers readers a rare glimpse at a part of Army history that few get to see.

This issue's Army Art Spotlight looks at the artwork of Joseph Hirsch. Additionally, in his Chief's Corner, Mr. Bowery discusses the value of Army historians as well as some of the Center's near- and mid-term priorities. In our Guest Historian's Footnote, Dr. R. Scott Moore examines the state of Army record keeping with some thoughts as to its improvement.

As always, I invite readers to submit articles, inquire about book reviews, and send us their comments on this publication.

Bryan J. Hockensmith
Managing Editor



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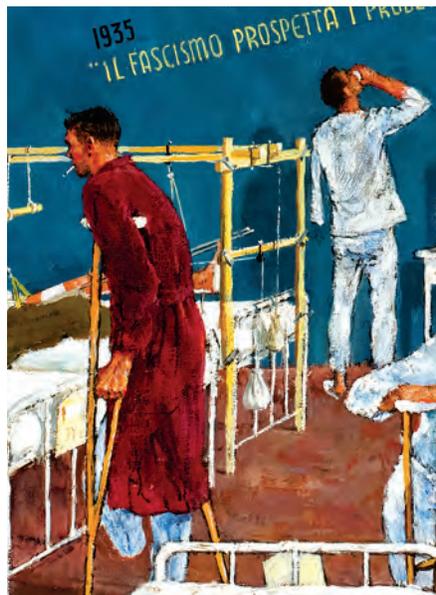
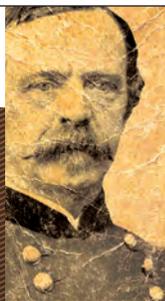
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THE CHIEF'S CORNER

CHARLES R. BOWERY JR.

"BIG ROCKS" AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Center of Military History (CMH) recently hosted the biennial Army Historians' Council, a meeting of CMH and Army Command historians to discuss issues of mutual interest across our enterprise. I had the honor of kicking off the meeting with some remarks based on my orientation to the Army Historical Program, an acclimation process that has taken me around the country and to the Far East over the last six months. Below are some items I discussed with the council.

Army historians continue to offer significant value to both the operational and the institutional Army in the form of perspective and deep expertise that enhance operational effectiveness and decision making. The source of this value, and of its increase over time, is the professional and academic competence of Army historians, our people, who constantly model the historian's craft in useful ways, but more importantly, who understand their roles as staff officers or academic faculty. It has become clear to me since assuming my duties at CMH that Army leaders have significant requirements for the perspective and expertise that we provide.

As the Army faces resource constraints and an uncertain operational environment, collaboration between the historians, museum professionals, and archivists of Career Program 61—and the historians who work at our pre-commissioning sources and in the Army's military education institutions—becomes more important than ever. I am interested in reexamining potential points of professional interchange between the two communities, in order to increase their value to their parent organizations.

Finally, I would like to call your attention to the Center's near- and mid-term priorities, which I call our "big rocks," for your awareness and ideas. Our workforce focuses on these priorities while we continue to implement Department of the Army headquarters transformation. Over the next five to seven years, Histories Directorate will

conclude two ongoing series, the U.S. Army in Vietnam and the U.S. Army in the Cold War, so that we can focus on the official histories of the Army in Afghanistan and Iraq. We expect to publish a framework for this project in October. I am recommending a more collaborative approach to this series, involving not only CMH historians but also our teammates in command history offices and in our branch schools.

Field Programs and Historical Services Directorate is leading an Army-wide effort to improve record keeping and command history processes, in order to address systemic shortfalls in our documentary record. Field Programs is also revising our doctrinal publication on the staff ride and is working with Training and Doctrine Command to develop a staff ride leaders course.

Museums Directorate will continue to transform the Army Museum Enterprise, with the goal of increasing the professionalism of our museum workforce and the overall quality of our museums. Property accountability within the Army Historical Collection remains the near-term priority of effort. On 1 October 2018, museum staff positions Army-wide will shift to the CMH Table of Distribution and Allowances, and museum funding will be centrally managed from CMH. The National Museum of the United States Army remains on track, with a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for 14 September 2016 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

The Institute of Heraldry (TIOH) continues to provide heraldry support across the U.S. government. We are exploring opportunities to develop a new TIOH facility adjacent to the Museum Support Center at Fort Belvoir.

Enjoy this issue of *Army History*. Army Historians Educate, Inspire, and Preserve!



NEWSNOTES

CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY RELEASES NEW PUBLICATIONS

Two new publications in the U.S. Army Center of Military History's U.S. Army Campaigns of the Civil War series are now available. The first, *The Virginia Campaigns, March–August 1862*, by Christopher L. Kolakowski, covers key battles in the Commonwealth of Virginia including Malvern Hill, Glendale, Gaines' Mill, Mechanicsville, and Second Bull Run. It also discusses the changes made in leadership of the Union command as President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton assumed direction of the war. It has been issued as CMH Pub 75–5.

The second of these is *The Civil War in the West, 1863*, by Andrew N. Morris. In 1863, Union and Confederate forces fought for control of Chat-

tanooga, a key rail center. The Confederates were victorious at nearby Chickamauga in September. However, renewed fighting in Chattanooga that November provided Union troops a victory, control of the city, and drove the Confederates south into Georgia. The Union success left its armies poised to invade the Deep South the following year. This pamphlet has been issued at CMH Pub 75–11.

Both brochures are available to U.S. government agencies through the normal channels and may be purchased by the general public from the U.S. Government Publishing Office.

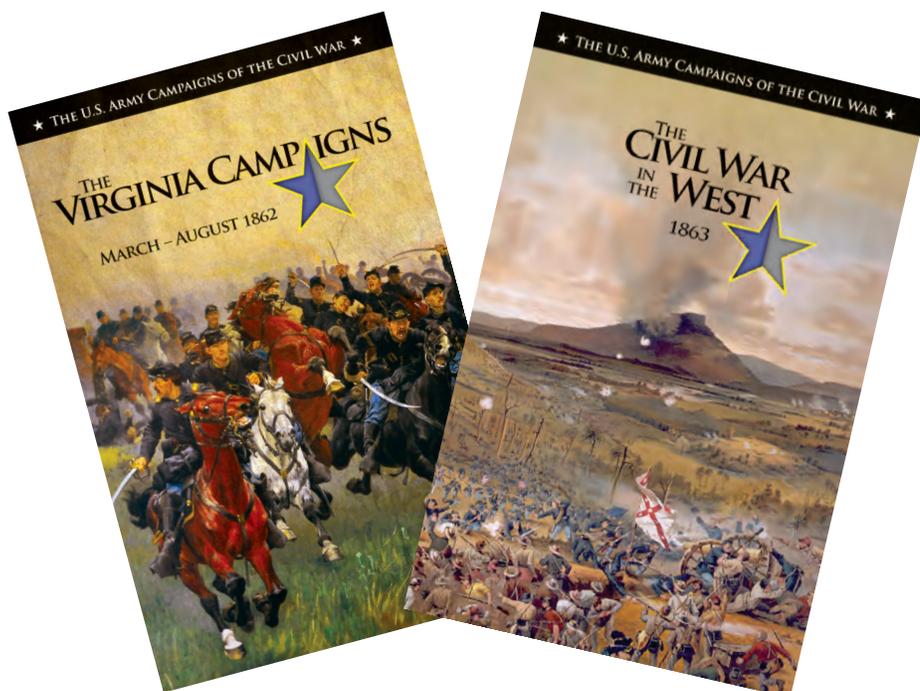
IN MEMORIAM: ROBERT F. PHILLIPS (1924–2016)

Robert F. Phillips, a former Army officer and military historian, passed

away on 1 May 2016 at the age of 91. He served as an Army combat medic during World War II and as an infantryman during the Korean War, earning a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart. As a historian, he worked for the U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Military History, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Division, the U.S. Army Ordnance Department History Office, the Air Force Office of Aerospace Research, the Seventeenth Air Force in Germany, and the Air Force Systems Command History Office. He retired in 1986. He was the author of *To Save Bastogne* (New York, 1983) and numerous historical articles and papers. He was laid to rest with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie, and his children, Kathryn and Mark.

CORRECTION TO ISSUE No. 100 INSIGNIA SPOTLIGHT

In the Insignia Spotlight that appeared in the Summer 2016 issue (no. 100) the unit described was mistakenly identified as the 127th Brigade Engineer Battalion. This designation is colloquial in nature and is not accurate. Although the unit is organized as a brigade engineer battalion, which is the generic term for this type of unit, it is officially designated as the 127th Engineer Battalion and should have been noted as such in the article.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathan A. Marzoli is a Recent Graduate Historian Intern at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. A U.S. Air Force veteran, he recently completed a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in history and museum studies at the University of New Hampshire. Marzoli's primary researching and writing interests focus on his home state of New Hampshire and the Civil War, as well as public history.



Library of Congress

Pvt. Lorenzo Hawkins of Company I, 12th Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry, c. 1862. Private Hawkins was wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville on 3 May 1863.

“Their Loss Was Necessarily Severe”

The 12th New Hampshire at Chancellorsville

BY NATHAN A. MARZOLI



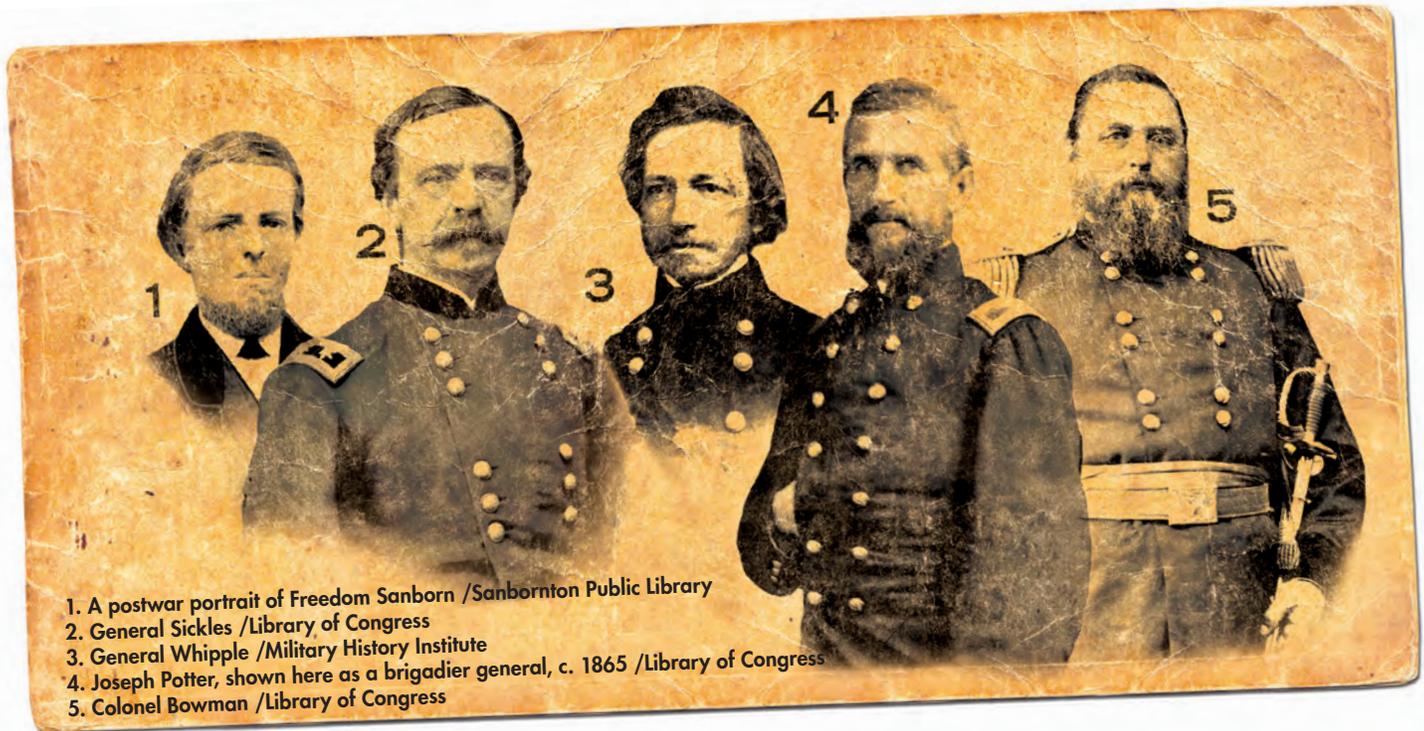
On Sunday evening, 3 May 1863, an exhausted Pvt. Freedom Sanborn, of Company H, 12th Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry (hereafter the 12th New Hampshire), somehow found the energy to scribble a few lines in his pocket diary recounting the day's events. Under “Battle of Chancellorsville,” Sanborn's entry continued: “Marched out and formed a line of battle about 5 AM—Went in and stayed till we lost all our Officers—Then retreated and fell back to the river.”² Freedom Sanborn was not an eloquent writer; this entry, like most of the others in his wartime diary, condensed an entire day's events into a few words. Yet 3 May 1863 was no ordinary day for Sanborn. During the morning hours of that Sunday, Freedom participated in some of the bloodiest fighting of the American Civil War. On the climactic third day of the Battle of Chancellorsville, in the woods surrounding Hazel Grove and Fairview, the Union and Confederate armies suffered a combined 17,585 casualties in

five hours of fighting. Up until that point in the war, the combined casualties of the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia had exceeded that total in only two prior engagements—at Antietam and Fredericksburg—and both of these had been all-day contests.³

The 12th New Hampshire, in Maj. Gen. Amiel W. Whipple's Third Division of Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles' III Corps, suffered 317 casualties out of roughly 580 combat effectives (a casualty rate of 54.7 percent), the highest number of any regiment, Union or Confederate. During the few hours of fighting around Fairview on the morning of 3 May, a staggering seventy-two men and officers were killed or mortally wounded. The high number of casualties is indicative of the 12th's position during the battle. In its first major engagement, the regiment became separated from the rest of its brigade and stubbornly held its ground for nearly two hours before finally retreating in the face of an overwhelming Confederate advance. Despite enduring such a horrific baptism of fire,

the regiment's experience lacks any sort of official corroboration.⁴

The 12th's report is missing from the *Official Records*; the regimental commander, Col. Joseph H. Potter, was wounded in the leg during the battle, while Col. Samuel M. Bowman, the brigade commander, could not accurately report on the 12th's location on the morning of 3 May because he was fighting elsewhere. General Whipple, the division commander, and the only other person who supposedly knew the whereabouts of the New Hampshire regiment, was mortally wounded on 4 May and died before he could submit an official report. Therefore, the account of the 12th's fight on the morning of 3 May leaves many questions unanswered. Where exactly was the regiment during the morning's action? Were they as alone in the fight as they thought? And most importantly, what were the individual and collective experiences of the men who fought in one of the bloodiest few hours of the entire war?



This article aims to answer these questions for two important reasons. First, the exploits and the position of the 12th New Hampshire on the morning of 3 May 1863 have largely been either neglected by historians or incorrectly located on the battlefield; no one has attempted to figure out exactly where they were during the morning's fighting.⁵ This article will use a combination of the reports of surrounding units in the *Official Records*, as well as evidence from a variety of primary sources, to pinpoint the whereabouts of the 12th New Hampshire during the climactic fight at Chancellorsville. This will help us to better understand some of the bloodiest few hours of the Civil War that have been woefully neglected by military historians, as well as the entire battle itself.

Second, although historians have explored the "typical" experiences of Union and Confederate soldiers in-depth, Civil War combat, much like in any war, was a complex, chaotic, and terrifying experience.⁶ "The extent of combat seen by the common soldiers," wrote Pvt. Leander Stillwell of the 61st Illinois, "is that only which comes within range of the raised sights of his musket."⁷ Stillwell, a veteran of numerous battles in the Western The-

ater, was no stranger to combat, and his words prove that it is a difficult task for historians to shape combat into a uniform experience. Each individual soldier experienced things in different ways, depending on a variety of factors. Therefore, it serves historians well to study the tactical actions of smaller units, such as the 12th New Hampshire at Chancellorsville, to gain greater insight into the perspective of the individual soldier. This article serves as a perfect case study, where examining the actions of a relatively small number of soldiers who endured a chaotic battlefield experience will help us to understand one more piece of the puzzle that was Civil War combat.

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE MOUNTAINEERS

On 10 August 1862, following President Abraham Lincoln's call for 300,000 additional troops for three years to put down the rebellion, some prominent citizens of Belknap and Carroll Counties, New Hampshire, asked the permission of Governor Nathaniel S. Berry to raise a volunteer infantry regiment. The request was granted, but only under the condition that the regiment's roster was full

within ten days. The farmers of the rugged terrain around Lake Winnepesaukee and the southern White Mountains joined eagerly, and six days later the adjutant general was told that the quota was filled and ten full companies were raised and ready to be mustered into U.S. service. Known as the Belknap [County] Regiment, and later the New Hampshire Mountaineers because of the mountainous terrain of the hometowns of the majority of the men, the unit was ordered into camp near the State House in Concord, New Hampshire, on 5 September. By 25 September, the organization of the newly christened 12th Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry was completed with the appointment of Colonel Potter, a Regular Army officer, as its commander.⁸

The 12th left Concord for Washington, D.C., on 27 September 1862, where it briefly manned the defenses of the nation's capital before being assigned to General Whipple's Third Division of the III Corps in the Army of the Potomac. The regiment came under enemy fire for the first time at Fredericksburg in December 1862, but fortunately remained in reserve in the streets of the ransacked town and avoided assaulting the Confeder-

ate stronghold at Marye's Heights. Following the Union defeat, the 12th, along with the rest of the Army of the Potomac, retreated back across the Rappahannock River to their camps at Falmouth, where they remained for the rest of the winter.⁹

"THE BALL IS OPENING"¹⁰

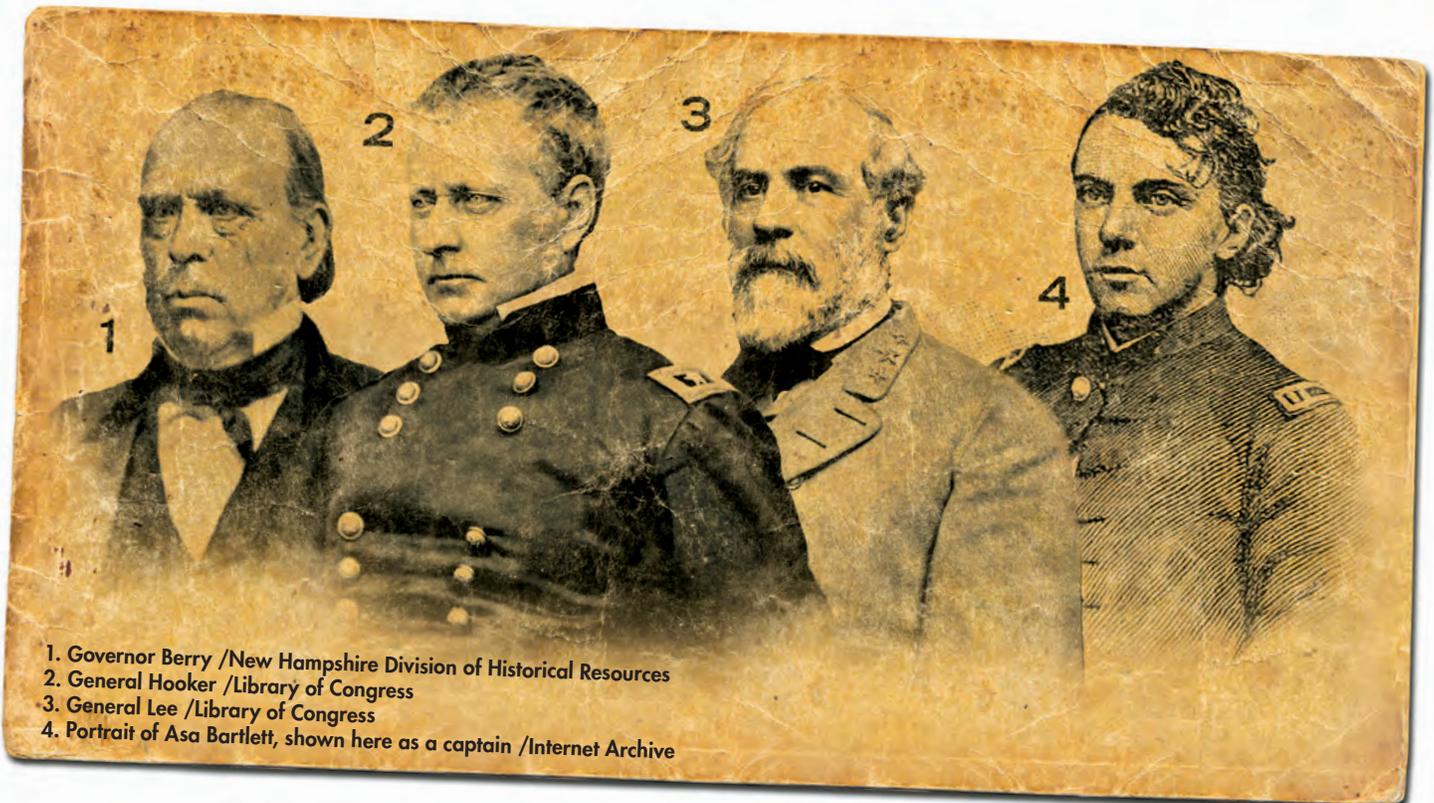
Maj. Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker replaced Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside as the commander of the Army of the Potomac after the bloody debacle at Fredericksburg. Over the winter, Hooker refit and reorganized the Army by dismantling Burnside's Grand Divisions and reconfiguring the 130,000-strong force into seven infantry corps, each led by a major general. Each corps was ordered to wear new corps badges, which instilled a sense of unit pride and assisted with the identification of units on the battlefield. The general also planned to renew the offensive in the spring. Hooker's plan would forgo a headlong assault at a fixed position, such as at Fredericksburg, and would instead use maneuvers and flank movements to deceive Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia.

The Union general planned to hold Lee's 60,000 Confederates at their positions behind Fredericksburg with a small part of his army, while marching most of his soldiers in a flanking movement across the Rappahannock River to the west and either destroy the Army of Northern Virginia or force Lee to retreat toward Richmond. Full of confidence, Hooker boasted, "My plans are perfect, and when I start to carry them out, may God have mercy on General Lee, for I will have none."¹¹

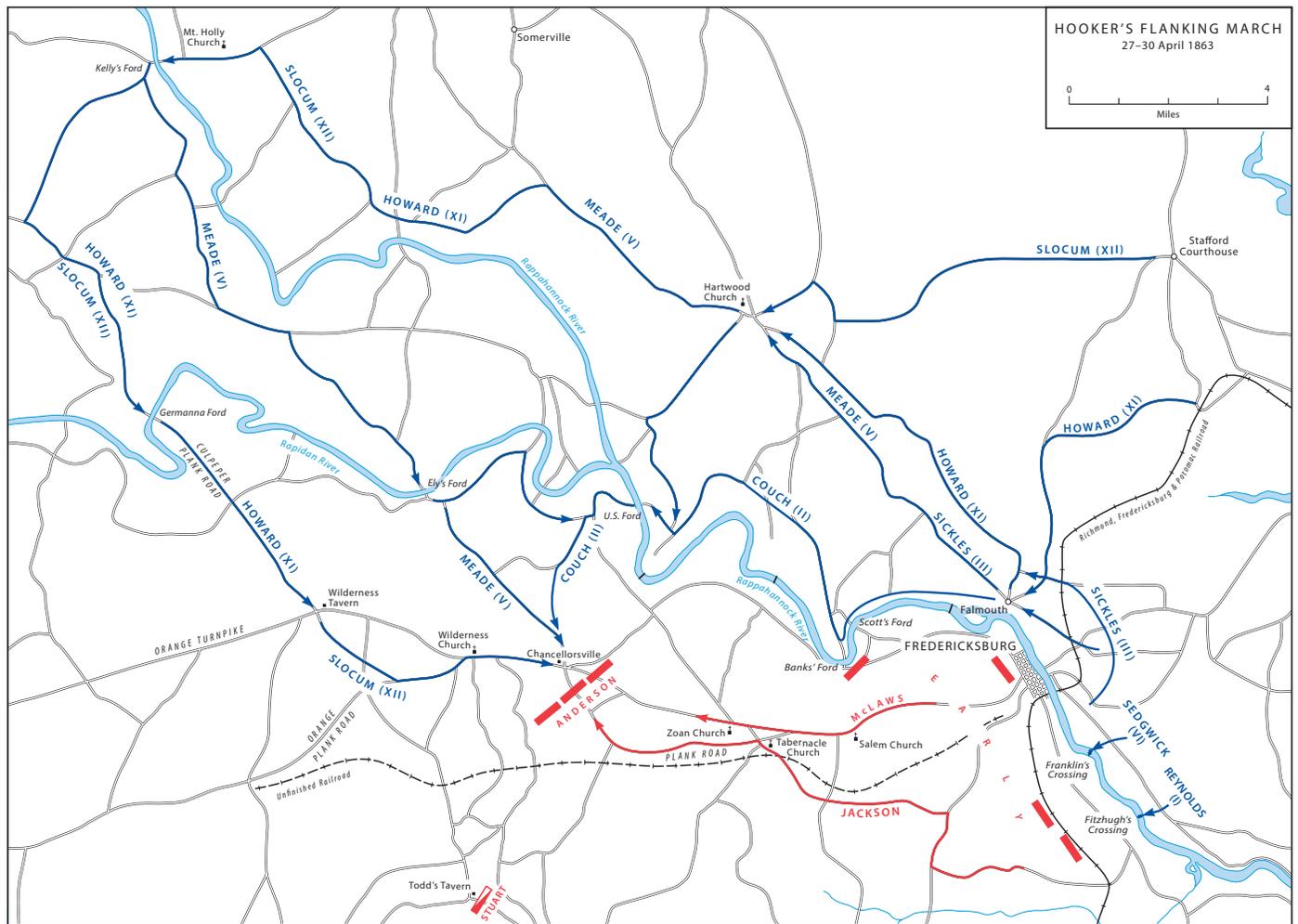
Drenching rainstorms delayed any movement for nearly two weeks, however, and the army did not finally begin to move until 27 April. The 12th New Hampshire, as part of III Corps, did not leave Fredericksburg until 28 April. During their long, circuitous march to the Rappahannock crossing at U.S. Ford, the men heard evidence of the rest of the Army crossing the river and encountering Confederate pickets on the south banks. "Cannons are booming on the bank of the Rappahannock," Sgt. Asa W. Bartlett wrote in his diary on 29 April, "and we hear the sharp crack of sharpes [*sic*] Rifles telling us that the ball is

opening."¹² The 12th, with the rest of III Corps, finally crossed the Rappahannock at U.S. Ford around noon Friday, 1 May, just as elements of Maj. Gen. George G. Meade's V Corps and Maj. Gen. Henry W. Slocum's XII Corps encountered the divisions of Lt. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson along the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road, just east of Chancellorsville. Although the men of the 12th were ordered to remove their knapsacks, load their weapons, and form into a line of battle around 1600, they anxiously remained in reserve for the first day's fighting. At about 2200, they returned to where they had left their knapsacks and bivouacked for the night. "With dead leaves upon the ground for a bed, and the green branches of the forest pines overhead for a covering," the men of the 12th New Hampshire somehow slept, undisturbed, through the night.¹³

On Saturday morning, 2 May, the regiment marched up the Orange Turnpike past the Chancellor House before filing off at a crossroad that lead into the woods onto a cleared elevation known as Hazel Grove. After resting



1. Governor Berry /New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources
2. General Hooker /Library of Congress
3. General Lee /Library of Congress
4. Portrait of Asa Bartlett, shown here as a captain /Internet Archive

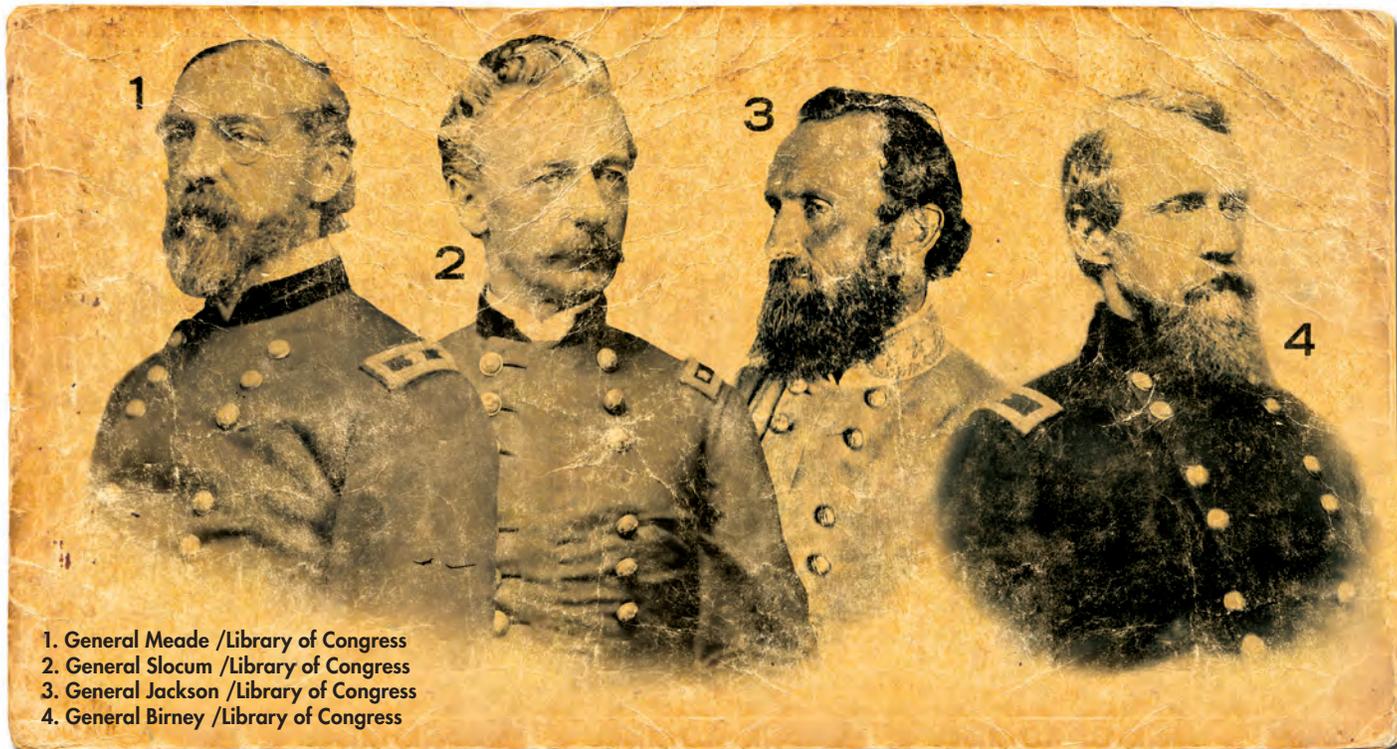


here for a short time, the 12th New Hampshire and the rest of Sickles' III Corps were sent south toward Catharine Furnace to attack what turned out to be the rear of Jackson's flanking column. The regiment was formed into a line of battle, but once again remained in reserve. While the III Corps was still in this position, Jackson's flank attack came down upon the XI Corps in an "unexpected onslaught" on the Army's exposed right flank along the Orange Plank Road. During the chaotic rout of the XI Corps, the 12th New Hampshire, with the rest of General Whipple's Third Division, withdrew from its position near Catharine Furnace and was placed in support of the five batteries that had been positioned to stem the Confederate advance in the vicinity of Hazel Grove. As dusk became night, Jackson's furious attack was halted, and the anxious soldiers from New Hampshire settled down on their arms to try and find any sort of

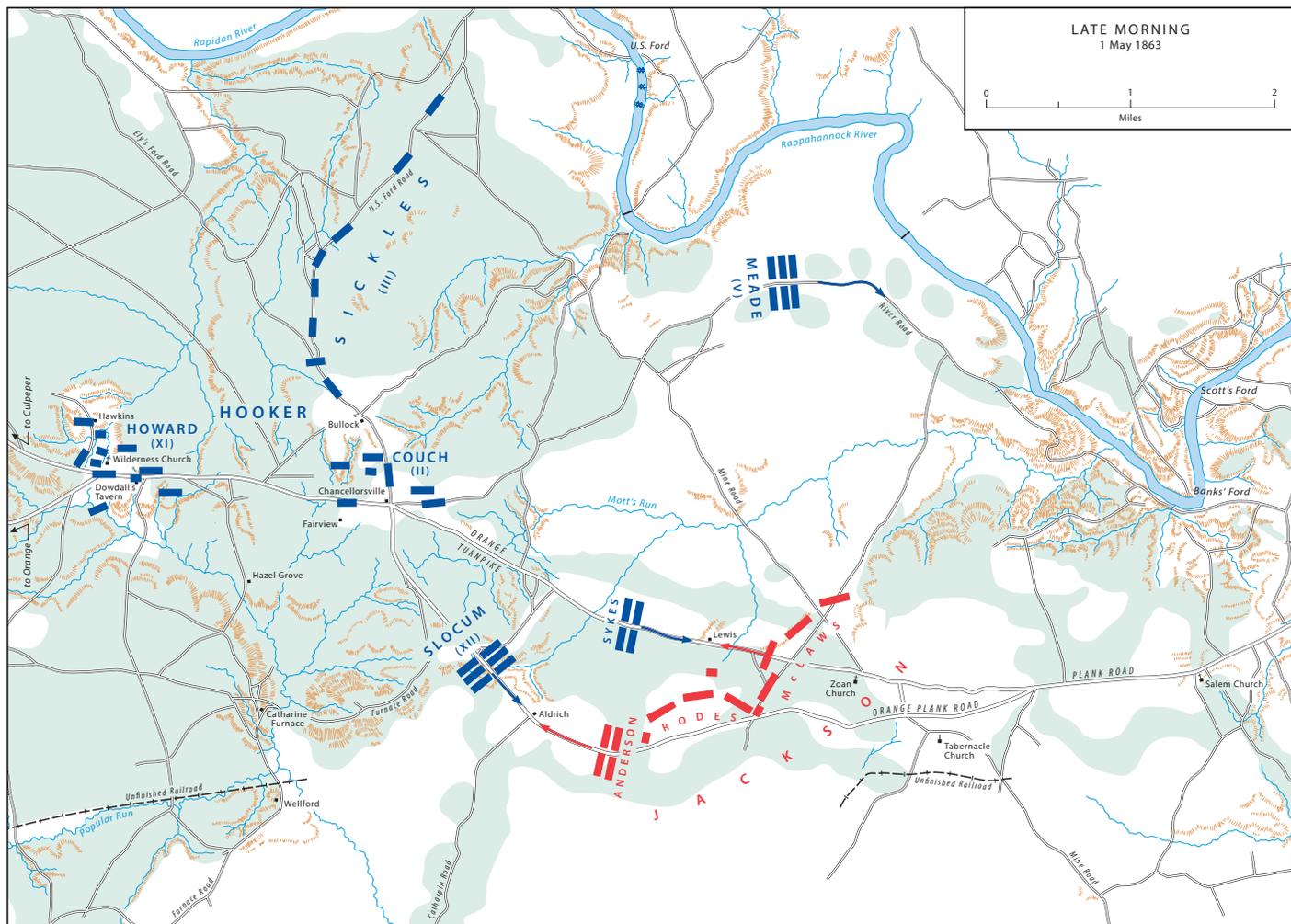
rest before another day that promised heavy fighting.¹⁴

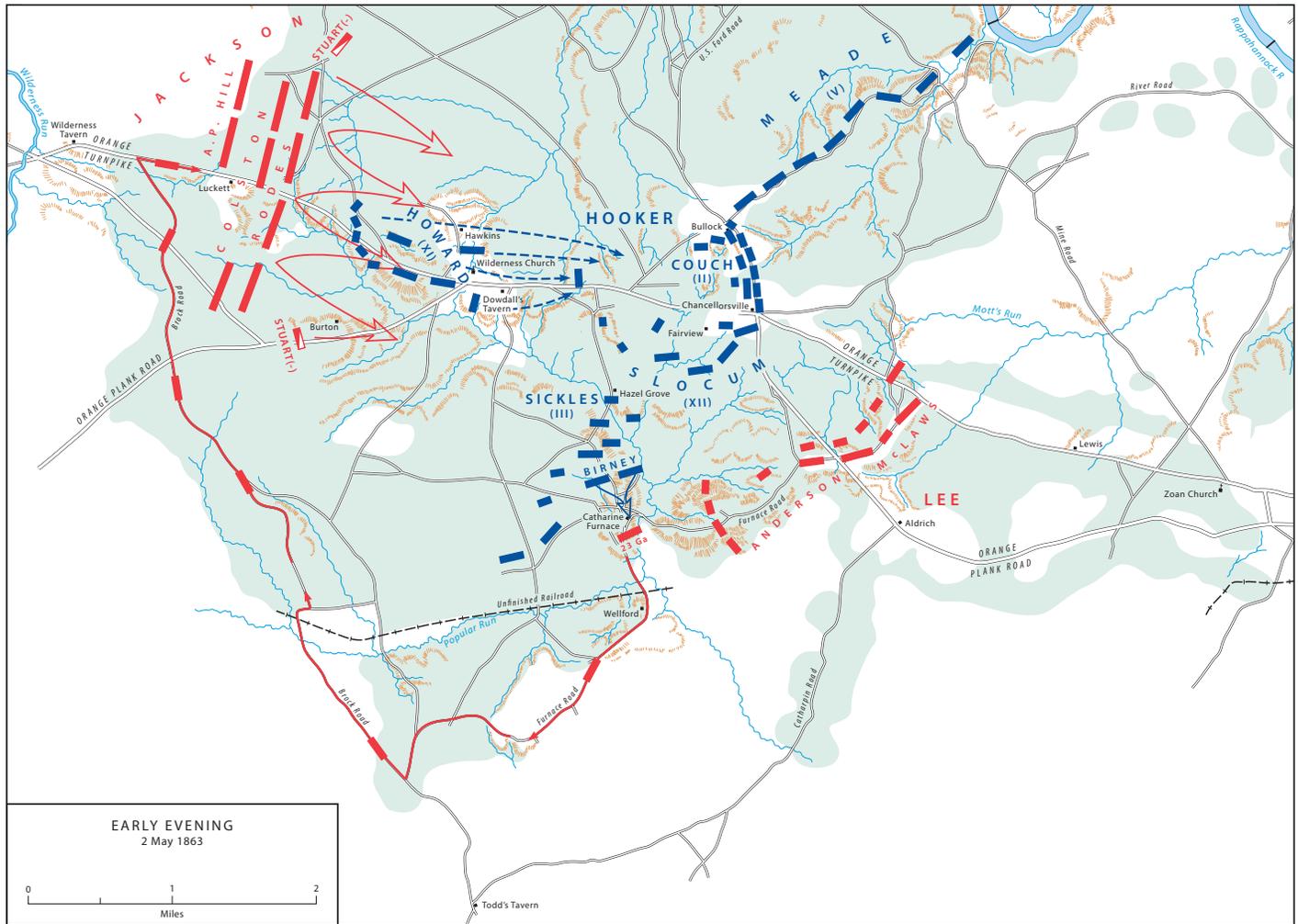
For many of the men in the 12th, however, attempts at sleeping proved futile. Sickles ordered an attack from Hazel Grove toward the Orange Turnpike by two brigades of Brig. Gen. David B. Birney's division, and around midnight, the attack kicked off "within full view" of the 12th's position. The light of the full moon, partially obscured by mist rising from the marshy areas of nearby Lewis Run, was accentuated by flashes of artillery and musket fire. Lt. Joseph S. Tilton, commanding Company H, watched the nearby artillery and saw the futility of the attack, even from afar. "From the position we occupied," Tilton wrote, "it seemed to me as if our shells were as likely to fall among our own men as theirs and so with their own."¹⁵ The wounded from this action were carried to an old stable near the battle line, and the "commingled moans and groans"

of the wounded pierced the chill night air. "The piteous, heart-piercing cries of one poor fellow," the regimental historian wrote, "continuing until the angel of death heard and came to his relief," haunted many of the men of the 12th New Hampshire.¹⁶ The effects of the heavy fighting were not the only things that kept the men of the 12th awake during the night. During the advance toward Catharine Furnace earlier in the day, they had been forced to wade the steep-banked Scott's Run, which was five feet deep in places and therefore "wet nearly every man to his hips."¹⁷ Once the sun went down, the temperature plummeted, and a heavy frost set in. Forced to lie on the cold ground, many still in damp clothes, every soldier suffered from "chilled limbs and shivering bodies." Those who were able kept in continuous motion in order to stay warm; Lieutenant Tilton remembered pacing constantly in front of his company.¹⁸ Even those



1. General Meade /Library of Congress
 2. General Slocum /Library of Congress
 3. General Jackson /Library of Congress
 4. General Birney /Library of Congress





Portrait of Lieutenant Tilton /Internet Archive

undisturbed by the cold, cannon fire, and cries of the wounded had a difficult time sleeping with the expectation that the fierce fighting would renew in the morning.

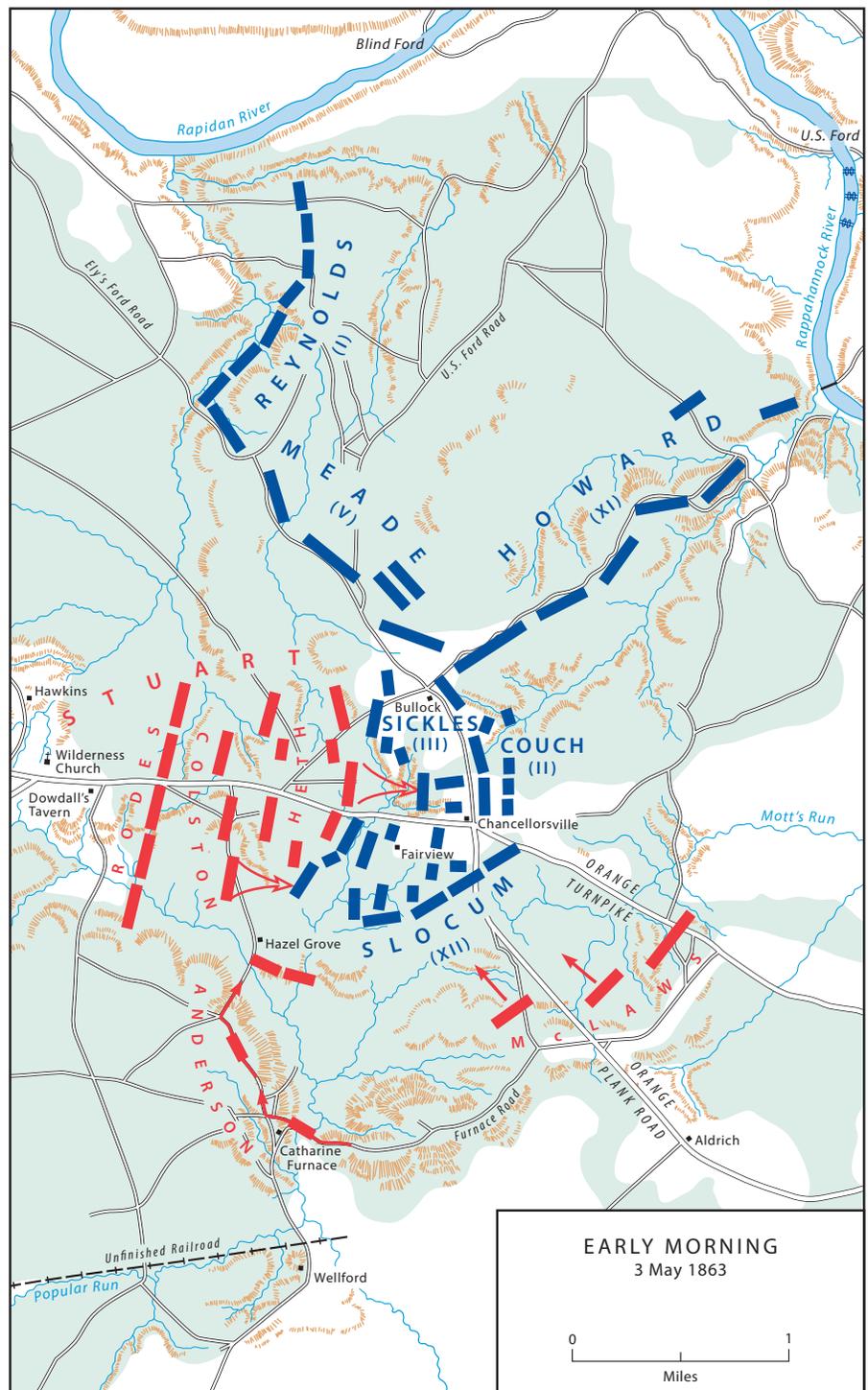
Hazel Grove, the position occupied by the 12th in the misty pre-dawn darkness of 3 May, was the name for the large open plateau that formed an irregular rectangle running roughly northeast and southwest, extending perhaps a quarter of a mile. On the south and east, the plateau sloped off to a marsh and a creek, and a farm house and outbuildings stood in the southern part of the clearing.¹⁹ Although this position offered one of the few cleared and elevated areas on the battlefield in which to provide advantageous artillery fire, it also formed a salient in the Union lines. At the expense of this strong artillery position, Hooker decided to consolidate his forces by withdrawing his artillery, as well as

the divisions of Birney and Whipple, from the high ground at Hazel Grove. He then planned to redeploy them in support of the XII Corps surrounding the high ground at Fairview, about a half-mile to the northeast and another half-mile directly west of Chancellorsville. For Hooker and the men of the III and XII Corps, the abandonment of this position would soon prove disastrous.

Just before dawn on Sunday, 3 May, Whipple's division, being the closest to the Confederate lines, received the order to abandon their positions at Hazel Grove. The 12th New Hampshire quickly filed down through a narrow, marshy valley toward their new positions in support of the artillery that occupied the high ground at Fairview. As they passed a wooden fence, the men were ordered to "shoulder a rail" to lay across the marsh; the retreating Union artillery from Hazel Grove needed a makeshift corduroy

road to pass over. Upon reaching the heights at Fairview, the 12th was then marched down the hill into a ravine along the banks of a small tributary of Lewis Run, where they were ordered to lie down in a position roughly just south and perpendicular to the Orange Turnpike. The regiment was in the second line of battle; to their front, a space of dead grass of about a “half a gunshot” rose gently up to the edge of the woods, where the XII Corps brigade of Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Ruger occupied the first line. To the right of Ruger, also in the first line but here protected by a line of hastily felled trees, stumps, and rails, were Col. Samuel Ross’ 123d Regiment, York State Volunteers and 3d Regiment Infantry, Maryland Volunteers, with the latter’s right flank abutting the Orange Turnpike. Brig. Gen. Gershom Mott’s III Corps brigade, also with its right flank on the Orange Turnpike, occupied the second line to the right of the 12th New Hampshire. Behind Mott and the New Hampshire regiment, in reserve, lay the XII Corps brigade of Brig. Gen. Joseph F. Knipe.²⁰

As the sun rose over the woods to the east, the mist from the chilly night quickly dissipated. “Never was there a more beautiful sunrise, not a cloud in the sky,” remembered Pvt. Rice C. Bull of the nearby 123d New York. The “ideal Sunday morning, warm and fair” was quickly spoiled by the renewed Confederate offensive.²¹ Jackson’s troops, now under the command of Maj. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart following Jackson’s wounding the night before, had reignited the previous evening’s attack in the hopes of reuniting the separated wings of Lee’s army. The boom and crash of cannon and musket fire reverberated through the woods in front of the 12th New Hampshire, signaling the opening of the battle. To the regiment’s left at Hazel Grove, the men of General Birney’s III Corps division served as a rearguard for the evacuation of the Union artillery position at Hazel Grove. Attacked in force by Brig. Gen. James J. Archer’s brigade, Brig. Gen. Charles K. Graham’s Pennsylvanians were unable to hold and soon followed the rest of the III Corps to Fairview. Many soldiers



distinctly remembered this “collapse” of the Union left, as it provided the Confederates with an advantageous position in which to enfilade their lines with artillery and musket fire. “We could very soon see our troops coming toward us; our line on the left had given way, the enemy pressing,” Lieutenant Tilton remembered.²² Graham’s retreat from Hazel Grove was anything but orderly; the 114th

Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers, conspicuously clad in Zouave uniforms, crashed pell-mell through the Federal lines with “less than half their number of the enemy close at their heels,” causing chaos within the Union ranks.²³

At some point during the early morning, the 12th New Hampshire lost contact with Colonel Bowman, their brigade commander, as well



1. Thomas Ruger, shown here as a colonel, c. 1862 /Library of Congress
 2. Colonel Ross /Courtesy of Hugh Blackmer
 3. Gershom Mott, shown here as a major general, c. 1865 /Library of Congress
 4. General Knipe /Library of Congress
 5. Rice C. Bull, shown here as a sergeant, c. 1864 /Rensselaer County Historical Society

as the other two regiments in their brigade. After retreating from Hazel Grove, the 84th Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers, and the 110th Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers, apparently did not follow the 12th New Hampshire to the second line of battle in the ravine below Fairview, but instead were placed in the third line in front of the Federal batteries on the hill. Soon after the morning's fighting began, the rifle pits to the south of Fairview were abandoned by elements of Brig. Gen. John W. Geary's Second Division of the XII Corps; Bowman, deciding that unless the rifle pits were secured "the enemy would have [them] before sunrise," ordered the 84th and 110th Pennsylvania into the vacant breastworks. The 12th New Hampshire would consequently enter the battle as an independent command.²⁴

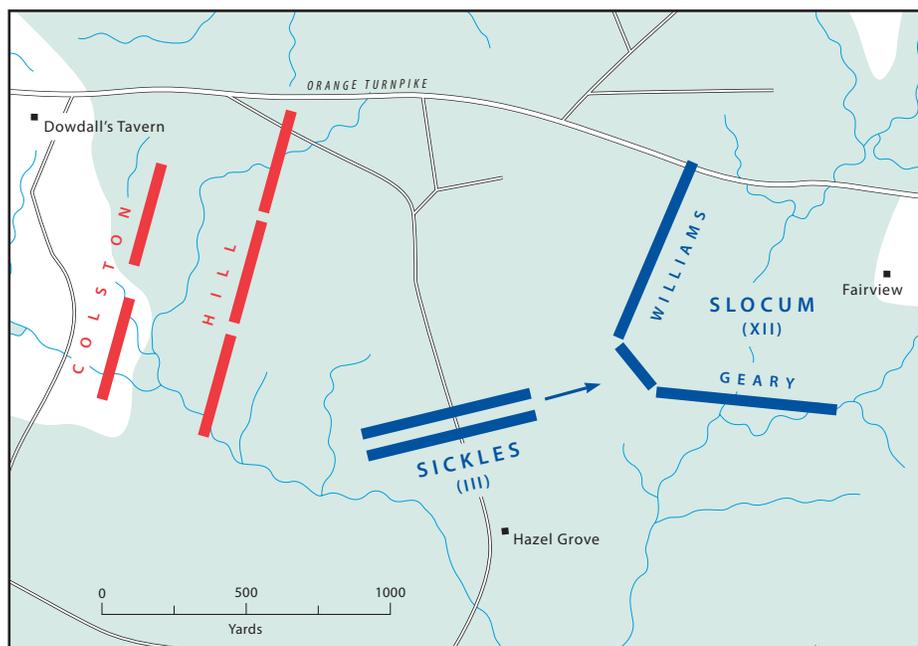
The first line, General Ruger's brigade and the 123d New York and 3d Maryland, quickly became engaged in the woods in front of the 12th's position. The 3d Maryland broke under the pressure of the Confederate attack, spearheaded by Brig. Gen. James H. Lane's North Carolina brigade, and fled the battlefield; the 5th Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, and the 8th Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, of Mott's brigade, moved up to the first line to occupy the position vacated by the Maryland men. The 7th Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, of the same brigade, advanced in front of the breastworks and maintained a flanking position close to and nearly parallel to the Orange Turnpike. Farther south, Ruger's brigade counterattacked and moved up into the woods after repulsing the first wave of attackers, leaving a vacated position along the edge of the

woods that the 12th eventually moved forward and occupied.²⁵

As the regiment waited to enter the action that morning, the anxiety among the men increased as casualties mounted from enemy fire. Stray bullets whizzed across the ground in front, slicing the field of dead grass and scattered trees along the edge of the woods. Pvt. Uriah Kidder, while lying here next to his brother Henry, suddenly turned to Sgt. Richard Musgrove and said, "Richard, Henry is dead." A stray musket ball had struck Pvt. Henry Kidder on the top of the head and passed out near his right eye, killing him instantly. Privates Charles Gilman, of Company A, Winsor Huntress, of Company B, and William Worth, of Company G, were also killed by stray Confederate fire. Many others were wounded, including Capt. Orlando Keyes, the commander of Company D. Keyes was struck in the



III Corps retreats from Hazel Grove just before dawn on 3 May 1863



calf, a wound serious enough to merit evacuation, but he nevertheless refused to leave his men.²⁶

Mental and physical strain were exacerbated by sheer volume of noise that emanated all around them. Posted on a low sandy knoll at Fairview directly to their rear, Federal artillery batteries fired shells and canister directly into the woods across the creek in front. The batteries were placed so close that “the heat from the guns as they were discharged was plainly felt by us,” Richard Musgrove remembered, “and the shot and shells screeched as they passed over us.”²⁷ Others were forced to cover their faces and plug their ears due to the furious fire of the cannons. In addition to the shriek of the cannon, the bursting of shells, and the “awful and continuous roar of musketry,” the “crash of falling timber could be heard above the com-

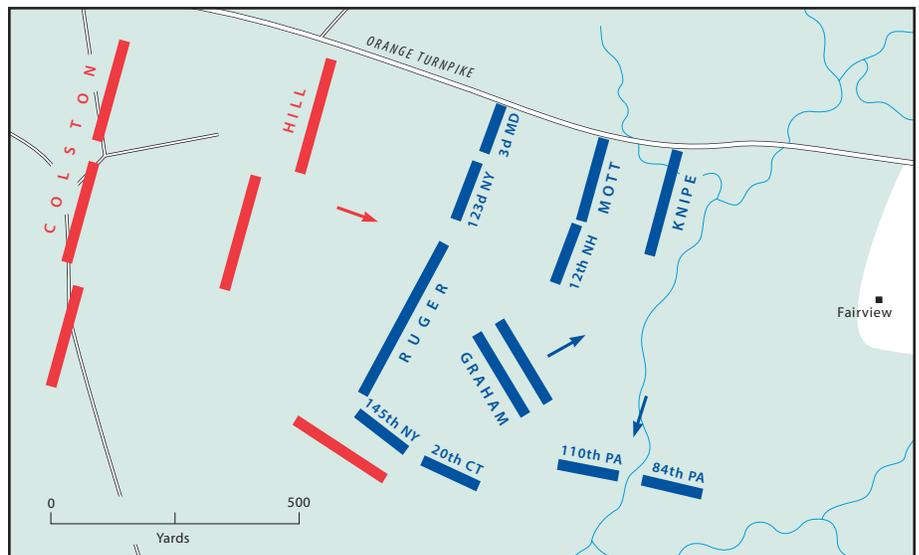
bination of [such] unearthly noises” as the trees in front of them were hacked apart by artillery fire.²⁸

Although General Ruger’s brigade had doggedly maintained a forward position some several hundred yards into the woods and had stymied every Confederate attack, by around 0830 they were nearly out of ammunition. Scattered elements of the III Corps were ordered to relieve Ruger’s position south of the Orange Turnpike; the first unit to do so was General Graham’s brigade, consisting of the 57th, 63d, 68th, 105th, 114th, and 141st Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers. Having regrouped from his chaotic retreat from Hazel Grove at dawn, Graham entered the woods on the left flank of the 12th New Hampshire. The Pennsylvanians charged forward up over the brow of the low hill just inside the wood line, where 150 yards in front of them, the 27th Regiment, Indiana Volunteers, of Ruger’s brigade, was still engaged with the Confederates of the first two waves whom they had driven back to the opposite side of an extensive line of the breastworks that had been erected by Union forces on the night of 1 May.²⁹ After quickly establishing his line at the crest of the hill, Graham’s brigade charged forward, his left and center regiments assisting the 27th Indiana in driving the Confederates out from behind the protection of the works. At about this time, the 12th New Hampshire and another regiment, probably the 123d New York, were also ordered to advance into the woods. The 123d New York, which had maintained its position along the edge of the woods behind their crude log barricades, apparently did not immediately advance. Colonel Potter ordered the 12th New Hampshire into the trees beyond, therefore completely unaware of the presence of Graham’s Pennsylvania brigade and with his flanks seemingly unsecured. The 123d New York, however, eventually did advance over the breastworks and into the woods, probably just after the New Hampshire regiment to its left.³⁰

Confederate Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur’s brigade, consisting of



Federal entrenchments across Orange Turnpike about one mile west of Chancellorsville



The Confederate advance at dawn on 3 May 1863

the 2d, 4th, 14th, and 30th Regiment, North Carolina Troops, advanced on a collision course with the Granite State men as part of the third and final wave of the Confederate attack on Fairview. Ramseur’s left regiments, the 4th and seven companies of the 2d North Carolina, had encountered

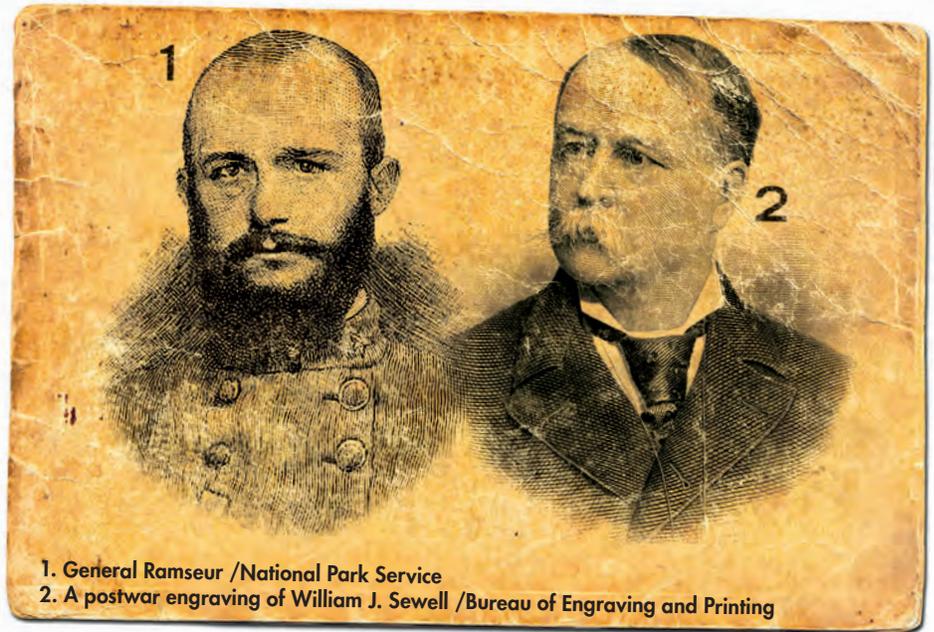
little Federal resistance in the woods directly abutting the Orange Turnpike and were quickly bearing down on the exposed 123d New York, forcing them to begin falling back out of the woods. However, Ramseur’s remaining regiments, the 14th and two companies of the 2d North Carolina, were unable

to advance in fear of being completely rolled up by the strong presence of Graham's Pennsylvanians directly to his right.³¹ They were compelled to halt some 150 to 200 yards in the rear of the rest of the brigade's advance, roughly parallel with and to the right of Graham. As the 12th New Hampshire entered the woods and crested the brow of the hill just inside the tree line, they therefore unknowingly confronted a weak spot in Ramseur's attack; the portion of Ramseur's brigade directly in front of them could not advance, and the New Hampshire regiment had unknowingly flanked the 4th and most of the 2d North Carolina.³²

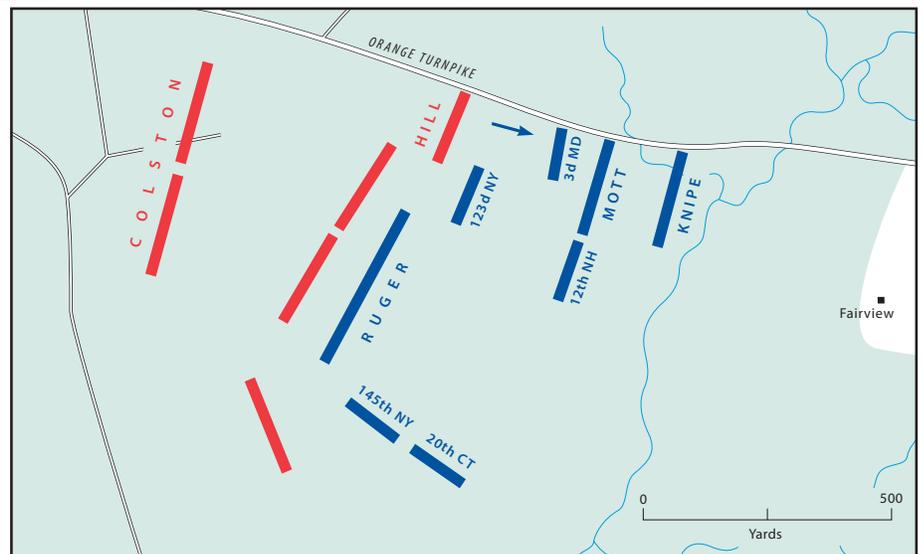
Almost immediately after establishing a line of battle along the crest of the hill just inside the wood line, Colonel Potter ordered Companies C, K, and B to half-face to the right, where they unleashed a volley into the North Carolinians flank. At the same time that the three companies of the 12th New Hampshire fired into the North Carolinians, General Mott's III Corps brigade, which at that time had fallen back to the brook to regroup and replenish ammunition, charged forward, bypassing the then-retreating 123d New York. In a sharp action, Mott's six regiments (now under the command of Col. William J. Sewell due to Mott's wounding) captured much of the 2d North Carolina and their colors, forcing the scattered remnants of Ramseur's left regiments to retreat. Mott's brigade then fell back over the crest of the hill and out of the woods, never to be seen again by the men of the 12th. The New Hampshire soldiers, however, maintained their exposed position on the hill, drawing fire from both the rest of Ramseur's brigade and the Confederates at the line of breastworks farther into the woods.³³

"THE REAL WORK OF THE DAY"³⁴

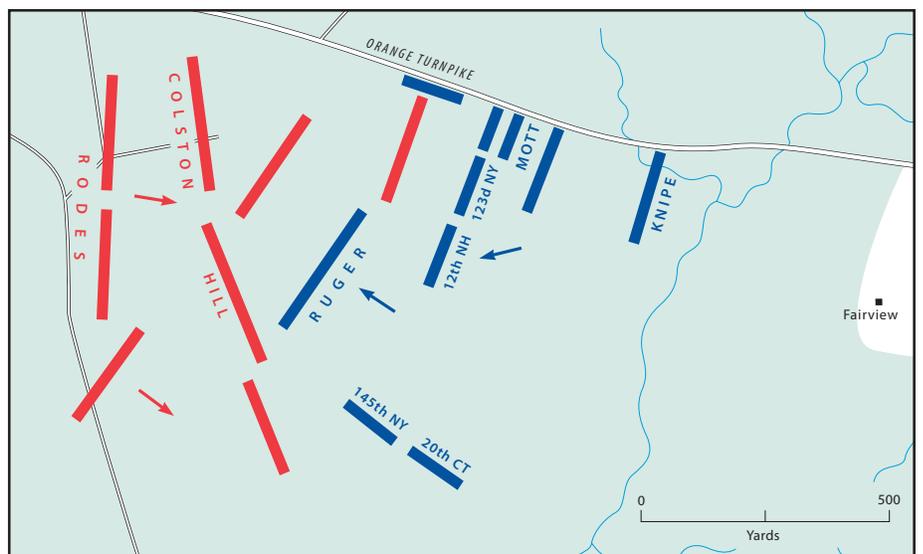
The woods here were a mixture of dense thickets of second-growth small pine and scrub white oak trees that offered little protection from enemy gunfire.³⁵ Therefore, the display of fire-power that converged on the position of the 12th New Hampshire, exposed along the crest of the wooded hill



1. General Ramseur /National Park Service
2. A postwar engraving of William J. Sewell /Bureau of Engraving and Printing



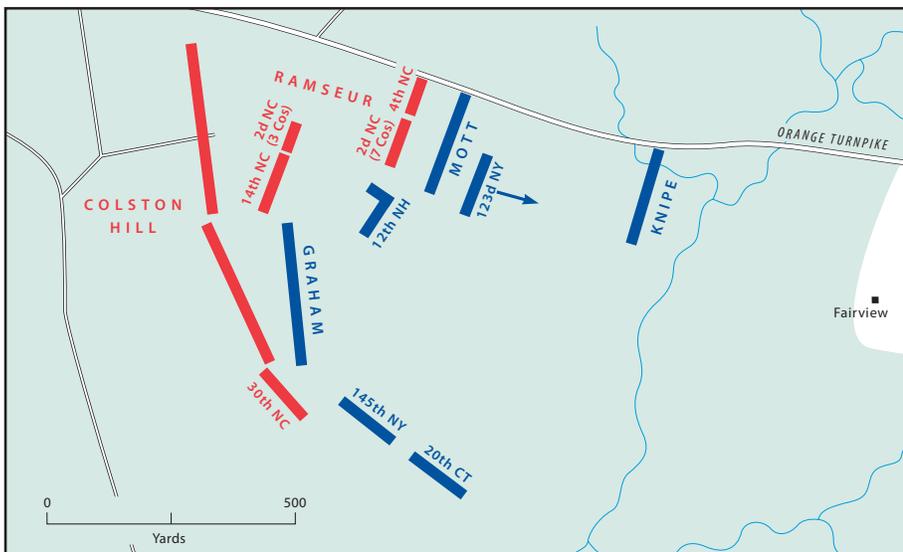
Opening attacks, 3 May 1863



Opening attacks, continued, 3 May 1863



1. Portrait of Pvt. Henry Kidder /Internet Archive
 2. Portrait of Capt. Orlando Keyes /Internet Archive
 3. Portrait of Richard Musgrove, shown here as a captain /Internet Archive
 4. Portrait of Uriah Kidder, shown here as a sergeant /Internet Archive
 5. Portrait of Pvt. William Worth /Internet Archive
 6. Portrait of Pvt. Winsor Huntress /Internet Archive
 7. Portrait of Pvt. Charles Gilman /Internet Archive



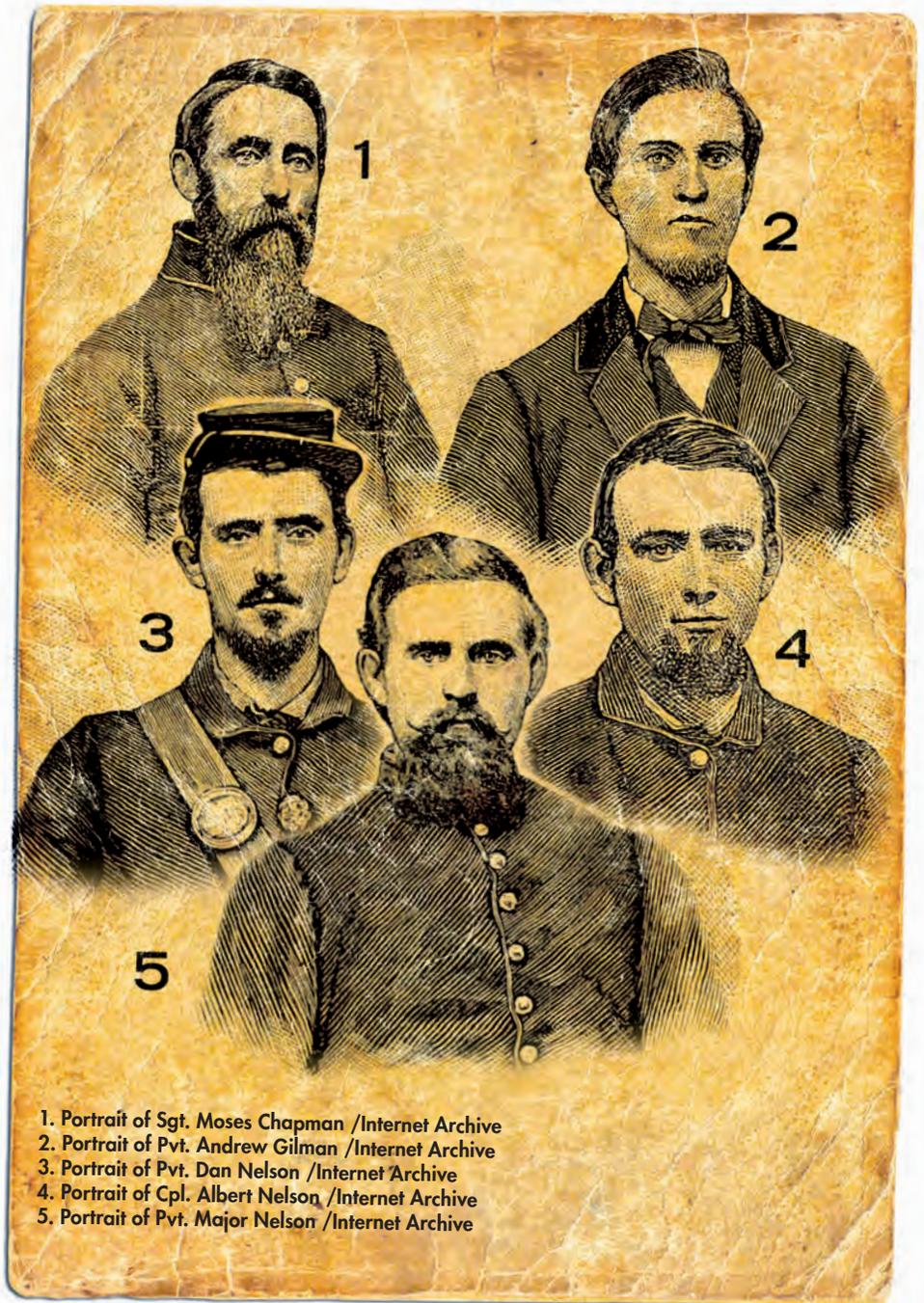
The relief of General Ruger's brigade, around 0830, 3 May 1863

and with no protective breastworks, quickly “taught them a lesson . . . for every man has his tree behind which he is fighting, though most of the trees are too small to afford but a partial protection from the rebel bullets.”³⁶ Sgt. Moses Chapman, from Company I, was awestruck when he set his gun against a small tree for only a minute or two to get out his extra cartridges. During that time, six bullets struck the young tree. Pvt. Andrew Gilman, of Company D, was so severely wounded in the left hip that he could not make his way back out of the fighting. He was forced to lay down behind the trunk of an oak tree in order to save himself from getting hit a second time.³⁷ One soldier's cap was blown off

by the discharge of a frightened and careless comrade's rifle behind him; a bullet also struck him in the ankle, cut his stocking nearly completely off, and lodged in his boot. A minié ball ricocheted off the lock of Cpl. Benjamin M. Tilton's gun, passed through his lungs, shattered his shoulder blade, and stopped in his knapsack. Tilton felt no immediate pain, and in a state of shock, hurriedly looked for another musket to continue the fight. As he bent down to pick up a discarded weapon, Tilton saw blood coming out from his shoe. Finally feeling faint, Tilton managed to escape to the banks of the brook, where he collapsed from the loss of blood.³⁸

Pvt. Dan Nelson, of Bristol, went to the assistance of his brother Albert when he saw that the corporal had been hit in the head by a piece of shell. While helping Albert off the field, Dan also found his other brother Pvt. Major (his given name). Major was only slightly wounded, so he was able to assist Dan in hauling Albert Nelson away to potential safety. A few minutes later, however, Dan was shot in the back, the bullet passing through his bowels and protruding in front. The Confederates were so close that Dan begged his brothers to leave him to his fate rather than they all be captured. Albert and Major reluctantly left their mortally wounded brother behind, and would never see him again.³⁹

The heavy fire also caused a disproportionate amount of casualties in the officer ranks, who made conspicuous targets out in front of the line. The fire from Ramseur's brigade was so heavy in the center of the line that Colonel Potter was wounded early in the fighting when a musket ball struck his calf, just below the knee. Although the wound was not severe, the commander was assisted out of the woods and hobbled toward the Chancellor House a half-mile away. Maj. George Savage, commanding Company A, sustained a wound through the jaw that was so severe that he never saw action with the regiment again. His brother, Capt. Moses Savage, was fatally shot through the left eye. He was carried out of the woods and to the edge of the brook, where he soon



1. Portrait of Sgt. Moses Chapman /Internet Archive
 2. Portrait of Pvt. Andrew Gilman /Internet Archive
 3. Portrait of Pvt. Dan Nelson /Internet Archive
 4. Portrait of Cpl. Albert Nelson /Internet Archive
 5. Portrait of Pvt. Major Nelson /Internet Archive

expired. Captain Keyes, who had been wounded earlier and refused to retire, was shot through the heart while defiantly waving his sword in the air in the direction of the enemy. When struck by the bullet, Keyes sprang into the air for a second, then fell dead at the feet of his men. Thirty-seven-year-old Lt. George Cram, only recently promoted to the officer ranks in February, was also killed when a musket ball passed through his neck and severed both jugular veins, which caused blood to "[spurt] out on both sides." By the time the 12th came off the field, nineteen

out of its twenty-four officers had been killed or wounded.⁴⁰

During the chaotic defense of Fairview that morning, no place on the battlefield was safe. Pvt. Reuben Leavitt Jr. was struck in the knee and fell to the ground during the morning's fighting. His friends, Pvts. Edwin Kelley and John Philbrick, jumped at the opportunity to carry him from the field as a way to escape the heat of battle. When they stopped to rest against the walls of a nearby log house, a stray Union artillery shell burst directly over their heads. Twenty-year-

old Kelley was struck in the head by a shell fragment and killed instantly; his lifeless body slumped across the legs of the helpless Leavitt, who had to call for help to have the body removed. Pvt. George Reynolds was also killed while assisting a wounded comrade to the rear.⁴¹

Even in the midst of such death and violence, occasional comical and even amusing events occurred. Richard Musgrove, of Company D, remembered a man from another company skulking behind a tree, refusing to fire his weapon at the enemy. Colonel Potter, in an effort to coerce the man back to action, grabbed him by the shirt collar and struck him with his sword. The man continuously jumped to one side to avoid the blows, resulting in a comical situation where the two appeared to be dancing around in a circle.⁴²

Other amusing events ended much more tragically. Musgrove saw another man skulking behind a tree during the battle, this time a sergeant in his own company. Pvt. William Martin, a soldier who had been accused of desertion, went to Lt. Bradbury Morrill and asked him to order the sergeant from behind the tree. Not long after, Martin himself was struck in the arm by a minié ball. Although the wound was not severe, he apparently dropped his gun and “bounded like a deer to the rear.” While in the hospital, Martin remarked to a visiting comrade, “Now I have something that will take me out of the service.” Despite not appearing serious, the wound killed him a month later.⁴³

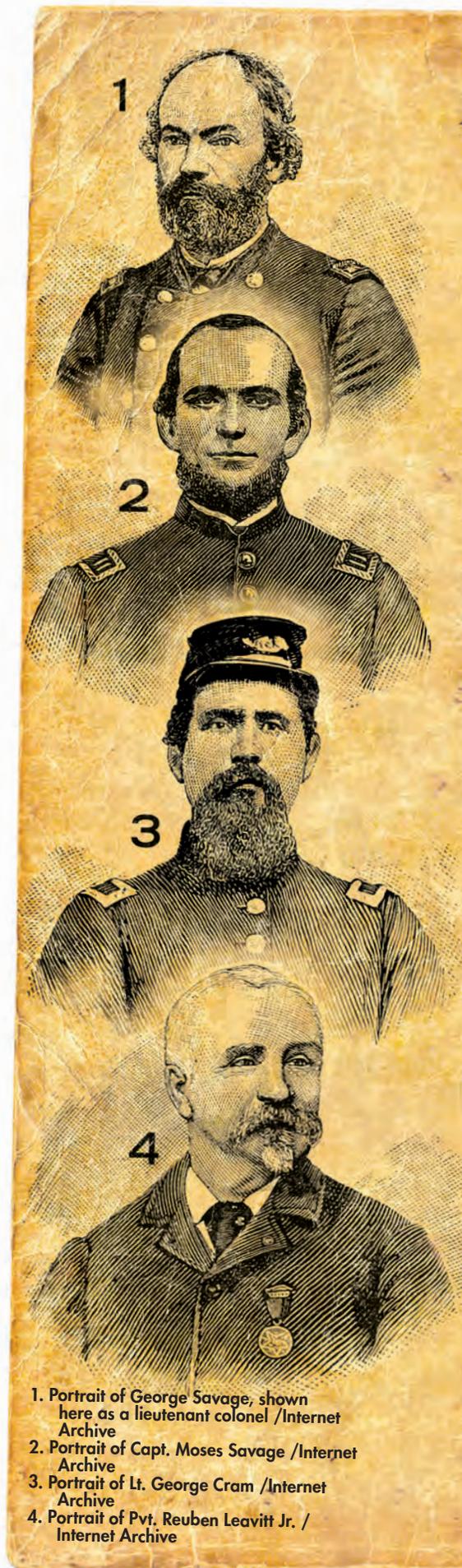
Other soldiers did not let the chaotic nature of combat disrupt familiar habits. Pvt. Joseph Stockbridge, of Company B, was an excessive chewer of tobacco. During the intense fighting, Stockbridge bit off and spit out so many cartridge ends that he lost the cud of chewing tobacco that had been in his mouth. The private was cool enough under fire to stop, take the tobacco plug from his pocket, and bite it off, “while the bullets were flying like hail around his head.” Cpl. Albert C. Evans, of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, was wounded in the hand and also lost a finger during the fighting. Toward

the end of the battle, Evans took shelter behind a tree to get off one more round at the swarming Confederates. As Sergeant Bartlett passed him, he was heard to call out, “I say, Asa, this is real old business,” an apparent favorite expression of his.⁴⁴

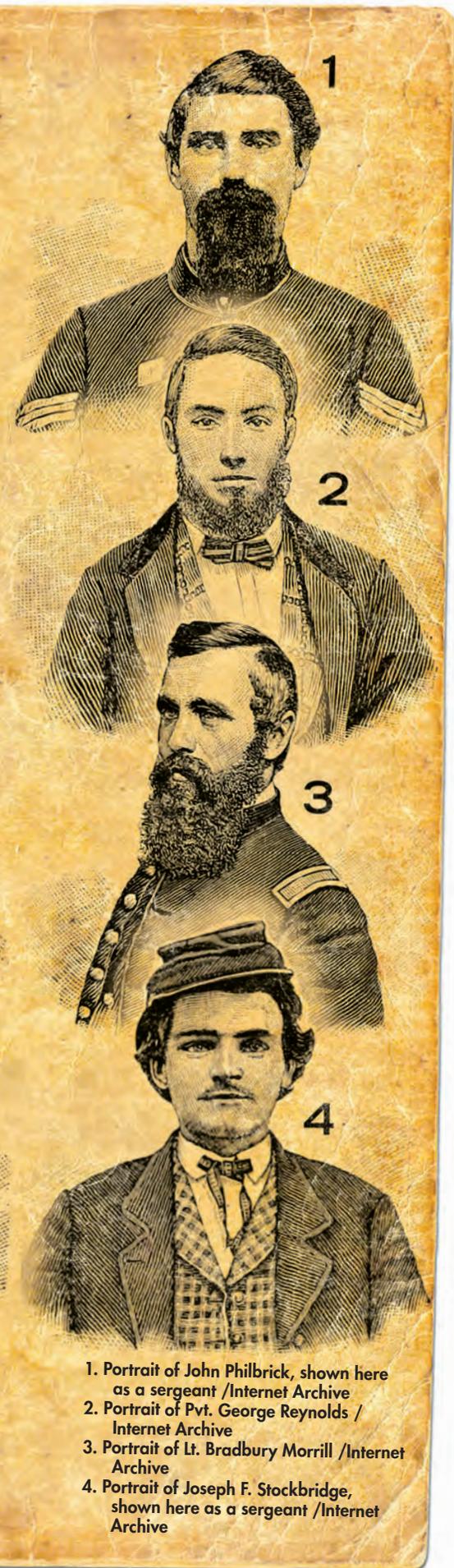
“RALLY ‘ROUND THE FLAG BOYS, AND GET OUT OF THIS”⁴⁵

By about 1000, the Federals were being rapidly driven by the Confederates from nearly every position that they had held at dawn south of the Orange Turnpike, and a last line of defense was hastily formed around the Chancellor House. General Graham’s brigade, which had frustrated the Confederate attack by stubbornly holding onto their positions along the thousand-yard-long log barricade to the left front of the 12th New Hampshire, could not hold their advanced position any longer and were forced to pull back due to a lack of ammunition and the pressure of renewed Confederate attacks. As the Pennsylvanians regrouped along the crest of the same knoll where they had first established a line of battle, the 114th Pennsylvania came into view of some of the men in the 12th New Hampshire. Unaware that the Zouave regiment had been furiously engaged for some time, the men of the 12th thought that these soldiers had “more show than fight,” as they fired only one round before wildly retreating to the rear. “They were old fighters and perhaps took in the real situation more than we did,” Richard Musgrove recalled, “for this was our first musketry engagement, and we did not know enough to retreat.”⁴⁶ When General Graham’s brigade finally fell back out of the woods, the 12th New Hampshire was the only Federal unit left in the patch of woods between Hazel Grove and Fairview.

The situation looked bleak for the unwounded men of the 12th who remained on the firing line. They had only been issued sixty rounds of ammunition before entering the woods, and the furious fighting of over an hour had most of the men down to their last few rounds. Many had already used their last cartridges;



1. Portrait of George Savage, shown here as a lieutenant colonel /Internet Archive
2. Portrait of Capt. Moses Savage /Internet Archive
3. Portrait of Lt. George Cram /Internet Archive
4. Portrait of Pvt. Reuben Leavitt Jr. / Internet Archive



1. Portrait of John Philbrick, shown here as a sergeant /Internet Archive
2. Portrait of Pvt. George Reynolds / Internet Archive
3. Portrait of Lt. Bradbury Morrill /Internet Archive
4. Portrait of Joseph F. Stockbridge, shown here as a sergeant /Internet Archive

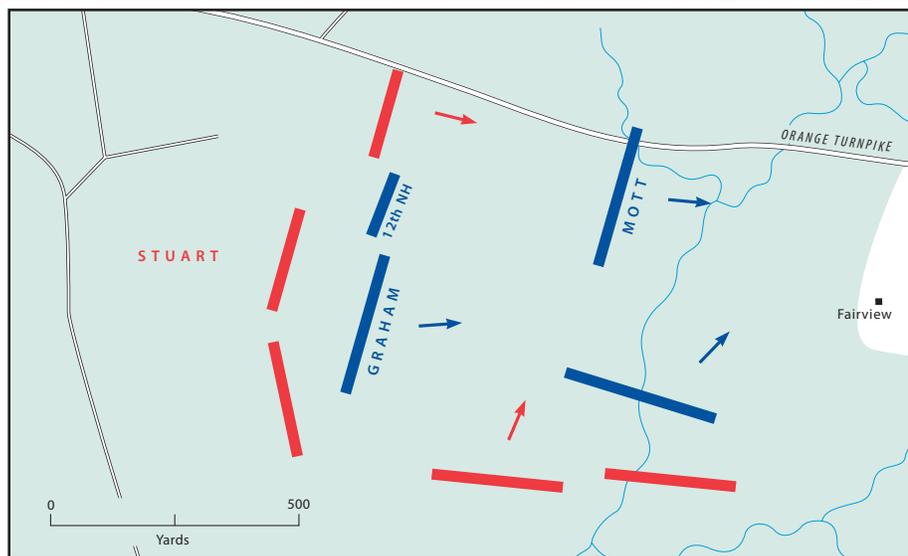
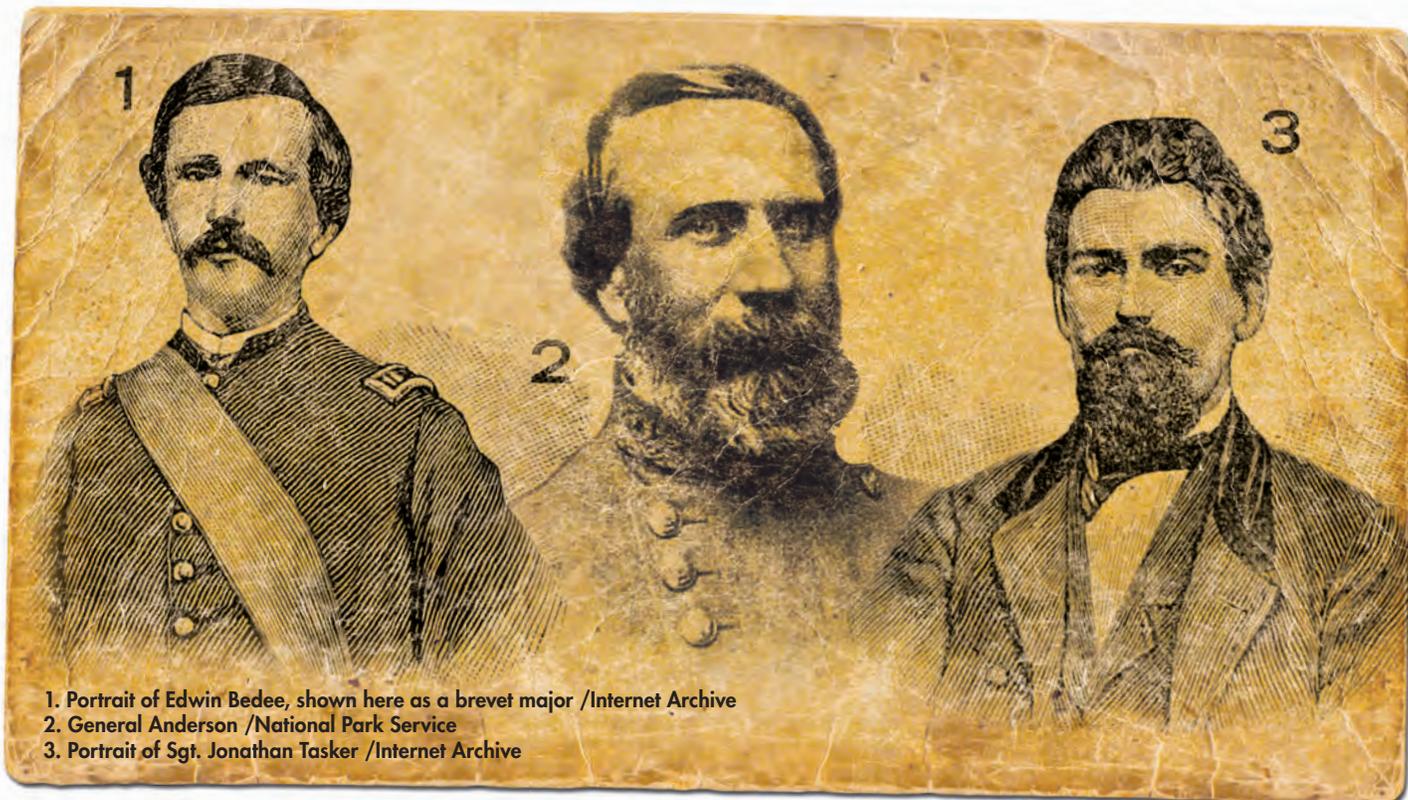
Lt. Edwin Bedee remembered that they were forced to take ammunition from the dead and wounded for quite some time. Furthermore, many of the muskets were fouled by the heavy firing, and soldiers were forced to pick up those discarded on the ground. Soldiers could only load those still in use by using the trunk of a tree to force the ramrod down the barrel.⁴⁷ The tired troops of the first two waves of Confederate attacks—coupled with Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson’s fresh brigades advancing from the south—had replenished their ammunition and made more determined attempts to dislodge the Federal defenders. They spilled out of the woods onto the open plain of Fairview and planted their flags in plain sight of the Chancellor House, barely 750 yards distant. The Confederate batteries that had been pounding the 12th New Hampshire’s position for several hours from Hazel Grove quickly followed, careening through the marshy ravine before climbing the scarred hill and unlimbering on the plateau of Fairview.⁴⁸ The 12th’s position had somehow been bypassed and had become untenable; the regiment was nearly entirely surrounded and close to having their only avenue of retreat cut off.

By this time, only about 25 to 30 men and officers remained on the firing line. Lieutenant Bedee suddenly found himself to be the highest-ranking officer left, and immediately took command of the regiment. Bedee decided that it meant certain death or capture if the regiment held its position any longer. The young lieutenant issued a general order to retreat, which was passed along among the survivors over the crash and roar of musket and artillery fire. As the men of the 12th New Hampshire left their fallen behind at the position that they had so stubbornly held for over an hour, some of the very last Union defenders in the woods south of the Orange Turnpike had finally given way to the swarming Confederates.⁴⁹

The retreat of the 12th New Hampshire was chaotic and no less deadly

than their stand in the woods that morning. Neither the state nor the national colors remained on the battle line; both had been carried to the rear when their bearers, Sgt. Jonathan Tasker and Cpl. William Straw, were severely wounded. With no flag to “rally around,” most of the scattered survivors, after crossing the brook at the edge of the woods, fled individually up the steep ravine toward the open plateau at Fairview. The scene that greeted them there was terrifying. The open plain that had to be crossed to reach the Chancellor House was thickly strewn with dead and wounded, and the display of fire continued to be devastating and tremendous as the Confederate forces spilled out of the woods on all sides. One lieutenant recalled that there “seemed to be a continuous bursting of shells in all directions.” “It seems a wonder that any man could pass through the storm of shot and shell that swept this field and live,” Richard Musgrove remembered.⁵⁰ Not all escaped the effects of this awesome display of firepower. A man running to the right of Musgrove fell to the ground “with a piercing cry of pain or terror.” Another poor soldier, assisted by two of his comrades, tried to make his way to the Chancellor House despite the flesh being so torn away from his hips that one could see the joints moving within the sockets.⁵¹

The new defensive perimeter around the Chancellor House was equally in turmoil. General Sickles ordered the shattered remnants of his corps to “fall in here, with no reference to regiments, brigades, or divisions. You are all my men! We must hold this line if every man of us should fall!”⁵² As the small band of survivors of the 12th New Hampshire dashed across the open plain toward Chancellorsville, Sickles, with a keen eye, somehow spotted the small specks of blue amid the onrushing tide of gray. The Federal batteries, which had been loaded with canister to attack the Confederates at close range, were ordered to temporarily hold their fire, and the exhausted remnant of New Hamp-



Collapse of the Union positions south of the Orange Turnpike at approximately 1000, 3 May 1863

shire soldiers scammed into relative safety behind the Union artillery. As the men moved hurriedly past the Chancellor House to the woods in the rear, Lieutenant Bedee became the final casualty of that bloody morning when he was knocked down by a shell fragment wound to the head. The regiment went into the battle under the command of a colonel, but Henry French, a second lieu-

tenant, led the 12th New Hampshire off the field at Chancellorsville.⁵³

"THE REGIMENT IS A WRECK FROM HARD FIGHTING"⁵⁴

For the small group of unwounded survivors who made it safely to the Chancellor House, the end of their battle brought exhaustion, exasperation, and a sobering realization of the

events that had transpired that Sunday morning. "Up to the time of rejoining my comrades here I had been so engrossed with the scenes of the day that no thought of home or friends had entered my mind," Richard Musgrove remembered upon waking up from his immediate post-fight slumber. But as he sat down among his surviving comrades, his mind "flashed to far-away home," and as he "thought of the sad news that must be borne them, tears came freely."⁵⁵ Roll call, which came early the next day, was another sobering reminder of the 12th's heavy fighting the previous morning. Of the roughly 580 men and officers who had marched into battle at Chancellorsville, only 97 enlisted men and 4 officers had managed to find their way back to duty by Monday morning, 4 May.⁵⁶

In the individual companies these losses were most apparent. In Company B, for instance, nearly one-half of the men had been raised in the town of Gilmanton. Although they went into battle with a total of fifty-one men and officers, only thirteen from that company were present for duty on the morning of 4 May (a casualty rate of 74.5 percent). It must



Portrait of Lt. Henry French /Internet Archive



Trees shattered by artillery fire on south side of Orange Turnpike, c. 1865

have been shocking, overwhelming, and saddening for these men to see the loss of so many familiar faces. These were not only men that they had trained and camped with for the better part of a year, but also neighbors and friends that they had known for most of their lives.⁵⁷

The 12th may have been satisfied to know that they had helped to inflict almost as much damage on their enemies as they had received, however. General Ramseur's brigade as a whole lost 788 of 1,509, over half its strength. The officers and men of the 12th who had been taken prisoners were led back to the ground over which they had fought all morning, where the dead "lay in heaps." One lieutenant vividly remembered seeing the area "literally strewn with dead rebels," including a man with his head completely severed from his body. A soldier from the 14th North Carolina wrote home a few days later that the "slaughter was awful," and that in the woods in front of Fairview "the dead lie thickly strewn in every place." "The scene was terrific," remembered another North Carolinian, "it seemed as if heaven and earth were coming together . . . such fighting

has never been done by any set of men; this was the bloodiest day of the war."⁵⁸

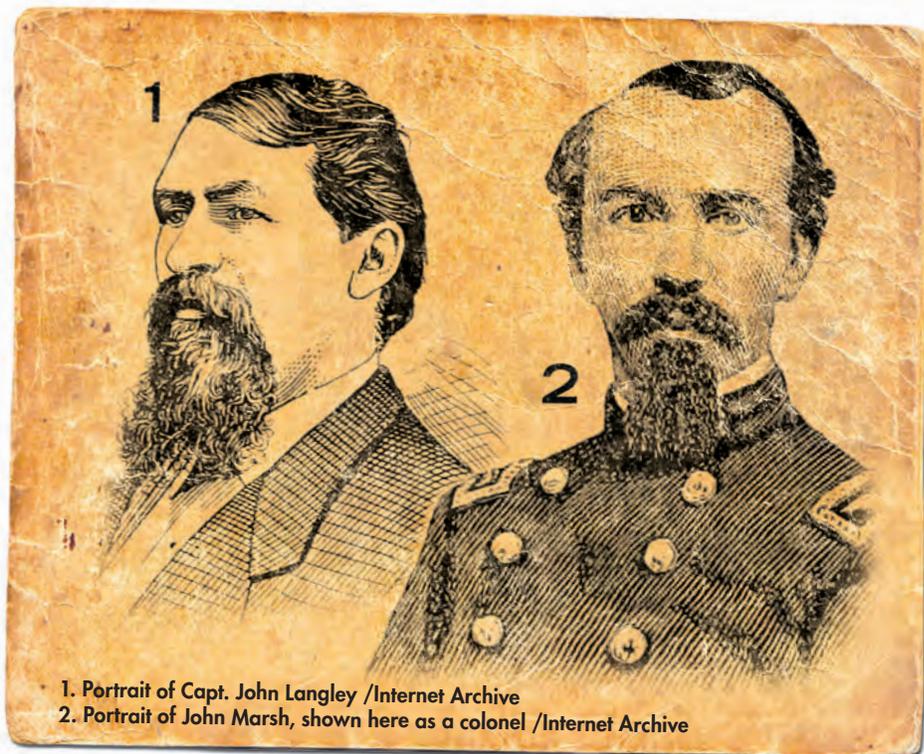
The men were physically and mentally exhausted after the strain of combat and the loss of so many of their comrades. On 5 May, adding insult to injury, several of the survivors were detailed to dig entrenchments to prevent a possible enemy flanking movement and were ordered to leave their equipment behind and dig trenches all day "while weak and hungry." On 6 May, when they returned, they found the equipment they left had been stolen. One soldier complained that he lost his knapsack, rubber blanket, overcoat, five days of rations, and all of the "little trinkets" in his possession, and was told that he would have to pay for all of it. "If we do," the soldier remarked, "it is meener [*sic*] than dirt."⁵⁹ All of the work was for naught, because on 6 May, Hooker pulled the Army of the Potomac back across the Rappahannock River. The survivors of the 12th New Hampshire were "hardly able to drag themselves along" because they were so tired and "played out." Some even had to fall out and were unable to get themselves back into their former winter camp at Falmouth under their own power.⁶⁰

A turn in the weather, coupled with the Army's retreat across the river, added to the regiment's misery. A steady rainfall fell on the afternoon of 5 May, and continued through the entire retreat back to Falmouth. Many of the men viewed the torrential rain as symbolic of the carnage that they had just witnessed a few days before. "It seems as if the Heavens had put on the veil of mourning in sympathy and sorrow for the fallen heroes of Earth," diarist Sergeant Bartlett wrote. "Everything seems sad and gloomy like a funeral, as indeed it is to us of many a brave and cherished comrade. The many still missing in the company lines tells us plainly of the terrible havoc of war."⁶¹

A week after the battle, the regiment was still a shadow of its former self. The chaplain's 10 May Sunday service marked the first time that the regiment was in line since its return to camp at Falmouth. To the men of the 12th, the empty ranks marked a "solemn occasion to all."⁶² "It don't seem as though this was the 12th Regiment now," one soldier wrote home to his friends in Concord. "We have only about 157 men for duty. On Dress Parade we used to have

a longer line than any regiment in the Division, if not in the army, but now I guess we have the shortest.”⁶³ Many of those wounded during the 3 May fighting continued to suffer, especially those who had been captured. A soldier from the 123d New York remembered that “two boys” from the 12th New Hampshire spent a night in Confederate captivity in “great agony” due to the lockjaw they had contracted from exposure in the rain after being wounded. The next morning, all was quiet after one of them had expired due to that “dread disease.”⁶⁴

No field officers remained to command the 12th, and Capt. John Langley, formerly of Company F, was placed in temporary command. Langley wrote a letter to Colonel Bowman, the brigade commander, requesting that he use his influence to secure more time for the regiment to reorganize and recruit before undertaking active service in the field again. “This if possible,” Langley wrote, “we may be temporarily relieved from a service for which, at present we are almost wholly unfit.”⁶⁵ Bowman did what he could to make amends for his abandonment of the 12th during the battle. He wrote a letter to Lt. Col. John Marsh, recuperating from his wounds sustained at Chancellorsville at home in Nashua, New Hampshire, in hopes that he could somehow persuade state officials to secure rest for the beleaguered regiment. “Until its broken and decimated ranks can be filled up by new recruits or until you are sufficiently recovered of your wounds to take charge of the regiment,” Bowman wrote, “perhaps, then it should be appointed to light duty as temporary guards, or as pioneers to build bridges, roads, etc. . . . and so far as I shall be able to control the matter, and until I can do something better, I will give the regiment that direction.”⁶⁶ There were even rumors and suggestions that the 12th be merged with another New Hampshire regiment that had suffered heavy losses, the 5th under the command of Col. Edward E. Cross.⁶⁷ None of this would come to pass.



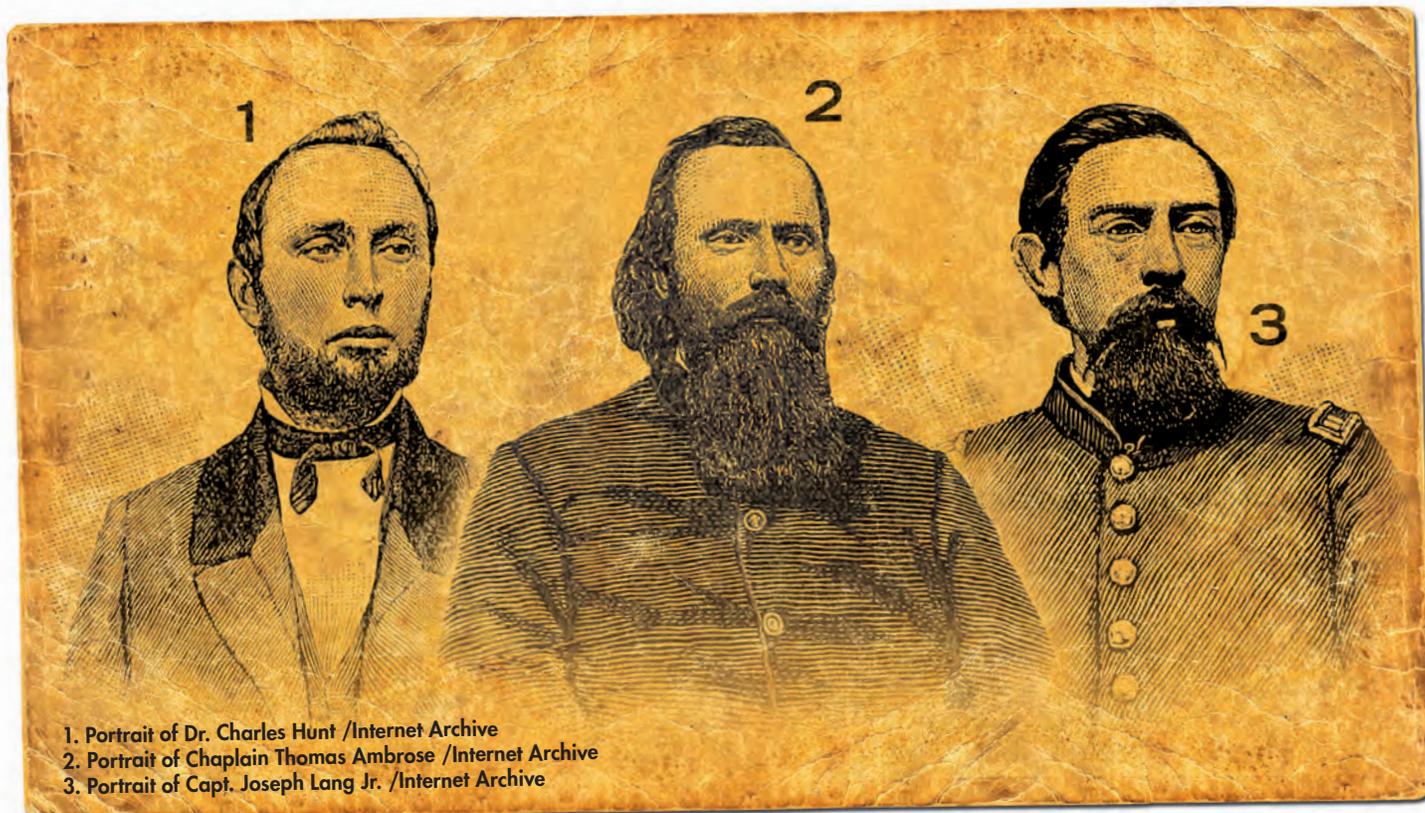
1. Portrait of Capt. John Langley /Internet Archive
2. Portrait of John Marsh, shown here as a colonel /Internet Archive

“READY TO GIVE THE REBELS ANOTHER TRY”⁶⁸

As the regiment recuperated at Falmouth, morale slowly improved. Men who had been wounded or missing, including those feared killed, gradually trickled back into camp. Colonel Potter, when wounded, had been carried to the Chancellor House, where he remained until the home caught fire due to the furious Confederate bombardment. He had been last seen in the company of Assistant Surgeon Dr. Charles Hunt, Chaplain Thomas Ambrose, and Capt. Joseph Lang Jr., and for a few days none of the party was heard from by the regiment—it was feared that they all had been killed. However, within ten days, word reached the regiment at Falmouth that both their beloved commander and chaplain were alive, but Confederate prisoners. Ambrose had not been wounded but had chosen to stay behind to tend to the regiment’s wounded; a soldier of the 123d New York who was also captured 3 May regarded Ambrose as “one of God’s Saints . . . [and] one of the heroes of Chancellorsville.” As officers, Ambrose and Potter were paroled, and

returned across the river to Falmouth on 16 May. The regiment was “wild with delight” at the return of Potter and Chaplain Ambrose—many agreed that it was good to hear Ambrose preaching again.⁶⁹

Even though the Army of the Potomac had suffered another defeat, the experience at Chancellorsville was not as demoralizing as the complete disaster at Fredericksburg the previous December. “Courage . . . offered ways to cheer those who suffered ruinous defeats in battle,” historian Gerald Linderman argued, “to defend the soldier against the grisliness of the battlefield, and to conceal the destructiveness of the conflict.”⁷⁰ Therefore, to the 12th New Hampshire, their severe casualties were indicative of the regiment’s bravery in the face of withering enemy fire. It provided the survivors with an effective method of dealing with the death and destruction. The *Dover Enquirer* wrote that the 12th New Hampshire “posted in the very jaws of the struggle . . . stood firm and unwavering in the awful shock, when others around them, in front and in rear, quailed and fled.”⁷¹ The officers were also proud of the combat performance of their inexperienced soldiers, as the



men had proved their mettle while under fire in such an isolated position. Lieutenant Tilton, commander of Company H, admitted that the men “fought beyond my expectation” and that “if the history of the war records its parallel it would please me to have it pointed out.” Tilton continued that “friends of the dead and wounded may not regard the bearing of the men as I do . . . had the whole army fought as we did there would not be much left on either side.”⁷²

Conversely, the enlisted men attributed their performance to the regiment’s superior leadership. The men considered the regimental officers, especially Colonel Potter, to be some of the finest in the entire army. One soldier hoped that the people of New Hampshire would treat Potter, sent home on furlough to recover from his wounds, as one of the state’s “best and bravest officers.” “She has never sent out a braver officer,” the soldier continued. “He looks out for the boys, and keeps good discipline in the regiment. They may brag of their [Brig. Gen. Gilman] Marstons, [Col. Edward E.] Cross’s, [Col. Walter] Harrimans, etc. (all brave men and true of steel.) but there is none of them more heroic than

the gallant Colonel of the ‘Chancellorsville heroes.’”⁷³ “Every officer and man loves him like a brother,” one newspaper reported. “Mention his name to one of them, and the first reply from them invariably is something about ‘our noble Colonel’. The men all say they will follow him anywhere.”⁷⁴

As the Virginia spring turned into summer, the men of the 12th, much like the rest of the army, felt increasingly ready to take on Lee’s army once again. The change in season boosted confidence. The old winter quarters, which reminded them of their departed comrades, were torn down in order to build new ones for the coming summer. A month after Chancellorsville, a local New Hampshire newspaper reported that the men of the 12th, “though few in number . . . are in excellent spirits, and ready to give the rebels another try.” The men felt “first rate” and were certainly ready to “wade in” again if Hooker wanted them to. The 12th New Hampshire had “got its name up,” and the soldiers who had fought at Chancellorsville wanted to maintain their reputation so that their severe losses would not prove to be in vain.⁷⁵ Pvt. William Mason, of Company F, thought that the failure of upper-level leadership was

the only thing preventing the Union from delivering a crushing defeat to the Confederates. “I think it is awful strange we can’t have enough to whip the rebs,” he wrote home to his family. “We had ought to have enough to went [sic] into Richmond this spring.” Mason did not blame Lincoln for the lack of manpower, but instead placed little faith in either Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton or General in Chief Henry W. Halleck. “If they had let [George B.] McClellan alone we should been in Richmond long ago,” he continued. Hooker, Mason believed, had been foiled by things out of his control; the young soldier was worried that the Army of the Potomac commander would be relieved for the defeat, much like McClellan and Burnside had before him.⁷⁶ Despite their diminished numbers, William Mason and the rest of the 12th New Hampshire would not be given much time to rest and soon got their chance for revenge.

Only a month after returning to camp at Falmouth, the 12th New Hampshire, along with the rest of the Army of the Potomac, was given another shot at Lee’s army. Because the Union Army, in its weakened state, remained on the defensive,



Portrait of William Mason, shown here as a corporal /Internet Archive

Lee took the initiative and advanced northward into Maryland and Pennsylvania to relieve the Union pressure at the sieges of Vicksburg and Charleston. Despite Lee's attempts at secrecy, Hooker quickly found out about the Army of Northern Virginia's movements and ordered the Army of the Potomac in pursuit on 13 June 1863. The Army of the Potomac, now commanded by Maj. Gen. George Meade after President Lincoln relieved Hooker on 28 June, clashed with Lee's forces around the Pennsylvania crossroads town of Gettysburg during 1–3 July in the greatest battle ever fought on American soil. The 12th New Hampshire went into battle, while still under Captain Langley's command, at only half strength with only 12 officers and 212 enlisted men; in severe fighting next to the Klinge farm along the Emmitsburg Road in the evening of 2 July, the regiment suffered another 44.3 percent casualties. For all intents and purposes, the 12th New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry had ceased to exist as an effective combat unit.⁷⁷

To recuperate and recruit additional strength, the 12th was assigned to guard prisoners at Point Lookout,

Maryland, from July 1863 until April 1864. During this time, the regiment received 350 new recruits, many of whom were draftees. By April 1864, however, Grant needed manpower for his spring campaigns, and the services of the 12th were called upon again. The veteran regiment was placed in the XVIII Corps as a part of Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler's Army of the James, where they saw action in the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. At Cold Harbor, those who had somehow survived the brutal fighting at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg were thrust into Grant's massive assault on the Confederate positions on 3 June 1864. Placed out in front of their brigade, the regiment once again suffered grievously; they lost 40 killed and 125 wounded within the span of a few minutes. By war's end, the regiment had suffered 6 officers and 105 enlisted men killed, and 32 officers and 673 enlisted men wounded. Of those wounded, 3 officers later died, while 100 enlisted men also died of their wounds. The total casualty rate of 12.3 percent was the highest of any regiment that was

raised in New Hampshire during the Civil War.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

"The great work in which almost three years ago we engaged is accomplished," Col. Thomas Barker, the longest-tenured and last commander of the 12th New Hampshire lectured his troops when they were mustered out at the end of the war. "With the knowledge that we have done an honorable part toward crushing the rebellion, saving the union, and restoring peace, we have been permitted to return to our dear old native state, and are about to resume our peaceful avocations." Barker told the men that they had served their country "long and nobly," and that by their actions at the likes of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg, "ages hence will view your deeds and the generations of centuries to come will honor and bless you for the legacy gained by your valor and bequeathed to them."⁷⁹

The survivors of the 12th New Hampshire did not easily forget the sacrifices that they had made during the war. The 12th Regiment Asso-

Skulls and bones of unburied soldiers on south side of Orange Turnpike in 1865



Library of Congress



ciation, formed in 1866 despite the national unpopularity of veterans remembrance and organizations in the immediate aftermath of the war, was one of the most active such organizations in the state for the next several decades. The association, which was formed to “stimulate the spirit of patriotism, [strengthen] the fraternal ties of old comrades who shared in the experiences and dangers incident to the camp, and hospital, the march, battlefield, and prison, and . . . assist the needy and give to the deceased a soldier’s burial,” held an annual reunion each year until well into the twentieth century.⁸⁰ Each year it was held in a different town in the New Hampshire Lakes region, and attendees were given a unique memento, such as a miniature flag, haversack, or canteen, commemorating the event.

The veterans of the 12th Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry believed in the importance of reminiscing about their Civil War experiences. The philosopher Edward S. Casey believes that we reminisce “not only to savor, but to understand, or re-understand.”⁸¹ These men therefore gathered yearly not only as a way to revel in one of the most traumatic and

exciting events in their lives, but also in an attempt to understand the confusing and chaotic nature of the combat that they had experienced during their wartime service. Combat for the average soldier, as John Keegan argued, is a “wildly unstable physical and emotional environment” that reflects a “very small-scale situation which will throw up on its own leaders and will be fought by its own rules—alas, often by its own ethics.”⁸² Keegan’s assessment certainly rang true for the 12th New Hampshire on the morning of 3 May 1863 at Chancellorsville. The fight that morning, for the 580 men from the White Mountains of the Granite State, was closely personal, chaotic, harrowing, and terrifying. The men who endured such an experience spent much of their lives trying to understand what happened, and it is now up to historians to continue that effort.

The hope is that this article has served as a sort of case study. By examining one particular regiment in a poorly studied area of the major battle of Chancellorsville, historians will not only develop a better understanding of the military action itself, but also the chaotic nature of Civil War combat. The task, therefore, is for historians to apply this method to other battles and campaigns. With a vast amount of smaller units that fought during the Civil War, each with their own unique (but also sometimes shared) experiences, the nature of combat during America’s greatest conflict serves to be better understood. This work by historians should strive to continue the efforts that veterans, such as the men of the 12th New Hampshire, began at their reunions a century and a half before.



NOTES

1. U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 25 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 391 (hereafter cited as *OR*).

2. Freedom Sanborn Diary, 3 May 1863, New Hampshire Historical Society (NHHS), Concord, New Hampshire.

3. Stephen Sears, *Chancellorsville* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), p. 366.

4. *OR* ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 172–92; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New Hampshire, for the Year Ending 20 May 1865, vol. II (Concord, N.H.: Amos Hadley, State Printer, 1865), p. 265; Sears, *Chancellorsville*, pp. 341–42. The main account of the regiment’s fight at Chancellorsville exists in Asa W. Bartlett’s regimental history, *History of the Twelfth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion* (Concord, N.H.: Ira C. Evans, Printer, 1897).

5. There have been a few articles written on the 12th New Hampshire, including: James A. Burns, “The 12th New Hampshire Regiment at Gettysburg and Beyond,” in *Gettysburg Magazine*, no. 20 (1998): 113–20; David Vander Haeighe, “12th New Hampshire: Drummer’s History Unearthed” in *North South Trader’s Civil War*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2010): 46–54; Mark Hudziak, “From Fredericksburg to the Fall of Richmond, the 12th New Hampshire Ably Represented the Granite State,” in *America’s Civil War* (November 1998): 8, 79–80, 82–83. However, none of these cover Chancellorsville specifically. Stephen Sears’ *Chancellorsville* does mention that the 12th was separated from its brigade that morning, but he wrongly states that the regiment’s main foes were Brig. Gen. George Doles’ Georgia Brigade. This would place them in the wrong location that morning.

6. Numerous studies have been done about the experiences of the average soldier during the Civil War. The original groundbreaking study was Bell Irvin Wiley’s *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971) and its companion volume, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). For further exploration of Civil War and general combat experience, see: Michael C. C. Adams, *Living Hell: The Dark Side of the Civil War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014); Joseph Allan Frank and George A. Reaves, *Seeing the Elephant: Raw Recruits at the Battle of Shiloh* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Joseph Glaathar, *The March to the Sea and Beyond: Sherman’s Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaign* (New York: New York University Press, 1985); Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, with Loren W. Christensen, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace* (China: Warrior Science Publications, 2008); Christopher H. Hamner, *Enduring Battle: American Soldiers in Three Wars, 1776–1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011); Earl J. Hess, *The Union*

Soldier in Battle (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997); Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation: The Behavior of Soldiers in Battle* (Boston: Kluwer Boston, Inc., 1982); Gerald F. Linderman, *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1987); James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Reid Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers* (New York: Viking, 1988); James Robertson Jr., *Soldiers Blue and Gray* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988); Alexander Rose, *Men of War: The American Soldier in Combat at Bunker Hill, Gettysburg, and Iwo Jima* (New York: Random House, 2015).

7. Frank and Reaves, *Seeing the Elephant*, p. 92.

8. Otis F. R. Waite, *New Hampshire in the Great Rebellion, Containing Histories of the Several New Hampshire Regiments, and Biographical Notices of Many of the Prominent Actors in the Civil War of 1861–65* (Claremont, N.H.: Tracy, Chase & Company, 1870), p. 462.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 471.

10. Asa Bartlett Diary, 29 Apr 1863, NHHS.

11. Bradford A. Wineman, *The Chancellorsville Campaign: January–May 1863* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2013), pp. 7–12.

12. Wineman, *Chancellorsville Campaign*, p. 15; Asa Bartlett Diary, 29 Apr 1863, NHHS.

13. Wineman, *Chancellorsville Campaign*, pp. 19–24; Bartlett Diary, 1 May 1863, NHHS; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 70.

14. Richard Musgrove, *Autobiography of Capt. Richard W. Musgrove* (Mary D. Musgrove, 1921), pp. 65–67.

15. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 68; Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 300; Joseph S. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville,” *Laconia Democrat*, 5 Jun 1863.

16. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 76.

17. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”

18. Bartlett Diary, 2 May 1863, NHHS; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 75; Tilton, “12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”

19. Jay Luvaas and Harold W. Nelson, ed., *Guide to the Battles of Chancellorsville & Fredericksburg* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), pp. 246–47. Today, only the easternmost tip of Hazel Grove remains intact as a part of the battlefield. Much of the rest of the area is now occupied by the Wilderness Resorts, where Lewis Run was dammed to create Cool Spring Lake. A dirt road that connected the Orange Turnpike to Catherine

Furnace existed at the time of the battle; this is now roughly the course that the main road takes through the resort.

20. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 77–78; Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville”; OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 687–88, 707–21, 702–06.

21. K. Jack Bauer, ed., *Soldiering: The Civil War Diary of Rice C. Bull* (New York: Presidio Press, 1995), pp. 53–54.

22. Sears, *Chancellorsville*, pp. 317–18; Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”

23. OR ser. 1, vol. 1, p. 687; David Herbert Donald, ed., *Gone for a Soldier: the Civil War Memoirs of Private Alfred Bellard* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1975), pp. 213–14; Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 328.

24. Ltr, Col Samuel M. Bowman to Lt Col John F. Marsh, *Nashua Gazette*, 21 May 1863; OR ser. 1, vol. 25, p. 500; Ltr, Daniel Hall to Asa W. Bartlett, 21 Mar 1892, Bartlett Papers, NHHS.

25. OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 684–89, 702–06, 707–20; William R. Hillyer, “War Papers, Chancellorsville, May 2 and 3, 1863” (Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Commandery of the District of Columbia), pp. 20–30; Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 323; Edmund Randolph Brown, *The Twenty-Seventh Volunteer Infantry in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1865, First Division 12th and 20th Corps* (Monticello, Ind.), pp. 328–48; Tilton, “12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”

26. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 68; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 79.

27. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 68; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 77.

28. Michael C. Hardy, ed., *North Carolina Remembers Chancellorsville* (Gettysburg, Pa.: Ten Roads Publishing, LLC), pp. 7–8, 36.

29. These breastworks run slightly to the west of the modern-day National Park Service road (Stuart Drive), before crossing that road about 100 yards south of the Frank “Bull” Paxton Monument.

30. OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 412–28, pp. 707–21; Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville,” Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 79–80.

31. The 30th North Carolina was detached from Ramseur’s right flank to provide support for a battery that was attempting to dislodge the Pennsylvanians.

32. OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 996–97.

33. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 81–83; OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 478, 996.

34. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 68.

35. Randolph, *Twenty-Seventh Indiana*, p. 429; Hardy, *North Carolina Remembers Chancellorsville*, pp. 7–36.

36. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 83.

37. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville”; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 345, 408.

38. H. L. Robinson, *History of Pittsfield, NH in the Great Rebellion* (Pittsfield, N.H., 1893), pp. 52–54, 150.

39. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 75.

40. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 81–82, 502–04, 700; Musgrove, *Autobiography*, pp. 68–69.

41. Robinson, *Pittsfield*, pp. 100–105, 136.

42. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 74; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 410–11.

43. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 74.

44. Robinson, *Pittsfield*, p. 69.

45. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 84.

46. Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 346; OR ser. 1, vol. 25, pp. 414, 417; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 83; Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 68. Colonel Collis, the 114th’s commander, claimed that he was being flanked and could not hold his position.

47. Ltr, Edwin Bedee to Asa Bartlett, 8 Mar 1892, Bartlett Papers, NHHS; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 83.

48. Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 359.

49. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 84.

50. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville”; Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 69.

51. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 375–76; Musgrove, *Autobiography*, pp. 69–70.

52. James I. Robertson Jr., ed., *The Civil War Letters of General Robert McAllister* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), p. 298.

53. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, pp. 86–88.

54. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”

55. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 71.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

57. Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 508; U.S. War Department, Regimental and Company Books of the 12th New Hampshire Infantry Regiment, Regimental and Company Books of Civil War Volunteer Union Organizations, 1861–1867, Record Group (RG) 94: Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1762–1984, National Archives and Research Administration, Washington, D.C. (NADC).

58. Sears, *Chancellorsville*, p. 336; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 410; Hardy, *North Carolina Remembers Chancellorsville*, pp. 9, 27.

59. Ltr, William P. Mason to family, 1 Jun 1863, William P. Mason letters, 1862–1864, MS 165, Milne Special Collections and Archives, University of New Hampshire Library (UNHL), Durham, N.H.

60. Musgrove, *Autobiography*, p. 72; Bartlett Diary, 5–6 May 1863, NHHS.
61. Bartlett Diary, 7–8 May 1863, NHHS.
62. Bartlett Diary, 10 May 1863, NHHS.
63. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Belknap Gazette*, 13 Jun 1863.
64. Bauer, *Soldiering*, p. 78.
65. Ltr, J. F. Langley to Colonel Bowman, 13 May 1863, Bartlett Papers, NHHS.
66. Ltr, Colonel Bowman to Lieutenant Colonel Marsh, *Nashua Gazette*, 21 May 1863.
67. Regimental and Company Books of the 12th New Hampshire Infantry Regiment, RG 94, NADC.
68. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Belknap Gazette*, 13 Jun 1863.
69. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Dover Enquirer*, 21 May 1863; “Col. Potter in the hands of the Rebels,” *Dollar Weekly Mirror*, 23 May 1863; Rice Bull, *Soldiering*, p. 70; Bartlett Diary, pp. 13, 16, 17 May 1863, NHHS.
70. Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, p. 61.
71. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Dover Enquirer*, 21 May 1863.
72. Tilton, “The 12th Regiment at Chancellorsville.”
73. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Belknap Gazette*, 13 Jun 1863.
74. “The 12th N.H. Regiment,” *Dover Enquirer*, 21, 28 May 1863.
75. *Ibid.*
76. Ltr, William P. Mason to family, 1 Jun 1863, Milne Special Collections, UNHL.
77. Waite, *New Hampshire in the Great Rebellion*, p. 473.
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 473–77; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New Hampshire, p. 268; Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth*, p. 747.
79. David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 140–70; GO No. 27, Bartlett Civil War Papers, NHHS.
80. “By-laws of the 12th Regt. Association: Adopted at Alton, Sept. 26, 1884,” Gilmanton Historical Society, Gilmanton, New Hampshire.
81. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, p. 173.
82. Keegan, *Face of Battle*, pp. 47–48.

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U.S. ARMY ART SPOTLIGHT

CRACKED WALLS AND BROKEN BONES JOSEPH HIRSCH'S *AFTER THE FASCIST FAIR*

BY SARAH FORGEY

The richness of the U.S. Army Art Collection often lies in artists' depictions of everyday life as a soldier. As a social realist, Joseph Hirsch was the perfect artist to distill soldier's lives into moments that distinctly capture the zeitgeist of war. Hirsch's 1944 painting *After the Fascist Fair* is one of the most visually compelling works in the Army Art Collection, depicting the reutilization of a pavilion covered in Italian propaganda murals as an orthopedic hospital.

Hirsch studied at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art and later trained under artist George Luks, of the Ashcan School movement. Throughout the 1930s, he completed murals at the Amalgamated Clothing Workers building and the Municipal Court in Philadelphia under the Works Progress Administration. Hirsch was a member of Associated American Artists, a gallery in New York dedicated to providing affordable original art and prints to ordinary people. During the war, Hirsch was employed by Abbott Laboratories. After designing the widely reproduced war poster *Till We Meet Again*, Hirsch was assigned as an artist-correspondent, first documenting naval aviation training at Pensacola Naval Air Station and then Navy medicine in the South Pacific. Following these assignments, Hirsch was dispatched to cover Army medical operations in North Africa and the Italian Campaign.

The hospital portrayed in *After the Fascist Fair* was located in Naples, occupying the site of the 1940 *Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare* (Triennial Exhibition of Overseas Italian Territories). The *Mostra*, which was publicized as the greatest celebration of Italian expansionism, opened in May 1940 and closed a month later. The site was damaged numerous times by Allied bombing during the war.¹ Of the painting, Hirsch stated, "I thought the juxtaposition of the cracking walls and the broken bones in the boys being mended made a striking picture. On top of these murals—as another example of GI impudence and disdain—were pin-up girls. The incongruity was wonderful!"²

Hirsch emphasized this incongruity throughout the painting, connecting discordant ideas and details. The fabricated heroism of the propaganda murals is contrasted with the courage and spirit of the wounded soldiers. The patients have irreverently decorated the walls with pin-ups, personalizing an impersonal space. The soldiers, some perhaps farmers themselves, ignore the feigned nobility of the Italian soldier and farmer depicted in the murals. Hirsch uses commonplace details to create a scene that encompasses the inherent boredom of waiting to recover from an injury: soldiers play checkers, read comics, and leaf through *Yank* magazine. As the wounded soldiers' bodies and spirits are mended, symbols of a broken ideology literally fall apart on the wall above them.

Upon its completion, art produced as part of the Abbott Laboratories Medical series became property of the Department of Defense. Along with the rest of the art related to the Army Medical Corps, this piece is part of the Army Art Collection and is preserved at the Army's Museum Support Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.



Sarah Forgey is the curator of the U.S. Army Art Collection.

1. Giovanni Arena, "The City of the Colonial Museum: The Forgotten Case of the Mostra d'Oltremare of Naples," Seconda Università di Napoli, in Dominique Poulot, Felicity Bodenstein, and José María Lanzarote Guiral, eds., *Great Narratives of the Past: Traditions and Revisions in National Museums*, European National Museums (EUNAMUS) Report no. 4 (Linköping, Sweden: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2011), accessed 25 Jul 2016 at <http://docplayer.net/3616091-The-city-of-the-colonial-museum-the-forgotten-case-of-the-mostra-d-oltremare-of-naples.html>.

2. DeWitt Mackenzie and Clarence Worden, *Men Without Guns* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Blakiston Co., 1945), p. 30.





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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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• Drilling newly enlisted Regular Army troops at Corpus Christi



1st. Habitual drunkenness.
2nd. Violation of the 38th Article of
3rd. Worthlessness.
4th. Conduct prejudicial to good
order and Military discipline.

DISCIPLINE RATHER THAN JUSTICE

Courts-Martial and the Army of Occupation at Corpus Christi, 1845–1846

BY CHARLES N. PEDE

On 25 July 1845, Bvt. Brig. Gen. Zachary “Old Rough and Ready” Taylor, sailed into the waters off Corpus Christi, Texas, with 533 men of the 3d Infantry.¹ By the end of August, over 4,000 American regulars of the Army of Observation, quickly dubbed the “Army of Occupation,” would establish a sprawling tent city on the coast abutting the small settlement of Corpus Christi. Here, under the hot Texas sun, drinking brackish water and drilling incessantly, General Taylor’s army would remain another seven months, until March 1846. Not until the politics of international brinkmanship and manifest destiny played themselves out would General Taylor move his army against the ill-prepared Mexican Army. General Taylor’s early tactical successes in the war with Mexico would later be repeated by

his successor Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott in 1846 and 1847. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the war and increased the western expanse of the United States on a grand scale—and although not as much as the Louisiana Purchase in 1803—the treaty gained nearly 530,000 square miles of territory in what is now the American Southwest.²

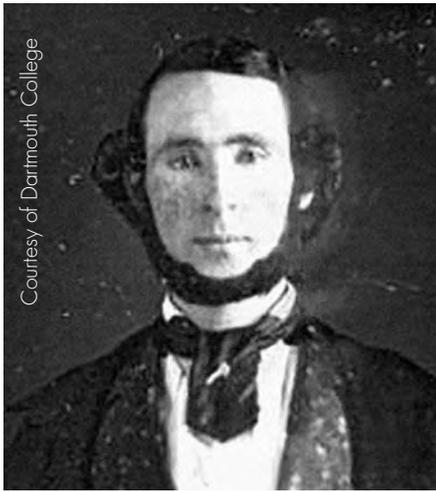
Amid this backdrop of national strategy, and on the cusp of history-making events at places like Chapultepec and Mexico City, is a subtext—written through the courts-martial of the common soldier of 1845—of what it meant to be a soldier in the ranks and an officer trying to maintain good order.

From the casually curious historian to the Army lawyer of the twenty-first century, the story that emerges from the courtrooms of the Army of Occupation tells us a great deal about

the American military legal system in 1845, the men who would fight another war on an even grander scale just over fifteen years later, and finally, that in some essential and surprising ways certain vestiges of our Army in 1845 remain with us today.

The story told here is of Taylor’s army in the opening months of the war with Mexico. Stitched together from numerous frontier posts, the Army had assembled in one place for the first time since the War of 1812. Old soldiers, long dispersed across the nation’s military outposts, reunited. Young officers with names like Grant, Meade, Lee, and Longstreet would meet for the first time, prove themselves, and cement their bonds with one another.

Vibrant depictions of life at the Corpus Christi encampment, a long-forgotten episode in the American Army, are rare finds indeed. But



Courtesy of Dartmouth College

William Bliss, c. 1848

such stories can still be found. Buried deep in the rare collection of court-martial papers, in the Army's premier military law library at the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School in Charlottesville, Virginia, are the daily disciplinary records of Taylor's army. In the pages of general orders and court-martial results is a fascinating portrait of this young and soon-to-be-tested army. These official papers, published almost daily by Taylor's headquarters, penned in elegant and error-free script by Taylor's fastidious adjutant Maj. William Bliss, catalog the army's challenges and vices as it waited and prepared for war.

The Army of Occupation court-martial were in permanent session. It is through the windows—or more accurately the tent flaps—of the courtroom that we see a young, anxious, and impatient army in waiting. We see a force of old warriors well past their prime occupying officer billets coveted by young West Pointers, for in this old army there was no “up or out.” Promotions came when officers died, retired, or were relieved. We see an army of immigrants, often mistreated at the hands of their officers, deserting to the Mexican Army, and an army dealing with indiscipline and crime as it waited for action. And we see how the army dealt with such misconduct—through the court-martial process.

The Corpus Christi courtroom paints a picture of soldiers at their

best and worst in 1845. It reflects the state of the law in America, and the role of laymen and lawyers at a time when Miranda rights, and even the right to an attorney in court, were not yet fixed principles of law. We see forms of military due process and punishment that are long forgotten, mythologized, and misunderstood. We see crime that we still see today ranging from absence and desertion, to barracks thieves, to crime “downtown”—although at the time Corpus Christi was nothing more than a “small Mexican hamlet . . . containing probably less than one hundred souls.”³

Importantly, we see a surprising and extraordinary level of precision in legal procedure performed by nonlawyers. These laymen were exceedingly well educated—typically at West Point—and most revealingly, they were aware of their moral and legal obligations, and acted on them.

AMERICA: THE HUNGRY WOLF MANIFEST DESTINY

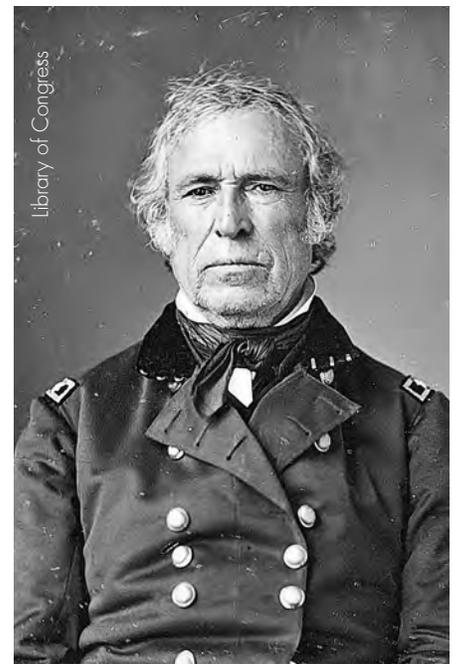
The controversial annexation of Texas by a hungry young republic in 1845 was the initial catalyst that sent General Taylor and his army to the disputed area. Both the United States and Mexico now claimed the territory between the Nueces River at Corpus Christi and the Rio Grande to the south. Continued rumors of Mexican Army activity kept the diplomats and the soldiers on edge after Taylor's arrival in Corpus Christi.

“We were sent to provoke a fight, but it was essential that Mexico should commence it. It was very doubtful whether Congress would declare war; but if Mexico should attack our troops,” there would be little choice but to respond, observed Grant in his memoirs, reflecting on his time in Taylor's army waiting for the big move.⁴ After eight months of miserable weather, constant drilling on the parade ground, boredom, and dysentery, the army finally marched south to the Rio Grande and into war. In May 1846, Taylor scored twin victories at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. The victories continued at the Battles

of Monterrey in September and Buena Vista in February 1847. General Scott, with his own army, was operating independently in Mexico as well and winning victories at Veracruz, and later Mexico City. Scott later brought the war to its successful conclusion, and in March 1848 the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed. The treaty required the United States to pay Mexico \$15 million and gained for the United States firm ownership of what is now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado, totaling over one million square miles.⁵

THE FACE OF THE ARMY

Not long after General Taylor's arrival in Texas, the main body of his army joined him. By the end of August, Taylor had a sizable force situated on the beach at Corpus Christi. The army was composed of three line brigades (including artillery) and a separate regiment of dragoons.⁶ It was not the Army of today of course. It had not yet experienced the great social revolutions and leveling of the twentieth century. It was an Army very much a product of historic class



Library of Congress

Zachary Taylor, shown here as a major general, c. 1847



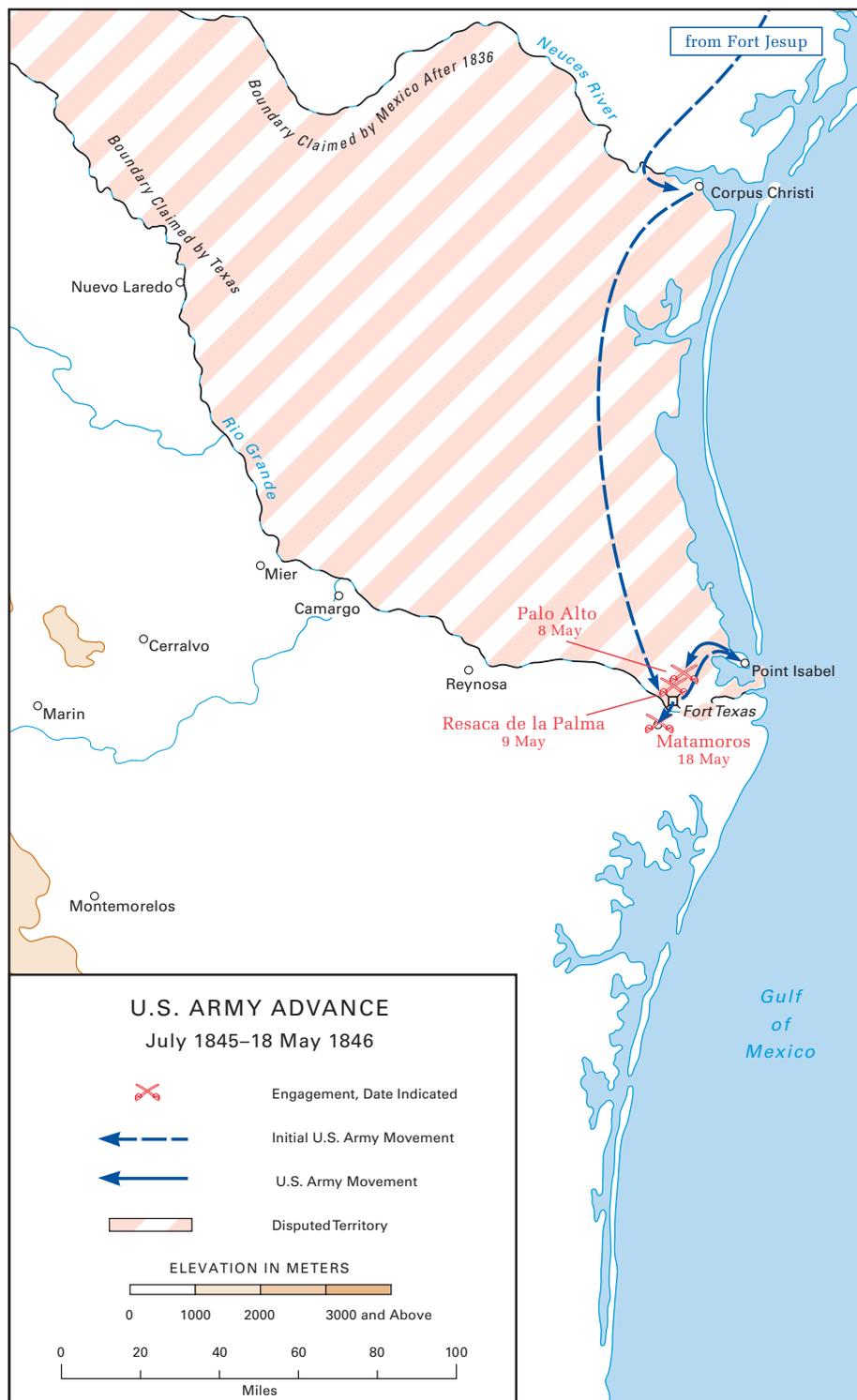
consciousness and some measure of social and economic stratification. The officer corps was a unique amalgam. Many senior officers were not West Point graduates but were instead self-taught in the art of war. In this early American Army, there was no performance-based promotion system as we know it today. There was also no retirement system. As a result, officers remained on the rolls drawing pay as long as they could. Many of these senior leaders were old and infirm and incapable of operations in the field. They, there-

fore, occupied the limited number of command and staff positions until resignation or death opened the slot for a junior officer to advance.⁷ Many of the billets of the Army of Occupation were filled in this way. When the war came, most of these senior officers remained “in bed,” while junior officers occupied the positions. This system slowed advancement and naturally embittered junior officers who were forced to carry the burden of increased responsibility.

Col. Josiah Vose, commanding the 4th Infantry of the 3d Brigade, was one

such aged senior officer but still chose to join his unit. While issuing orders during a drill on the parade ground in New Orleans, in preparation for movement to Corpus Christi, he had a heart attack. Bvt. 2d Lt. U. S. Grant, 4th Infantry, described the scene.

On the evening of the 15th Inst. Col Vose, for the first time since I have been in the Army, undertook to drill his Regiment. He was . . . probably some what embarrassed and gave his commands in a loud tone of voice [*sic*]; before the drill



was over I discovered that he put his hand to his breast when ever he commenced to give any command, and before he was through with the parade he was compelled to leave the field and start for his quarters [*sic*], which were hardly fifty paces off, and just upon arriving there he fell dead upon the poarch [*sic*].⁸

In stark contrast, nearly all of the junior officers, many of whom would rise to fame during the Civil War, like Lieutenant Grant, were graduates of West Point. Eager for advancement, these officers sought accomplishment on the battlefield in the hope of gaining recognition, and thereby, advancement. The stagnant life in Corpus

Christi did nothing to appease this desire among the embittered young officers.

Grant's own story is recounted well in his famous and immensely readable memoir. He tells the story, reflective of other officers operating in Mexico, of struggling for battlefield opportunities, while bristling as the commander of the regimental mule trains. He wrote: "I am not aware of ever having used a profane expletive in my life; but I would have the charity to excuse those who may have done so, if they were in charge of a train of Mexican pack mules."⁹

THE SOLDIER

I have never been so comfortless as now

In contrast, the enlisted ranks were populated by men willing to sign up for five years at seven dollars a month.¹⁰ The average soldier then was someone who had few prospects in civilian life and who was otherwise poor and uneducated. In addition, the Army was immigrant heavy. Indeed, almost 42 percent of the Army of Occupation were immigrants from Europe, many of whom spoke no or only limited English.¹¹

More than anything else, the conditions at Corpus Christi were the main cause of discipline and morale problems in the Army of Occupation. Although initially picturesque on the Gulf Coast, the biting winds and rain of autumn, coupled with the rain, wind and cold of winter, made the infantryman miserable. Lt. George Meade observed,

The weather has been extremely cold, and the high winds that constantly prevail here prevent you from getting your tent comfortable. Indeed in all my experience of field service, I have never been so comfortless as now. I feel the cold here more than in Maine, because there we had no wind, and plenty of fuel, and could encamp in the woods. Here it is all open beach, where the wind sweeps in gales, day and night, and there is barely wood sufficient for cooking purposes, to be procured.¹²



Lts. Ulysses S. Grant (left) and Alexander Hayes in 1845

The poor quality tents that had been issued magnified the problem and the soldiers' misery. The resulting leaky tent scandal produced, in addition to an investigation of the quartermaster, a horrible plight for the common soldier facing the coastal winds and rains of winter on the southeast Texas coast.¹³ The abundant rattlesnakes, the absence of firewood, and the contaminated coastal drinking water compounded their discomfort.

The proverbial "nail in the coffin" for the hapless enlisted man was the daily mistreatment at the hands of a fair number of misguided officers. A new tune quickly spread through the Army.

*Sergeant, buck him and gag him, our officers cry,
For each trifling offense which they happen to spy,
Till with bucking and gagging of Dick, Pat and Bill,
Faith, the Mexican's ranks they have helped to fill.¹⁴*

Echoing this state of affairs, William Tomlinson, a soldier in the 10th Infantry, wrote a friend that "[w]e are under very strict discipline here. [Some of] our officers [are] very good men but the balance of them are very tyrannical and brutal toward the men. . . . They strike the men with swords and abuse them in the most brutal manner possible for a human being to be treated."¹⁵ A former British soldier, George Ballentine who served with the American Army in Mexico echoed this sentiment in his autobiography:

I have frequently seen foolish young officers violently strike and assault soldiers on the most slight provocations, while to tie them up by the wrist, as high as their hands would reach, with a gag in their mouths, was a common punishment for trivial offenses. In fact, such a bad state of feeling seemed to exist between men and officers throughout the service, that I was not surprised that it would lead to numerous desertions.¹⁶



SONG

"Bucking & Gagging"

Come all Yankee soldiers, give an ear to my song,
It is a short ditty, it will not keep you long;
It is of no use to fret, on account of your luck.
We can laugh, drink, and sing yet in spite of
the buck.

Sergeant, buck him and gag him, our officers cry,
For each trifling offense which they happen
to spy,
Till with bucking and gagging of Dick, Pat and Bill,
Faith, the Mexican's ranks they have helped
to fill.

The treatment they give us, all of us know,
Is bucking and gagging for whipping the foe;
They buck and gag us for malice or spite,
But they're glad to release us when going to fight.

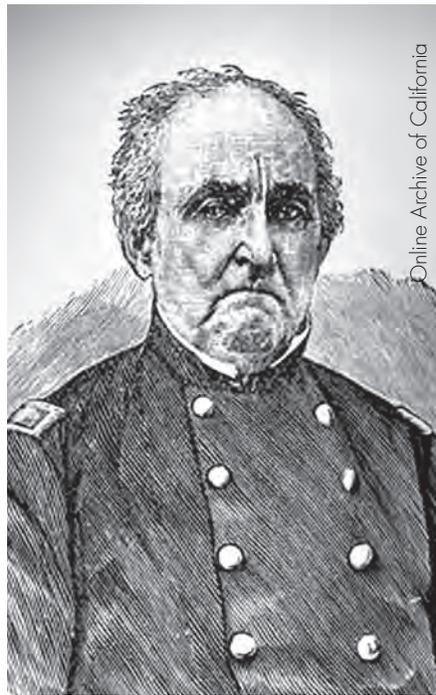
A poor soldier's tied up in the sun or the rain,
With a gag in his mouth till he's tortured with pain'
Why I'm blessed if the eagle we wear on our flag,
In its claws shouldn't carry a buck and a gag.

Indeed, the American Army in the war with Mexico was plagued by the highest desertion rate ever recorded in any American war, before or since. The final tally for the three years of war was 8.3 percent of the total force.¹⁷ These startling rates of abandonment began in Corpus Christi during the long period of inactivity prior to combat operations.

Although the officers were not typically subject to such maltreatment, they certainly were not immune from the effects of the harsh environment. Lieutenant Meade wrote his wife often that he was so miserable with jaundice that it was impossible to leave his tent for days.¹⁸ When these conditions were combined with incessant drilling on the parade ground, month after month, punctuated by guard duty and no prospects to engage the enemy, it is little wonder the soldiers turned to alcohol and other misconduct.¹⁹ Taken together, all of these features had a synergistic effect that was hard to contain.²⁰



George Meade, shown here as a captain, c. 1856



Colonel Whistler

COURTS-MARTIAL IN PERMANENT SESSION

It is no surprise given the poor conditions, and the interminable waiting and drilling, that just over a month after the army's arrival, with the stockade full, General Taylor convened his first general court-martial in Corpus Christi. Twenty-three of the next twenty-eight weeks in Corpus Christi would witness general courts-martial panels handing down judgments in 255 cases. Unlike court-martial practice today where a jury sits in judgment of a single accused, an Army panel in 1846 on the coast of Texas would try all of the accused then in confinement.

Twenty-three separate panels tried these 255 soldiers. The statistical lens suggests a remarkably balanced set of scales, proverbially speaking. Of the 255 cases, twenty-three resulted in full acquittals, about 10 percent. This percentage exceeds current Department of Justice rates of acquittal by 3 percent.²¹ And of course, this number does not address the many partial acquittals reflected in the orders. Of the 232 soldiers convicted, thirty-six, or 15 percent, received some form of clemency from General Taylor—a number

higher than modern clemency rates in courts-martial.

By far the most common offenses were drunk on duty (seventy-two cases or 28 percent) and desertion (seventy-eight cases or 30 percent). Of equal note and similar to today, some units tended to provide most of the business. So it was with the 3d Brigade, commanded by Col. William Whistler, which comprised 1,044 soldiers, one-quarter (26 percent) of the Army of Occupation and accounted for almost half of all cases (109 or 42 percent)!

The average sitting panel in Corpus Christi would hear anywhere from one to twenty-two cases a day. The orders authorizing the court, known as convening orders, directed the panel to try all accused then available. Although in one case, a commander was admonished for allowing an accused to miss his court-martial, there never seemed to be a shortage of business once the court was called to order.

THE COURT-MARTIAL IN 1845

Unlike the complex litigation we see at courts-martial today, trials during the Mexican War period were

substantially different. The court-martial, inherited from the British, was to be composed of thirteen members. This number was based on the tradition of twelve jurors and one judge. No such judge, however, actually existed in court-martial practice. Instead, the thirteen members were officers of the line and the president of the panel served as final arbiter of procedural matters. A line officer, who usually had no formal legal training, was designated the judge advocate for the court-martial.²² In practice, however, one usually found eight to nine members and an explanation in the convening order that more could not be detailed without manifest injury to the service. In the Army of Occupation, panels of less than thirteen members for enlisted soldiers were common. For officer cases, however, thirteen members were always detailed. Interestingly, the celebrated military legal historian of the nineteenth century, Col. William Winthrop, in his treatise *Military Law and Precedents*, notes that the need for thirteen-member panels was long dead by the war with Mexico.²³ It is clear, however, that those in the field still adhered to the formality of the requirement, if only in officer cases.

THE PANEL MEMBERS

Panels, the military equivalent of a jury, were convened on a particular date for all cases then pending. Under the Articles of War of 1806, all members of the panel had an equal voice. Indeed, this extended to all matters of substance, that is, challenges, objections to testimony, motions, findings, and sentencing. All such questions were decided by a majority vote of the court. The only exception is that a two-thirds vote was required for a capital sentence.²⁴

The panel was not a standing court-martial but was to sit for a day and try all available cases. Thus, a panel would convene and hear upwards of twenty cases in one day, and then following the last case, permanently adjourn.²⁵ Time of day, location, and the appointed members and units were

always identified. Additionally, Article of War 75 required courts to hear all cases between the hours of “eight in the morning and three in the afternoon.”²⁶ As the workload increased in Corpus Christi, the orders began to direct the court to “sit without regard to hours.”²⁷ Significantly, the accused were not identified in the order. When the stockade again filled with sufficient pretrial prisoners, a new panel would convene. Apparently, the stockade did not take long to fill as a new panel sat on average once every week.

COUNSEL

Perhaps the most surprising feature to the modern reader is that the criminal justice system was not administered by judge advocates with formal legal training. In nearly every case, a junior lieutenant from one of the regiments was detailed as judge advocate. This is hardly surprising. The United States in 1845 was a very different legal landscape. Most lawyers were self-taught, or apprenticed to another—earning their license through practice. It was, therefore, unusual in America to have a lawyer at trial with formal training, and in many trials throughout the United States, a lawyer at all. Only in the most serious cases would one find a lawyer representing someone accused of a crime.

Perhaps two reasonably well-known individuals of that time are illustrative. In 1858, William Tecumseh Sherman moved from California, where he had been a banker, to Leavenworth, Kansas, seeking employment. He took up an offer from a friend to join his law firm, although he “did not presume to be a lawyer.”²⁸ Sherman stated that

as my name was embraced in a law-firm, it seemed to me proper to take out a license. Accordingly, one day when the United States Judge Lecompte was in our office, I mentioned the matter to him; he told me to go down to the clerk of his court, and he would give me the license. I inquired what examination I would have to submit to, and he replied, ‘None at all;’ he would admit me on the ground of general intelligence.²⁹

Another example is Abraham Lincoln, who, like most lawyers of the day, was self-taught. In Lincoln’s case, he had read law books and at the age of twenty-eight entered the Springfield general store of Joshua Speed. “He asked the price of bedclothes for a single bedstead, which Speed figured at \$17.00. ‘Cheap as it is, I have not the money to pay,’ he told Speed. ‘But if you will credit me until Christmas, and my experiment as a lawyer here

is a success [emphasis added] I will pay you then.”³⁰ Of course, the line officer judge advocates did not earn their living practicing law and thereby learn its intricacies, but neither were they significantly less trained or experienced than the civilian counterpart. Indeed, all the line officer lieutenants were graduates of West Point. As such, they were likely better educated than most lawyers of the period.

With such a lens then, we should not judge the fairness of the system of justice and quality of counsel in Corpus Christi in 1845 using modern standards. We must compare it instead to the practice of law in America at that time. Despite what we would consider compromising handicaps today, the officers appointed as judge advocates in 1845, performed extraordinary work with remarkable precision and sophistication, under the harshest field conditions.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE

The judge advocate . . . shall prosecute in the name of the United States, but shall so far consider himself as counsel for the prisoner, after the said prisoner shall have made his plea, as to object to any leading question to any of the witnesses or any question to the prisoner, the answer to which might tend to criminate himself; and administer to each member of the court, before they proceed upon any trial, [the] oath. —Article of War 69 (1806)

Readers must remember that the right to counsel is of recent vintage. It was not until *Gideon v. Wainwright* in 1963 that the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that a state must provide legal counsel for anyone who is accused of a felony and cannot afford a lawyer.³¹ Even more enlightening on this point is the Supreme Court’s 1942 ruling in *Betts v. Brady*, in which the court reviewed an eight-year sentence in a robbery case with an alibi defense.³² It held that due process does not require that in every case, regardless of the circumstances, one charged with a crime, who is without funds to employ counsel, must be furnished counsel by the state.³³ Indeed, a judge on the Maryland Court of

The Army of Occupation’s camp on the beach at Corpus Christi



Appeals who reviewed the case observed, “Certainly my own experience in criminal trials over which I have presided (over 2,000, as I estimate it), has demonstrated to me that there are fair trials without counsel employed for the prisoners.”³⁴

And so it was in 1845. “Whenever a court-martial is appointed, a judge advocate shall be appointed for it.”³⁵ This requirement applied not only to general courts, but also to inferior courts (regimental and garrison level).³⁶ The traditional housekeeping duties of the judge advocate have changed little. He was responsible for obtaining all witnesses for the government and accused.³⁷ Any officer of the line or staff could be detailed as a judge advocate. Officers of the Judge Advocate General’s Department were only detailed for “prosecutions of unusual importance.”³⁸

At the time, the judge advocate’s role was that of prosecutor. He was to present evidence on the issue of guilt. He was also responsible for preparing witnesses and ensuring the availability and sufficiency of evidence.³⁹ Additionally, he was charged with advising the court on matters of law and procedure. Article of War 69 also directed that the judge advocate serve the accused in a number of important areas, which if done properly, would clearly constitute a modern-day conflict of interest.

Winthrop discusses the judge advocate’s role with respect to an accused in some detail. While recognizing the handicaps of the average enlisted man of the day in defending himself, the article of war and practice did little to minimize the soldier’s plight. Other than Winthrop’s official recognition of the potential conflict and the adjuration to the judge advocate to help out more, when more help was needed, there was little in the system to aid the accused.

[H]ow far the judge advocate shall properly counsel and assist the accused is left to depend in the first instance on whether he is furnished with competent personal counsel, and secondly on his own intelligence and ability to defend himself.

Where he is without counsel, and especially where he is an ignorant or inexperienced soldier, the judge advocate will properly render him, both in and out of court, such assistance as may be compatible with his primary duty of efficiently conducting the prosecution. In addition to aiding him before the trial in collecting his proofs and preparing his defence [*sic*] if he has one,—(and he will especially guard against even suggesting his pleading *guilty* if the case has any merits whatever,)—he will properly assist him in presenting in due form such challenges as he may desire to urge, in offering his plea or pleas general or special, and in bringing out the full testimony of the defence on the trial, as well as such circumstances of extenuation as may exist in the case.⁴⁰

It was ultimately a reliance on the good faith of the panel members who ruled by majority, and the general sense that most accused were guilty of *something*. In a system focused more on the need for discipline rather than justice, such a state of affairs is hardly surprising.

As much as we are a product of our time today, so too was the court-martial process in 1845. Judged by standards of the day, it was not far out of step with its civilian counterpart.

A WINDOW INTO THE SOUL OF AN ARMY

While Taylor’s army waited at Corpus Christi, there was a plague of misconduct that was, directly and indirectly, related to alcohol. Of the 255 general courts, seventy-two, or 28 percent, found that alcohol contributed to the primary charge. As a means of escaping the boredom and exceedingly harsh conditions, and as a substitute or prerequisite for desertion, alcohol served its time-honored purpose. Soldiers were charged with simple drunkenness off duty, drunk on duty, or the more serious and frequent, drunk on *guard* duty. Alcohol, however, was consumed by both enlisted *and* officer personnel without discrimination.⁴¹

THE CURIOUS CASE OF LIEUTENANT RIDGELY

In one notable case, Major Morris and Lieutenant Ridgely found that drink and the Sutler’s store were a dangerous combination.

Respecting the first allegation, ‘that Major Morris inveigled Lt Ridgely when intoxicated, into a game of cards, with the motive of winning his money,’ the court is of opinion that the apartment in the Sutler’s store where the game was played, is a place of common resort for the officers, and their meeting there on the P.M. of the 30th Dec. 1845, was entirely accidental.⁴²

It seems that after a long night of drinking, card playing and the loss of his money, Lieutenant Ridgely thought himself taken advantage of by the good Major Morris. Hearing of his aspersions, Major Morris requested, as was the custom in these days, a board of inquiry to clear his good name.⁴³ This was another example of the old adage, “be careful of what you ask for, you just might get it.” The board was charged to examine “certain imputations” against the character of Major Morris relating to a “transaction” (card playing) between Major Morris and Lieutenant Ridgely.

The board’s report was fairly lengthy and summarized in the general order approving its findings and recommendations. The details in the general order also give a sense of daily life in the camp. The Sutler’s store was obviously a popular place and saw much traffic.

Several entered at different times, and after playing other games for awhile, that of brag was proposed by Major Morris, to which LT Ridgely and a third person readily consented. All were excited to a certain degree, but every one at this period, is believed to have been perfectly competent to attend to his own interests in the game. . . . The playing was voluntary; no undue eagerness having been apparent in any one, nor reluctance manifested in any other, of the parties.⁴⁴

The board continued with its recommendations to General Taylor.

It is the opinion of the Court after a mature examination of all the testimony in the case, that Major Morris, in his game with Lt Ridgely took no undue advantage, but played it fairly, and according to its received rules. And they find no evidence, that during any stage of the play, Major Morris thought Lt Ridgely unfitted by reason of intoxication to play the game of brag with skill and judgment.⁴⁵

The board closed with this unusual admonition to Major Morris.

Having thus discharged the duty imposed by the order under which they are assembled, the Court cannot dismiss the case before them, without recording their condemnation of its general features, and expressing their conviction, that for scenes like that disclosed by the testimony, the time, place and circumstances chosen on this occasion are equally ill-suited.⁴⁶

General Taylor approved the findings and recommendations without further comment. The order and the activities of Major Morris, Lieutenant Ridgely, and the board give an excellent view of the daily life of the officers and the importance this small but professional army placed on relationships between ranks. Clearly, there were concerns about a major playing cards with a lieutenant where money was involved. And although the time-honored importance of a senior officer not gambling with subordinates was paramount, the board's real emphasis was on the ability of Lieutenant Ridgely to voluntarily, and with clear head, decide to play and continue to play. And although the board found for Major Morris, it condemned him for allowing such an event to occur. It is an interesting notion to consider whether a board in our Army today would be so forgiving.



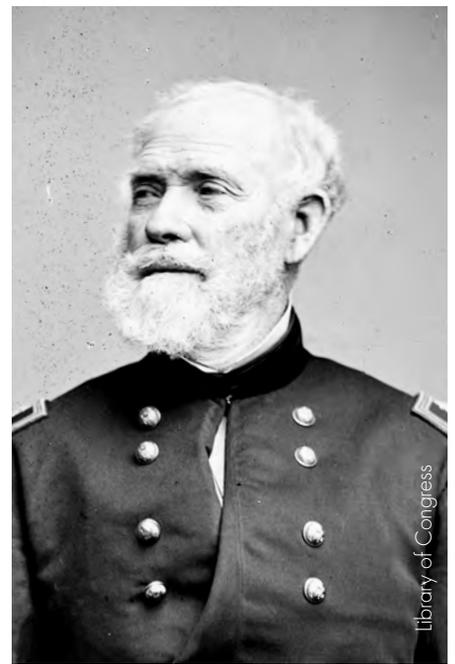
Colonel Twiggs

THE "SINK"

Another of the few recorded officer cases that did not escape notice in Corpus Christi involved First Lieutenant Hopson. He was charged with conduct subversive to good order and discipline in that he was "drunk when required on duty at dress parade on 19 February," and conduct unbecoming an officer. His defense was that he was going to the "sink" [latrine] just as the drum beat for parade. He was found not guilty of both charges, released from arrest, and resumed his sword.⁴⁷

DESERTION-LIKE LOCUST

Desertion, like a swarm of locusts, descended on the camp at Corpus Christi. It represented the single most common offense in the Army. By March 1846, eight months after arriving on the coast, sixty-five soldiers had been charged with desertion and another eighteen with being absent without leave (AWOL). Of course, the number of soldiers lost to desertion was substantially higher. Consider first that the number above reflects only those who surrendered or were apprehended. Indeed, the 2d Regiment of



William Harney, shown here as a brigadier general, c. 1860

Dragoons under the command of Col. David Twiggs traveled overland to join General Taylor in Corpus Christi and lost 50 of 596 to desertion *before* their arrival. Second, this number does not include those soldiers punished by the lower regimental courts for such offenses.

Finally, and as embarrassing proof of the problems that continued to plague the Army well into 1847, consider the infamous Saint Patrick's (San Patricio) Battalion of deserters captured following the Battle of Churubusco.⁴⁸ This unit of American deserters fought with the Mexican Army against the Army of Occupation. Desertions to the Mexican Army began at Corpus Christi in the fall of 1845. As the deserters trickled into Mexican territory, they were offered money and land to join the Mexican Army. Many obliged. The Mexican Army was vigorous in soliciting American soldiers to desert. At peak strength in 1847, the Saint Patrick's Battalion comprised two companies with a total strength of 204 men.⁴⁹ Their story is fascinating and, following the Battle of Churubusco, represents perhaps the largest American military execution in history. Fifty of the captured "San Patricios" were hanged.⁵⁰

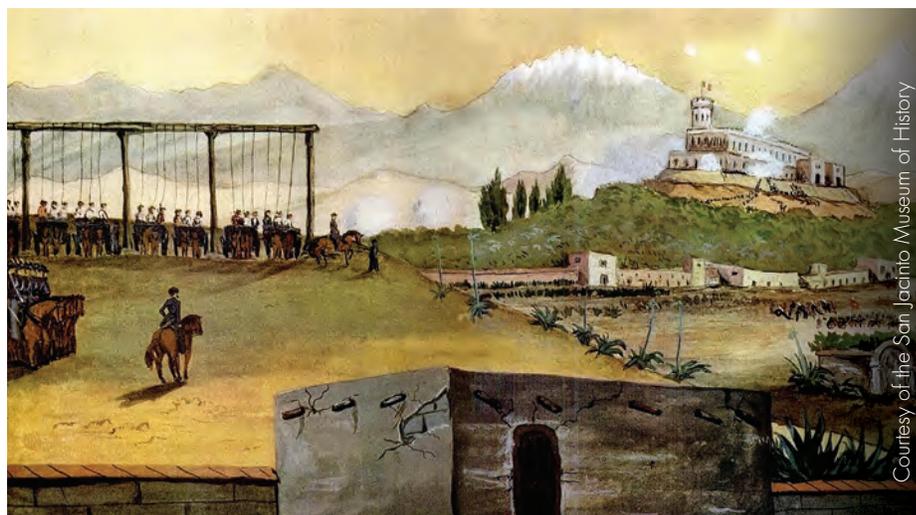
General Scott, then in command of the Army of Occupation, carefully reviewed the findings and sentences of the courts-martial, pardoned five and remitted fifteen of the seventy death sentences, among other clemency granted.⁵¹ “Old Fuss and Feathers’ sat up nights trying to find excuses for not executing the seventy prisoners sentenced to death.”⁵² Thirty of the condemned men met an unusual end. Col. William Harney ordered the gallows built on a hilltop overlooking the Chapultepec Castle, two miles distant. The prisoners were seated on boards at the ends of wagons with arms and legs tied. Colonel Harney directed them to watch the American assault of the fortress with nooses around their necks. He told the prisoners when the American flag was raised over the castle, they would die.

“[S]hortly before 9:30 A.M., when the Stars and Stripes replaced the Mexican tricolor over the castle, the colonel gave the signal by a wave of his sword.”⁵³ Most of the American soldiers approved of the hangings.

These executions, which would have been proper at any time, were particularly so now, as we were in the midst of the enemy’s country, with a desperate struggle before us, and with greatly inferior forces; there were many foreigners in our ranks; some of them not even naturalized citizens, and the enemy was making every effort still, to entice them away. The salvation of the army might depend upon an example being made of these dishonored and dishonorable men, and General Scott had the firmness to make it. The brave Irish, who remained faithful to us, and who were always among the foremost, and most devoted of our troops, were more rejoiced at this event than the native-born Americans even, as they had felt keenly the stigma which this conduct of their countrymen had cast upon them.⁵⁴

PUNISHMENT: A TOOL OF DISCIPLINE PURPOSE

Every lawyer, at some point in a sentencing argument, whether through in-



Hanging of the San Patricios by Samuel Chamberlain

spiration or desperation, has argued the five purposes of punishment. The doctrinal purposes have changed little over time, but society’s emphasis on one or another has changed how punishment is delivered to the convicted. Our modern purposes of retribution, restitution, incapacitation, and rehabilitation have been the currency of sentencing discussions since our Army first mustered. The system has simply emphasized one aspect more than another at different times. Arguably, during the Mexican War, deterrence was the paramount concern. In the last century, with the passage of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, rehabilitation was quite popular until the federal government concluded it had failed as a primary focus of corrections programs. Clearly, the Army of 1845 operated under the belief that the public nature of punishment worked as a strong disincentive to others. The commander in 1845 had a dizzying array of tools to achieve the goals of punishment as then known.

BRANDING

Branding has an ancient history. Whether as a mark of ownership on livestock or as an emblem of disgrace, branding was still authorized in 1845, but it was a misnomer. Soldiers were typically not branded with a hot iron but were instead tattooed with a permanent mark on their skin.⁵⁵

Given the far-flung outposts of the country, and no centralized record-keeping, branding was used not so much to induce public disdain or embarrassment, as to prevent future reenlistment. Indeed, the brand was not routinely visible but was customarily placed on the right hip. Hidden from view in such a location, it was clearly not meant to bring continued public scorn. Instead, it was typically done to prevent a soldier from reenlisting in the Army or Navy. To ensure that undesirables not reenter the force, medical regulations at the time required applicants to disrobe so the doctor could examine for physical defects as well as brands.⁵⁶ In its first six months in the field, the Army of Occupation branded over twenty-two soldiers with letters ranging from *D* for desertion, *HD* for habitual drunkard, *M* for mutiny, and *W* for worthless. Although branding or marking was officially abolished in the Army in 1872, the tenor of General Taylor’s orders make it plain that he felt compelled to correct overzealousness and to educate his officers.⁵⁷

In one case from a detachment in San Antonio, General Taylor closed his action with this cautionary education on the nature of branding: “Whenever branding is prescribed, the prisoner will instead be indelibly marked by tattooing.”⁵⁸ It is surprising, indeed, that such an admonition would be necessary. Perhaps branding was not as common as first

thought. The fatherly reminder may show a supreme lack of confidence in the officers at San Antonio. Given that hot-iron branding did occur later in the war in exceptional cases under different commanders (General Scott), the admonition may be the result of General Taylor's personal view of the Article of War that allowed branding. Regardless, the approved sentences provide evidence of not only General Taylor's mature judgment and pursuit of fairness, but also an emerging level of retributive spirit not yet seen among the officers in Corpus Christi.

FLOGGING

Flogging reemerged as an apparently necessary and potent tool of discipline during the Mexican War. Perhaps not since General George Washington's frequent (although little discussed) use of the lash during the American Revolution had it become such a mainstay of military justice. Discontinued by law in the Army in 1812, Congress reauthorized it in 1833, but it was limited to fifty lashes and then, only for desertion.⁵⁹ It remained little used, or at least infrequently discussed, until the desertion problems spread throughout the ranks of the Army of Occupation. Flogging was officially abolished in 1861.⁶⁰

Oddly, the routine use of flogging in Corpus Christi suggests that, at least for desertion, members of the Regular Army had routinely imposed it since 1833 when it was reauthorized. Although there is no overt discussion of it, the absence of any comment in the letters and writings of any of those who left behind journals suggests it was not noteworthy in novelty or cruelty. Neither Meade nor Grant, or any others, comment on it in their otherwise candid and frank letters home.

Regardless, while a soldier convicted of being AWOL might avoid the lash, a deserter could expect no such quarter. With remarkable predictability, all of the differently composed panels imposed flogging on deserters. The number of lashes is the only aspect that differed from case to case, and discrimination is evident in the quan-

tity of lashes imposed for the enlisted soldier.

Whether the soldier surrendered or was apprehended could mean a difference of twenty-five lashes. If the soldier was also convicted of other charges, or a problem with desertion was observed in a particular unit, naturally influenced the panel. Much background is lost to us given the limited knowledge of the work of the lesser regimental courts. Soldiers who faced general courts-martial with records of discipline from regimental courts could expect less mercy.

Flogging was normally done with either rawhide or a cat o' nine tails.⁶¹ The type was specifically set out in the sentence of the court. It is unclear, however, whether the punishment was always publicly administered. Soldiers served their confinement in an Army stockade built in Corpus Christi. If the lashes were imposed in front of the regiment or in the stockade is unclear. In some later promulgating orders, the court sentence specifically prescribes lashes "in front of the Regiment." Prior orders omit such direction. Although possibly an oversight, such an omission suggests flogging inside the stockade, away from the view of the regiment. Given the level of precision reflected in the sentences and promulgating orders elsewhere, it is unlikely that it was an omission. Perhaps it was merely superfluous language that only the more inexperienced panels included. If flogging was routinely done in front of the unit, then clearly such language would be unnecessary.

On occasion, lashes were given over a number of days. A variety of reasons exist for this. It is possible that the panel desired to lengthen the punishment for a prisoner. There is some evidence to suggest it was done for health reasons. It also was not uncommon to include washing of the back with salt water or brine—just in case the soldier was oblivious to the flaying of his back!⁶²

OTHER UNUSUAL PUNISHMENTS

Beginning in 1846, just about four months after arrival in Corpus Christi, the panels routinely began to put the

prisoner on display during his punishment. With regularity, the panels included language in the sentences that demanded public observance and opprobrium.

Private McDowall: "Stand on the head of a barrel every alternate two hours for 5 successive days from reveille to retreat."⁶³

Musician Ross: "Marked indelibly on the right hip with the word Thief in letters one and one half inch long, then drummed out of the service with his jacket turned inside out, buttons cut off and the word thief labeled in large letters on the jacket."⁶⁴

Private Bearnheart: "To refund \$4.12 (sum received for coat) to Citizen McDonald."⁶⁵

Private Dulang: "Confined for three days from reveille to retreat, except for 1 hour at breakfast and dinner, is to march in ring (50 foot diameter) at common time with 30 lbs. knapsack."⁶⁶

As the excerpts above demonstrate, there was endless variety to the punishments handed down by the courts. Perhaps not surprisingly, the really creative ideas were focused on the corporal aspects of punishment. It is reasonable to conclude that most of these punishments were designed to "heighten public awareness" of the crime and its consequences.

It is fascinating to observe the Corpus Christi panel's response to the repetitive nature of certain indiscipline. Clearly, the panel attempted to use whatever means were at its disposal not only to deter the individual from misbehavior in the future, but also, and especially as time went on, to deter others from similar conduct.

FACE BLACKING, HEAD SHAVING, AND BARREL STANDING

As the panels gained experience, their punishments became more creative and tailored to avert recurrence. Early on the sentences were, for their day, garden-variety boilerplate

pronouncements, such as, “50 lashes and return to duty.”⁶⁷ Later, we find more thorough, creative, and harsh sentences. Private Brown, Company B, 7th Infantry, was found guilty of habitual drunkenness and sentenced to “forfeiture of all pay and allowances, marked with a D, head shaved, face blacked and drummed out at evening parade.”⁶⁸ One suspects poor Private Brown had prior experience at a regimental court-martial. In another case, demonstrating the Army’s frustration with continued desertion, Private Bennet, Company H, 3d Infantry, was charged with desertion, found guilty of the lesser included charge of being AWOL and sentenced to a forfeiture of five dollars and to “stand on the head of a barrel from reveille to 12 O’Clock pm. and for the remainder of the day to be ‘bucked’ on the head of said barrel for 5 successive days.”⁶⁹

Corporal Smith, Company G, was charged with conduct unbecoming a noncommissioned officer, disobedience, and being AWOL. He was found guilty and sentenced to forfeiture of one-half of one month’s pay for four months and “to have his face blacked for one day.”⁷⁰ Another soldier was sentenced to having his face blacked for ten days and to have his head shaved. Evidently, face blacking and head shaving were effective means to visibly publish the results of a court-martial. Heavy emphasis was thus placed on specific, and perhaps more important to the panels, general deterrence. Notably these two soldiers were not discharged, but instead, returned to duty after their punishment was complete. It was also customary to blacken the faces of soldiers who were “drummed out of the service.” This peculiar punishment, although routine among those discharged, was used with discrimination among those retained in the service.

A Private Butters was charged with worthlessness, habitual drunkenness, loss of issued items, and conduct prejudicial to good order. He was convicted, contrary to his pleas and, given the unusual charge of worthlessness (the first occurrence since arrival in Texas), was provided even more unusual punishment.⁷¹ Private

Butters was sentenced to “branding HD [habitual drunkard] on the right hip, and W [worthless] on the left hip,” to have his head shaved and to be drummed out of the service. Not only was the double brand unusual thus far in Taylor’s army, but Captain Bliss and General Taylor quickly took exception to the novel charge of worthlessness. In his promulgating order, General Taylor remitted the charge of worthlessness as “too vague.”⁷²

And then there was the wretched thief Private Long, who made the grave mistake of stealing another soldier’s greatcoat. He was charged with “Highly disgraceful and unsoldierlike conduct, AWOL and Disobedience” (an additional charge, which at the time was typically limited to conduct in pretrial confinement after charges were initially preferred). He pleaded guilty only to the AWOL and was found guilty of all three charges. The panel sentenced him to “make good to Private Frederick Gibelsman of Company F, 4th Infantry, the price of a new great coat—and to be ‘bucked’ on the head of a barrel from reveille until 12 O’Clock pm. for fifteen days; the remaining portions of those days until retreat to stand on the head of said barrel, having suspended round his neck a board with the words ‘Great Coat Thief’ in large letters written thereon.”⁷³ The larceny was the most serious offense and was charged, interestingly, as “highly disgraceful unsoldierlike conduct.” Barracks thieves to this day have a special place in the sentencing minds and hearts of panels and military judges.

In the last case, and perhaps the most severe, Private Wallace, Company G, was charged with drunk on duty, disobedience, and striking an officer. He was convicted and given six months’ confinement, hard labor, *an iron collar of 12 pounds with three six inch prongs around his neck, inflexible iron rods attached to each leg from hip to ankles* and total forfeiture of all pay and allowances for six months.⁷⁴ Although it is possible that Private Wallace bore the weight and rigidity of this punishment initially, General Taylor quickly remitted the “iron” elements, as they were “impractical in the field.”⁷⁵

BALL AND CHAIN

Perhaps the most typical punishment for the period was the ball and chain, and its use was popular in the Army of Occupation. Beginning with the first general court held on 21 September 1845, five of sixteen men were given ball-and-chain punishment. It was typically combined with other forms of punishment and limited to sentences of confinement. The weight of the ball varied from five to twenty-five pounds as directed by the court.

The most interesting part of ball-and-chain punishment is that General Taylor ordered its disuse in Corpus Christi. By November, he had concluded that it was inappropriate to continue the ball and chain in the field environment. “In consequence of the inconvenience and difficulty which attend their complete execution in the field, so much of the sentences of General Courts Martial . . . as prescribes the wearing of ball and chain, is hereby remitted.”⁷⁶

Occasionally thereafter the punishment would appear in sentences handed down by the court, and Captain Bliss would with regularity remit that portion of the sentence. Not every panel was made aware of the commanding general’s policy.

NECK YOKE

The neck yoke was another common punishment in Corpus Christi. The panels quickly warmed to the use of yokes as they did to the ball and chain. As in the area of flogging, the quality of the punishment varied. Panels appear to have fashioned the weight of the yoke and the number of prongs within the yoke based on the gravity of the offense. A neck yoke with two prongs weighing five pounds was common.⁷⁷ In more severe cases, such as mutiny, and in combination with other punishment, a soldier might be ordered to wear a twelve-pound yoke.⁷⁸

CARRYING WEIGHTS

The carrying of weighted knapsacks was extremely common. Typically, soldiers were ordered to carry weights

ranging from twenty-five to fifty pounds for a specific number of days for a certain time each day. Private Haddock, Company C, for example, was sentenced to confinement at hard labor for twenty days carrying a forty-pound weight from tattoo to 2400 hours for the first fifteen days.⁷⁹ Another example of the carrying of weight punishment is found in the case of the hapless Private Asa Lewis who was found drunk on guard duty and ordered to carry a log weighing fifty pounds for thirty days from retreat until 2400 hours!⁸⁰

BUCK AND GAGGING

One of the most pervasive punishments was bucking and gagging. This punishment was only occasionally handed down by general courts. It was most typically imposed by regimental courts and by commanders at their in-

dividual discretion. As a result, it was widely used, and as mentioned earlier, it was much loathed by the soldier.

This process of bucking being something new [to me] I must describe it for the benefit of "posterity." The patient is seated—his latter end resting upon his parent earth. His heels are then drawn up until they come in contact with his posterious. His hands are then taken forward of his knees and tied with a handkerchief—a rope should be used when the patient shows violent symptoms. The job is then finished by running a stick under his knees and over his arms.⁸¹

CLEMENCY

General Taylor routinely scaled back the sentences of his soldiers. Of the 232 soldiers convicted, thirty-six

or 15 percent received some form of clemency. It is hard to assess whether the rates of indiscipline were higher in Texas than in the normal frontier postings. There is much, however, to suggest that rates may have been considerably higher and that clemency rates also climbed. Living conditions of the average soldier were markedly more severe as winter approached and certainly more dismal than garrison life on the frontier. Unlike the typical postings that had permanent quarters and a routine, life in Corpus Christi included the dreadful heat, bugs, and dysentery of the summer, or the severe weather of approaching winter.

The form of clemency afforded by General Taylor was usually quite simple.

The proceedings in the above cases are approved and the sentences will

An etching showing the various forms of punishment still employed at the beginning of the Civil War



Internet Archive

be duly executed under direction of the respective Commanders, except so much of those against Privates Edward Lawson, Company G, 8th Infantry, and Alexander Turner, Company A, 4th Infantry, as prescribes ball and chain which is remitted; and the entire sentence against Private Edmund Riley, Company H, 3rd Infantry, which is also remitted agreeably to the recommendation in his behalf; he will be returned to duty.⁸²

BUSTING UP THE TOWN

Sadly, General Taylor rang in the New Year responding to an alcohol and public relations problem. He was quick to take action. In his first general order for 1846, he referred to an “outrage of aggravated character” committed by “a party of soldiers upon the persons and property of some Mexicans” near the village of Corpus Christi.⁸³

To avert “repetition of such disgraceful acts,” which are “injurious to the public interest and the reputation of the service,” he ordered that thereafter

no Non-commissioned officer or soldier shall be permitted to pass the limits of the Camp between tattoo and reveille, except on duty—An officer will be added to the guard of the 3rd Brigade, and a patrol under a Commissioned Officer will be sent from that guard every two hours between tattoo and reveille, whose duty it shall be to examine the village and the houses on the hill . . . , with a view to the apprehension and delivery to the guard of any enlisted men who may be found without the chain of sentinels in violation of the above order.⁸⁴

It is impossible to determine the success or failure of this general order.

CONCLUSION

And so as the Army of Occupation marched deeper into Mexico, there can be no doubt that soldiers knew the high and visible costs of misconduct.

Indeed, the Army carried the lash and noose through its operations in Mexico. The executions at Chapultepec are a stark reminder.

Certainly the American Army in Mexico was a product of its age. Tales of indiscipline found in the orders of the Army of Occupation tell a story of an army that meted out what in today’s sensibilities are brutal and primitive punishment. But we should not be so quick to consider ourselves more enlightened than our predecessors.

Upon the hanging of deserters, a Mexican newspaper wrote this call to arms, which should suggest to the modern reader that we should not be so smug with our twenty-first century enlightenment.

Mexicans. Among the European volunteers whom the American army has hired to kill us, there are many unfortunate men who are convinced of the injustice of this war, who profess the same Roman Catholic religion as we do. . . . Some of these men, renouncing their error and following the noble impulse of their heart, have passed over to our army to defend our just cause. From them the president formed the Foreign Legion, known under the name of the San Patricio Company. At . . . Churubusco they fought with utmost bravery and after the enemy took this . . . place they were made prisoners. . . . Well, then, will you believe it my countrymen? *This day in cold blood, these [Americans] . . . from an impulse of superstition, and after the manner of savages and as practiced in the days of Homer, have hanged these men as a holocaust* [emphasis added].⁸⁵

Outrage over capital punishment is certainly not a new phenomenon. Moreover, disputes about capital punishment are hardly the point. By any modern standard, whether it be the character and quality of the punishment in 1845, or the measure of due process afforded a soldier, it would not make the grade today. We would also do well to remember that our forebears thought themselves enlightened,

modern, and eminently fair—as undoubtedly we do today. What will our successors say of us? Applying current standards to our predecessors then is not intended to level criticism as it is to celebrate our progress.

What we take from the tents on the shores of Corpus Christi, more broadly viewed then, is a rare and fruitful glimpse into the nature of court-martial of 1845–1846, and American justice—and as part of that landscape—military justice. It tells us about soldiers, the pressures they were under as we baited Mexico, and how a professional group of officers managed to maintain discipline among a largely immigrant Army while preparing for war in an inhospitable place. It tells us as well that human instincts and weakness will forever remain the same. Whether it is a greatcoat stolen by the shivering thief or a game of cards gone bad.

The story also is a brief glimpse into the Army that would reassemble and grow exponentially just over fifteen years later. Names like Lee, Grant, Bragg, Halleck, Hooker, McClellan, Sherman, Beauregard, Hill, Jackson, Longstreet, and Pickett, each of whom served in Mexico, would loom larger than life in the war to come. And each would know well the American court-martial as conducted on the shores of Corpus Christi.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

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NOTES

1. When General Taylor entered Corpus Christi he was sixty-one years old and had been a soldier in the American Army for thirty-seven years. He fought and commanded in the Black Hawk War and acquired the nickname “Old Rough and Ready” battling the Seminole Indians in the Florida Territory from 1837 to 1840. During the Seminole War, he was brevetted a brigadier general.

2. By comparison, the Louisiana Purchase gained just over 800,000 square miles of land for the United States.

3. Mary D. McFeely and William S. McFeely, eds., *Ulysses S. Grant: Memoirs and Selected Letters* (New York: Library of America, 1990), p. 48.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

5. Douglas V. Meed, *The Mexican War 1846–1848* (Great Britain: Osprey Publishing, 2002), p. 88.

6. Dragoons are similar to cavalry in that they move by horse, but, unlike cavalry, they dismount to fight.

7. Clayton R. Newell, *The Regular Army Before the Civil War, 1845–1860* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2014), pp. 48–49.

8. Ltr, Grant to Julia Dent, 17 Jul 1845, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume I: 1837–1861*, ed. John Y. Simon (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), p. 51 (hereafter cited as Grant Papers).

9. Grant, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, p. 73.

10. The monthly military pay for the remaining ranks in 1845: Musician, \$8; Corporal, \$9; Sergeant, \$13; First Sergeant, \$16; Second Lieutenant, \$29; First Lieutenant, \$34; Captain, \$44; Major, \$54; Lieutenant Colonel, \$65; Colonel, \$81. Robert Ryal Miller, *Shamrock and Sword: The Saint Patrick's Battalion in the U.S.-Mexican War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), p. 39.

11. Anton Adams, *The War in Mexico* (Chicago: Emperor's Press, 1998), p. 151.

12. Ltr, Meade to Wife, 1 Dec 1845, in George Gordon Meade, *The Life and Letters of General George Gordon Meade*, 2 vols. (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 1:36–37 (hereafter cited as Meade Letters).

13. Headquarters (HQ), Army of Occupation, General Orders (GO) 35, 4 Nov 1845, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Charlottesville, Va. General Orders 35 cites, "A Board of Officers will meet tomorrow at such hour and place as the Senior Officer may designate for the purpose of examining the quality and condition of the tents in this Camp. [Detail of five members and a recorder.] The Board will make a thorough examination of all the tents and will report 1st. Upon the quality of the wall and common tents, as regards their material and fabrication, whether they afford a sufficient protection against the weather and are generally fit for field service."

14. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, pp. 155n82, 156. A song quickly spread through

the Army, which decried the use of "buck and gag" punishment. In the field armies of the nineteenth century, the notion of a lash to gain and maintain order and control over the rank and file was common. Corporal punishment was as much in vogue in the Army in 1845 as it was at the hand of George Washington or in the Army of the Potomac in 1863. Once in combat, facing an enemy, on foreign soil, with many in the ranks of foreign descent and some who spoke no English, the measures taken by American commanders, when taken in context, are not surprising.

15. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 155.

16. *Ibid.*

17. The desertion rates for U.S. soldiers in other wars are as follows: Spanish-American War, 1.6 percent; World War I, 1.3 percent; World War II, 5.3 percent; Korean War, 1.9 percent; and Vietnam War, 4.1 percent. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 174.

18. Meade Letters, p. 37.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 35. "A camp where there is no active service is a dull and stupid place, nothing but drill and parades, and your ears are filled all day with drumming and fifeing."

20. All was not, however, misery and despair for the soldiers deposited on the windy shores of Corpus Christi. As Lieutenant Meade describes in another letter to his wife, soldiers will always find the path to merriment.

21. The criminal conviction rate reported by the Department of Justice for 2012, the most recent report, was 93 percent.

22. There was nothing unusual about the absence of legal training in judge advocates. Indeed, even as late as 1968, line officers served as judge advocates at courts-martial.

23. William Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents*, 2d ed. (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown and Company, 1920).

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 172–73. Only a majority vote was required for a capital finding.

25. The panel adjourns permanently. *Baron's Law Dictionary*, 1984.

26. Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents*, Article of War 75, p. 983.

27. HQ, Army of Occupation, After Orders, 26 Feb 1846, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Charlottesville, Va.

28. Charles Royster, ed., *Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman* (New York: Library of America, 1990), p. 159.

29. *Ibid.* While General Sherman is quite self-deprecating about his knowledge of the

law, he does concede during his modest education at West Point that during the course of his "military reading" he had "studied a few of the ordinary law-books, such as Blackstone, Kent [and] Starkie." Even lawyers today are not likely able to claim having studied such tomes.

30. Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1926), p. 216.

31. *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 83 Supreme Court Reporter (S. Ct.) 792 (1963).

32. *Betts v. Brady*, 62 S. Ct. 1252 (1942).

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*, p. 472, n31.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Many of the judge advocate duties were described in the army regulations then current.

38. *Betts v. Brady*, p. 183.

39. Winthrop explains that in some cases judge advocates were censured for not properly preparing the case for trial.

40. *Betts v. Brady*, pp. 197–98.

41. Although known to be an avid drinker later in his career, it appears Lieutenant Grant escaped incident in Mexico. However, this incident just a year before his arrival in Mexico was an ominous sign. In 1844, Miss Margaret Johnson Erwin chanced to meet Grant and in a letter to a friend wrote:

A most unpleasant evening. James brought my friend, William Sherman [William Tecumseh Sherman], to dinner and with them was a young man, a Lieutenant Grant. The latter drank far too much and his attitude towards the coast—and whole south—proves that he should be sent back where he came from; his place is not here. I think William S. was much put out by his loudness and general behavior.

She next saw him in New York on leave from his service in Mexico, presumably in 1846.

I could not make out one word he said, he was so inebriated. He stepped on Mrs. Spangler's gown, tearing the hem, and then almost fell to the floor. She was outraged and went from the room and would not return until some gentleman had escorted the belching donkey from the house. Seton was among them and when he returned he only shook his head; no comment.

42. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 10, 22 Jan 1846.

43. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 2, 6 Jan 1846.

44. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 10, 22 Jan 1846.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. An officer's sword was confiscated whenever the officer was suspended from duties or under arrest.

48. So named, as the majority of the deserters were Irish.

49. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 89.

50. Ibid., pp. 105–06.

51. Ibid., p. 101.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid., p. 108.

55. Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents*, pp. 103–04. Winthrop discusses branding and suggests it was no longer used by the time of the Mexican War. Indeed, General Taylor's order clarifying the nature of branding was not without exception. Those of the Saint Patrick's Battalion who were not hung were branded with hot irons on their cheeks. Clearly, when the gravity of the offense reached a certain level, in this case, taking up arms against your own country, the threshold had been reached. Curiously, the leader of the battalion, John Reilly, escaped execution because he deserted before war was declared and was thus not technically subject to death upon conviction. No legal detail was lost on the soldiers administering the system. Unfortunately for Reilly, he was branded with a *D* on his cheek, but the Mexican administering the brand seared the letter backwards. The

general on the scene immediately ordered the other cheek branded correctly. And so, after sustaining fifty punishing lashes, Reilly had both cheeks scorched by the iron. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 102. Capt. George Davis described the scene: "The fourteen that were to be whipped and branded were tied up to the trees in front of the Catholic church on the plaza, their backs naked to the waistband of the pantaloons, and an experienced Mexican muleteer inflicted the fifty lashes with all the severity he could upon each culprit. Why those thus punished did not die under such punishment was a marvel to me. Their backs had the appearance of a pounded piece of raw beef, the blood oozing from every stripe as given. Each in his turn was then branded."

56. Other medical oddities included checking teeth and breath. Adams, *War in Mexico*, p. 151.

57. Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents*, p. 440.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., p. 438.

60. Ibid.

61. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 13, 21 Sep 1845; HQ, Army of Occupation, After Orders, 30 Oct 1845.

62. Winthrop, *Military Law and Precedents*, p. 439.

63. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 58, 22 Dec 1845.

64. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 52, 6 Dec 1845.

65. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 49, 1 Dec 1845.

66. HQ, Army of Occupation, After Orders, 30 Oct 1845.

67. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 13, 21 Sep 1845.

68. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 28, 6 Mar 1846.

69. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 31, 9 Mar 1846.

70. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 18, 12 Feb 1846. It is unknown to the author by what means the face was blackened. Perhaps ashes or a burnt cork was used with the admonition that washing the face was prohibited.

71. Ibid.

72. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 18, 12 Feb 1846.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

76. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 41, 14 Nov 1845.

77. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 59, 23 Dec 1845.

78. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 14, 8 Feb 1846.

79. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 9, 20 Jan 1846. *Reveille*, of course, is the morning wake up call. *Retreat* ended the duty day in the late afternoon. *Tattoo* was, before *Taps* appeared, the call for lights out. So in the case of Haddock, he carried his weight from lights out until midnight for fifteen days.

80. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 16, 10 Feb 1846.

81. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 153.

82. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 11, 24 Jan 1846.

83. HQ, Army of Occupation, GO 1, 2 Jan 1846.

84. Ibid.

85. Miller, *Shamrock and Sword*, p. 111.

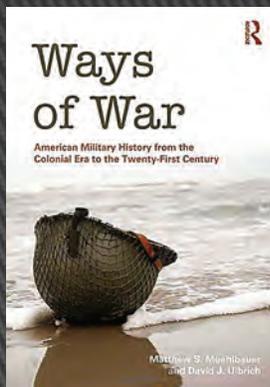
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BOOKREVIEWS

Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century



By Matthew S. Muehlbauer and
David J. Ulbrich
Routledge, 2013
Pp. xxi, 536. \$64.95

Review by Joshua Shiver

In *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*, Professors Matthew S. Muehlbauer and David J. Ulbrich provide a sweeping overview of the last 400 years of American military history from the precolonial period through the more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Designed primarily as a textbook for use in undergraduate classrooms, it is a blend of the traditional “drum and bugle” history that focuses on strategy, tactics, and troop movements with the so-called new military history that explores the relationship between the military and society. It does not represent a monolithic view of America’s martial

past, opting instead to use a wider lens by combining military with social, diplomatic, economic, and political history and by couching the centrality of warfare within the larger context of the nation’s cultural and political evolution over time.

The introductory chapter presents a brief but well-written overview of key terms that are decidedly nontechnical and which frame the information that follows. Chapter 1 focuses on early European colonization in North America and the often understudied Indian wars that broke out with regularity until the turn of the eighteenth century. Chapter 2 examines the European wars that drew the colonies into global conflict and led inexorably toward revolution. Chapters 3 and 4 explain the coming of the American Revolution and the challenges of the military in finding its place in a post-Revolutionary society suspicious of standing armies. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 look at the expanding role of the military after the War of 1812 and the outbreak of the Civil War. Chapters 8 and 9 expound on the growth of the post-Civil War military and its transformation into a standing military force and its performance in World War I. Chapter 10 describes the transformation of the military in its relationship with society from the end of World War I to the outbreak of World War II. Chapters 11 through 14 examine the transformation of the military from its peak in World War II to a defensive force during the Cold War. Finally, Chapter 15 analyzes the dramatic change in the public’s perspective of the military from the post-Vietnam era through the more recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Primarily a college textbook suitable for sophomore through senior-level history majors, *Ways of War* avoids the common trap of elevating information above story. Instead, it takes a more balanced approach that blends narrative story with factual information into a cohesive and well-structured whole. It is written for the student who has never been exposed to the basic terminology, historiographical undercurrents, or events and figures of American military history. Each chapter begins with a concise overview that gives the reader a broad understanding of the more complex information to follow. Throughout the book, black and white maps, diagrams, timelines, and illustrations provide visual representations that flesh out the more confusing aspects of strategy, tactics, and technological change. Additionally, in order to give students a taste of using primary source material, each chapter includes excerpts from journals, diaries, letters, or battle reports that help focus on more human and individual aspects of the overarching political and military narrative. Finally, each chapter ends with a summary of key points and an expanded bibliography for further research.

For modern classrooms, *Ways of War* fits nicely into the current technological context by providing students a companion Web site that contains a plethora of information not included in the book such as expanded timelines, chapter summaries, key terms, flashcards, bibliographies, and Web links. For instructors, this same online resource offers an immensely valuable test bank of multiple choice, discussion, and sample essay ques-

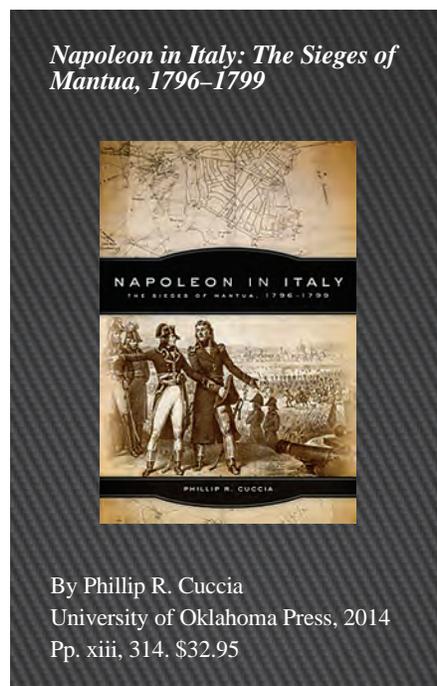
tions divided by chapter, in addition to images and maps from the book available for download and use in the classroom. This useful online resource is important for students who are often stymied by the limitations of page count and the resultant glossing over of key information inherent with textbooks that cover such broad and expansive periods.

This military history textbook goes far beyond defining the strategy and tactics that constitute most single-volume works on American warfare. It also examines the role of technology and its evolution over time, the growth of the military from a disparate militia to a standing professional force, the strangely symbiotic relationship between the military and society, the role of politics and diplomacy in defining war, and the changing social makeup of the military over time. In other words, *Ways of War* represents a richer narrative that does not paint war and its place in American society in stark terms. Rather, it weaves together a convincing history that reflects the ever-evolving nature of war as a product of broader societal movements.

Both well-written and well-documented, this textbook is easily accessible and a valuable resource for military and nonmilitary institutions of higher learning. Beyond outside reading, it offers a well-organized blueprint for designing a standard class on American military history. Where it is weakest, however, is in its treatment of post-World War II international wars such as Korea, Vietnam, Operation DESERT STORM, and the more recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, it underrepresents the military in the second half of the twentieth century while including more expansive treatments of earlier wars. Of course, it is the post-World War II period of American history that receives relatively scant attention in survey history courses and thus a more expansive inclusion of this period would have helped to set this book apart from its predecessors. Nonetheless, *Ways of War* is an important addition to the ever-changing military historiography

and may well become the new classic textbook in undergraduate classrooms across the country.

Joshua Shiver is a doctoral student at Auburn University studying the history of the American Civil War under Dr. Kenneth W. Noe. His research focus is on the role of personal relationships on soldier motivation during the Civil War and hopes to open up a dialogue on the influence of emotion on the American soldier. He has published an article on North Carolina blockade-running in an international context in the *Journal of the North Carolina Association of Historians* as well as various book reviews in *Army History* and the *Journal of Military History*.



Review by William C. Baker

Phillip Cuccia's *Napoleon in Italy: The Sieges of Mantua, 1796-1799* is a masterful examination of the fortress of Mantua and its importance to the Italian campaigns of the French Revolutionary Wars. Building on his dissertation concerning the Quadrilateral fortresses, the author presents a sweeping work that provides both

depth and breadth to a little understood aspect of the operations in northern Italy. Cuccia has focused his academic efforts for over a decade on the Revolutionary period in northern Italy, and this work is clearly a labor of love and dedication. *Napoleon in Italy* draws on sources from across Europe, including archival documents from the *Kriegsarchiv* in Vienna, the *Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre* at Vincennes, and private collections, making this book the most authoritative work in the English language to date.

As a reader would likely expect from the title, Napoleon Bonaparte is the commanding figure of the monograph, but Cuccia explores a side of the general that most other histories ignore. The traditional interpretation of Napoleon emphasizes the uniqueness of his talents as an operational commander while often minimizing his education in eighteenth century warfare. In a historiography dominated by operational design, corps formations, and broad campaign planning, biographers and military historians devalue the realities of conflict of the period, particularly in restrictive terrain. With armies operating in Flanders, Iberia, and northern Italy, fortifications and siegecraft remained an integral part of warfare as it did during the era of King Louis XIV and John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough. In Napoleonic scholarship, from David Chandler to Owen Connelly, readers experience this transformation of Napoleon from Toulon to Campo Formio without gaining an appreciation for the foundation formulated by his technical education. *Napoleon in Italy* rectifies this shortcoming by revealing Bonaparte's knowledge of military engineering. The French commander continually emphasized the importance of capturing Mantua prior to any eastward movement during the 1796 campaign, being forced to raise the siege to concentrate forces against the Austrian field armies. This balancing act between besieging army and covering force would look as familiar to commanders in 1696 as it did in 1796.

After the capture of Mantua on 2 February 1797, Napoleon set about

preparing the citadel for operations against Austria and as a bastion against allied aggression. Cuccia uses Mantua to explore life in territory occupied by Revolutionary armies, both as liberators and conquerors. French forces exacted tremendous tribute from the Mantuans to help pay for the war effort, making the civilian population the real losers of the siege. At the same time, Napoleon promoted the Revolutionary ideas of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity to those willing to listen as the French robbed the churches and treasuries of their wealth. The French commander also set about preparing the defenses and magazines for a future siege, rectifying the logistical problems that plagued the previous Austrian defenders. Most of this work would be undone in 1799 by Lt. Gen. François-Philippe de Foissac-Latour, who surrendered Mantua to an Austro-Russian force after only three months, drawing contempt from Bonaparte and accusations of treason.

While avoiding the trap of celebrating Napoleon at the sacrifice of his opponents, Cuccia uses his Austrian sources to create a very sympathetic picture of the two Austrian commanders in Mantua, Field Marshal Dagobert Siegmund von Wurmser and Lt. Field Marshal Joseph Canto d'Yrles. Despite defeats of the Austrian field armies, they maintained a spirited defense of Mantua for over eight months. Both officers received accolades from Napoleon and the Austrian court for their efforts in managing a campaign that included both positional and dynamic operations, often occurring simultaneously.

Napoleon in Italy calls into question a large problem of Napoleonic historiography: fortifications and siegecraft. Accounts of the revolutionary (or allied armies) operating in the Low Countries remain few and under-sourced, as many historians draw on the English-language works of John Fortescue and Ramsay Weston Phipps from a century ago. With an overemphasis on the changing nature of warfare, historians have left a gaping hole in the continuity between the *pré-carré* and the modern fortifications of

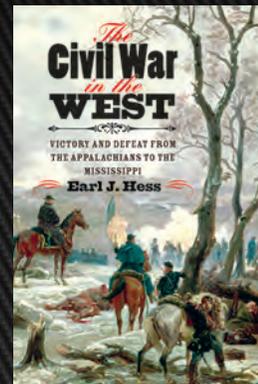
the early twentieth century. Napoleon did commit resources and talent to the problems of fortification and siegecraft, as General Jean Rapp at Danzig and Marshal Louis-Nicolas Davout at Hamburg in 1813 attest, with mixed results. How did Napoleon's attitude toward fortifications and the operational defense change over the course of his military career? This remains a question to be addressed by future scholarship.

There are a few minor weaknesses in the work. First, a large portion of the narrative is focused at the tactical level. This reader had a difficult time following the flow of the siege. Future editions need to include detailed graphics of parallels and sorties around Mantua, particularly during the French investment in 1796–1997. Second, there is a lack of balance between the allies and the French in the second half of the book. During the 1796 campaign, Cuccia devotes equal time to both sides of the campaign. Chronicling 1799, the author spends his energy analyzing the French commander, General Foissac-Latour, without exploring the successes of the Austrian commander. If the French commander surrendered Mantua prematurely, he did so because the Austrians aggressively took advantage of every opportunity to tighten the noose on the city. In efforts to prove Foissac-Latour's treason and incompetence, the work lacks the dynamism of the earlier chapters. Neither of these issues are serious drawbacks to an important work that is essential reading for anyone interested in Napoleon, his first campaigns, or eighteenth-century warfare.

Maj. William C. Baker is a student at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a doctoral candidate at the University of North Texas.



*The Civil War in the West:
Victory and Defeat from the
Appalachians to the Mississippi*



By Earl J. Hess
University of North Carolina Press,
2012
Pp. xv, 392. \$40

Review by H. Allen Skinner Jr.

In *The Civil War in the West*, Earl Hess, history chair at Lincoln Memorial University, delivers a thoughtful and well-written overview of the Western theater of operations in the American Civil War. Here, Hess' title is a bit misleading since his work generally excludes the peripheral Trans-Mississippi Theater to focus on the area east of the Mississippi to the Appalachians. In outlining his thesis in the preface, Hess is much clearer: "Union victory in the Civil War was a Western victory in more than one sense of the term" (p. xiii).

As he even-handedly acknowledges the critical contributions of the north-east states in the final Union victory, Hess provides convincing evidence to support his thesis. For example, Hess notes that the Federals in the west quickly established a supremacy over their rebel enemies, "a self-confidence born of repeated successes" (p. 317), while the armies of the East labored under a feeling of inferiority reinforced by repeated battlefield failures. Hess addresses the common misperception that western battles were not as bad as those in Virginia. Hess acknowledges the eastern battles were worse in terms of size and total casualties; then he presents counterbalancing data that show the

western armies suffered proportionately heavier losses—all while compiling an unmatched series of victories over the Confederates. To reinforce his point, Hess quotes Ulysses S. Grant (who as commanding general had a good perspective on the matter) in describing the Army of the Tennessee as the most successful Federal army “never sustaining a single defeat during four years of war” (p. 315).

Hess also provides a fresh reappraisal for some of the contributing factors in the Confederate defeat. For example, he quickly eliminates material weakness as an excuse, tartly remarking “history is replete with examples of wars won by the weaker power” (p. 308). Instead, Hess points to the systematic Confederate mismanagement of available resources, noting that the Union armies were more efficient than the rebel quartermasters at extracting supplies from Confederate territory. He relates how the Federal commanders quickly learned to harness already available technical means—steamboats, trains, and telegraph—to synchronize sustained force at any point along the Mississippi River Valley. Hess contrasts the continuous improvement of the Union war-fighting effort with the Confederacy which, despite some occasional flashes of brilliance, failed systematically to improve the ability to generate and focus combat power. Accordingly, the Confederacy “squandered its natural advantages of sheer mass and interior lines” (p. 310); failures that contributed to the eventual outcome of the war. Moreover, Hess contrasts how the executive leadership of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis shaped the conduct and result of the war in the West. Learning from some serious early missteps, Lincoln improved his ability to place the right commander in the right place at the right time, and to balance political and military considerations when making strategy. In contrast, Jefferson Davis blundered many critical strategic decisions, and never improved in his ability to select and retain his best general officers in the critical field army commands—particularly the western armies.

As Hess relates, the key to success in the West rested with the Union commanders who developed and refined

the ability to plan, conduct, and sustain operations within the limits of the logistics systems in place. To reinforce the point, Hess calls particular attention to Sherman’s success in taking Atlanta in September 1864, an impressive feat of arms accomplished while his army campaigned deep in hostile territory at the end of a vulnerable line of communications. In his closing summary, Hess describes Union victory as assured only after it regained control of the Mississippi River, the domination of which effectively stopped the movement of recruits and supplies from the Trans-Mississippi area. He offers the observation that the eastern armies were “barely able to defeat Lee just before Sherman arrived with those veterans. Otherwise the West would have won the war in the East and the Western Federals would have had even more reason to brag about the decisive role they played in saving the Union” (p. 319).

The book is written mainly at the strategic and operational level, with Hess incorporating vignettes that help clarify several poorly understood facets of the Civil War. Most notably, he pinpoints the insidious influence of the cotton trade on strategic and operational decisions during the war; cotton trade was vital to the South for financing the war, while the North needed cotton to produce clothing and textiles for the Union army and for foreign trade. For example, Hess describes how after the capture of Memphis, Union officials had to contend with a flood of Northern cotton speculators, which distracted the Union commanders from the critical task of pacifying and administering the area. Meanwhile, the Confederate cotton producers, who were cut off from European markets, found themselves in the desperate position of having to trade cotton with the despised Yankees. Of interest to students of counterinsurgency, Hess delves deeply into the efforts by Union commanders to simultaneously build combat power for follow-on operations and provide humanitarian relief to destitute ex-slaves and civilians—all while combating rebel guerrillas.

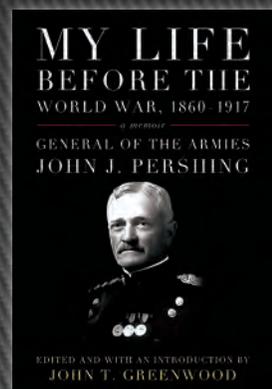
Overall, Hess’ book is well written, and includes material drawn from over forty primary source collections, supported by period photographs, illustrations, and

forty-eight pages of detailed endnotes. The only minor flaw in the book is the lack of detailed campaign maps; the addition of which, in a subsequent edition, would greatly improve the quality of the reading experience. This book is recommended to both the casual reader and the serious historian, each will find *The Civil War in the West* essential for understanding the war in the West.

H. Allen Skinner Jr. is the command historian for the 81st Regional Support Command, United States Army Reserve. Prior to his retirement from the Army National Guard in 2015, he served as a military history detachment commander and the command historian for the Indiana National Guard. He received his master’s degree in military history from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 2006.



My Life Before the World War, 1860–1917: A Memoir



By General of the Armies
John J. Pershing
Edited by John T. Greenwood
University of Kentucky Press, 2013
Pp. xii, 727. \$50

Review by Wm. Shane Story

General of the Armies John J. Pershing (1860–1948) was one of the most remarkable and accomplished officers ever to serve in the U.S. Army, and his writing is as relevant today as it was a century ago. Con-

sider his reflections on turmoil in Mexico: “My service on the border and in Mexico (1916–1917) came at a time when the minds of men in responsible position were much confused. Mexico was already in chaos when I arrived in Texas and within four months the war in Europe had begun. Apparently, none of the world’s greatest leaders, either civil or military, could see with perfect clarity or act with unerring judgment. Without exception, they all made mistakes. It was the beginning of the most tragic period that has come to the world since the business of waging war became that of nations rather than armies” (pp. 328–29). Ironically, Pershing’s “tragic period” coincided with his own professional triumphs. It was as if the acquisition and exercise of power itself was a Greek myth wherein success and futility were inextricably intertwined.

First off, there is no doubting that Pershing enjoyed great success in the face of tremendous challenges, and his rise paralleled that of the United States to global power. Across six decades, Pershing witnessed or participated in almost every war involving American troops as well as many other ill-defined military operations. Along the way, he learned the keys to success included education, training, action, and relationships. In his childhood, he witnessed raids by Confederate sympathizers on his pro-Union Missouri hometown. He won an appointment to West Point, Class of 1886, by a margin of one point on an entrance examination, and subsequently led troops against the Sioux Indians (1890–1891). After his frontier assignment, he trained cadets at the University of Nebraska and simultaneously completed a law degree, thereby embracing a path of discipline and hard work that ambitious officers still pursue. Next, as a military aide in Washington, he did something abhorrent to today’s sense of professional military ethics; he lobbied successfully to have a friend, a former congressman, appointed as Assistant Secretary of War, and he later used that connection to escape an ill-timed assignment to West

Point to join the expedition to Cuba in 1898. Pershing wanted to fight, and he knew that military careers are made in combat. After landing in Cuba, Pershing made his way to the front lines, where he exchanged congratulations with Colonel Teddy Roosevelt at the victory on San Juan Hill. Next, he helped suppress the Philippine Insurrection (1902–1903) and served as an observer in the Russo-Japanese War (1905).

Pershing’s hard work and talent paid off when President Theodore Roosevelt shocked the Army establishment by promoting Captain Pershing, along with three other officers, to brigadier general over hundreds of more senior officers. The fact that Pershing had married a powerful senator’s daughter certainly helped Congress approve the promotion. Pershing, in short, left no stone unturned in getting to the center of the action and cultivating powerful connections. Next, there were follow-on operations and military government in the Philippines (1907–1913), followed by service in Texas and command of the Mexican Punitive Expedition (1916–1917). Pershing’s rise was not disreputable, but it was the keen sense of an astute politician that guided his ambitions to command at the highest level. In 1917, Pershing’s wide-ranging experiences and accomplishments prepared him to command the two-million-strong American Expeditionary Forces in France.

As the title indicates, *My Life Before the World War, 1860–1917: A Memoir*, covers Pershing’s perspective on events up to 1917, but it is what happened next that gave impetus to and shaped the book. By the summer of 1918, when Pershing had marshaled substantial American forces on the Western Front, the German Army was nearing collapse following its last-ditch offensive gamble to win the war in the west. Alongside British and French forces, Pershing led his troops to victory and secured his place in the pantheon of modern American heroes. After the war, Pershing finished his career as the Chief of Staff of the Army and, in

1932, won the Pulitzer Prize in history for *My Experiences in the World War*, a well-written account that gave readers an insider’s perspective on American operations during the conflict.

Shortly after finishing *My Experiences in the World War*, Pershing resumed work on a series of draft chapters covering his life before the war that he had wrestled with for years. These chapters described incidents small and large that marked Pershing for life, including faults and shortcomings that he could not control, comprehend, or fix. During a childhood fight, for example, he picked up a snowball that had frozen into ice and threw it at another boy’s head; it gave the boy a concussion, and the boy’s family never forgave Pershing for the damage done. His moniker, “Black Jack,” derived from Pershing’s service with the 10th Cavalry Regiment, an African American unit, and his views on race reflected the prejudices of the day. He likewise embraced imperial expansion, such as American governance of the Philippines, as the natural obligation of a great nation toward less-developed peoples. Today, Pershing’s views challenge readers to question their own assumptions about race, America’s role in the world, and the impact of military operations on civilians.

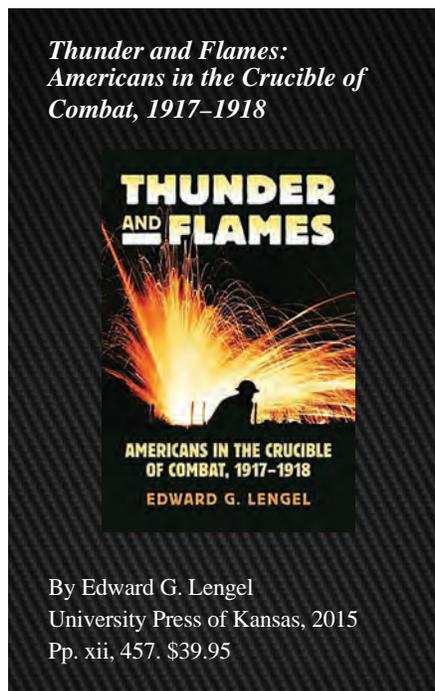
Pershing worked on these chapters for years with generous assistance from the Army and another writer, but his vigor declined as he aged and the writing languished. As he reflected on his life, he could not find words to resolve his greatest burdens. He found it impossible to write about the devastating loss of his wife and three daughters in a house fire in 1915, so he omitted the tragedy—personally, the greatest of his life—entirely from his final draft manuscript. In matters of policy, he could not comprehend the U.S. withdrawal from its imperial mission in the Philippines, and he regretted that, after the Armistice in November 1918, President Woodrow Wilson visited France but expressed no interest in seeing the troops and “neither sought nor desired my views

on the peace terms” (p. 363). Finally, he believed no one but himself could complete the memoir to his satisfaction, but neither could he himself finish the work.

It was due to others’ efforts that *My Life Before the World War* finally came to publication. For decades, the Library of Congress’ Manuscript Division preserved Pershing’s files and unpublished chapters as source material for generations of historians and researchers. John T. Greenwood, the former chief of the Office of Medical History, Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army, edited these chapters to produce this volume so that a broader audience could gain access to Pershing’s thoughts. Greenwood enhances their value by explaining the history of those draft chapters in the introduction. Ten appendices include speeches or reports Pershing wrote on operations in Cuba, the Philippines, and in Mexico, and they demonstrate the important role effective writing played in Pershing’s success. An extensive biographical appendix provides detailed information on scores of individuals—most drawn from the alumni registries of the U.S. Military Academy—whose careers intersected with Pershing’s. These short entries use the lives of Pershing’s contemporaries to place his own career in a larger context.

This book is an invaluable resource for soldiers and civilians because it highlights the astonishing scope of one man’s life experience, from Civil War partisan atrocities to the command of two million troops in France in 1918. It also provides insight on the United States’ emergence as an imperial power, and Pershing modeled a career path focused on extensive preparation and seizing opportunities that still resonates. Nonetheless, the most important lesson of *My Life Before the World War* derives from appreciating Pershing’s disappointments, losses, and things he did not complete. Even more than success, it is failure and loss that marks our humanity. Whatever one’s accomplishments, enduring success depends on what others value and remember.

Dr. Wm. Shane Story, a retired Army colonel, is the chief of the Contemporary Studies Branch at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. He has a Ph.D. in history from Rice University and deployed to Iraq as a historian with the Coalition Forces Land Component Command in 2003 and with Multi-National Forces–Iraq in 2007–2008.



Review by Scott A. Porter

Many military historians are making significant inroads appealing to wider audiences by integrating personal experiences into the historical narrative. Edward G. Lengel does this extraordinarily well in his latest book *Thunder and Flames: Americans in the Crucible of Combat, 1917–1918*. Lengel’s aim is to precisely match documented firsthand experiences from soldiers into the story of America’s initial battles in northeast France during 1917 and 1918.

This innovative approach lends credit to Lengel’s assertion that what actually occurred at the tactical level is in contrast to many previous publications that have exaggerated American endeavors in World War I. The result is that from

the corps down to the squad level, the reader experiences a well-balanced synthesis of the American, German, and French official records with these personal accounts. The book covers a period of ten months from November 1917 with the 1st Division occupying the trenches through the 28th Division’s tragedy at Fismette, France, in August 1918. On the way to Fismette, doughboys had to innovate to survive passing through the small village of Fismes, certainly a crucible event for those that undertook such a dangerous mission. The hard fighting at Fismes is where the book name derives. Doughboys called Fismes “Flames” for a good reason.

What the reader discovers is that most American soldiers were indeed highly motivated and committed to serving their country in the war, but at the same time were totally unprepared for combat on the Western Front. Poorly trained, lacking the required equipment, and unable to grasp the complexity of modern war, General John J. Pershing’s American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) blundered into an ongoing conflict against a well-trained and highly experienced German army. The result was the loss of thousands of American lives in desperate undertakings to gain small parcels of land. While the U.S. newspapers were wildly exaggerating AEF triumphs, the reality in the muddy battlefields of northeastern France was far from what Americans were reading back at home.

It is important the reader understands the context of war on the Western Front to fully appreciate America’s experience while under French corps command. This is why the book ends just before the battle of St. Mihiel, when the American First Army came into its own. Lengel is intentionally targeting a specific ten-month timeframe from when relatively small division-sized American operations commenced until the beginning of the First Army’s large-scale initiatives in the fall of 1918. It also does not cover U.S. troops under British command or American operations in Italy. The purpose behind this focused timeframe is to better understand what really happened during America’s early part of the war on the

Western Front, and to combine these facts with the direct experiences of those that fought and survived. Because of Lengel's research, only now can we really know what happened behind the period's curtain of propaganda and patriotic zeal.

Although prior to the large campaigns of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, Lengel analyzes many notable battles in his book. He does this in a chronological order starting with the disorganized American occupation of lines from November 1917 to April 1918. Lengel's strong suit is his ability to brilliantly piece together an attention-grabbing and very readable account of a battle from the lowest tactical levels, including eyewitness accounts from German and American soldiers. The first significant actions are bloody German storm-trooper assaults on the U.S. 26th Division at Seicheprey on 20 April 1918. With remarkable detail, the reader is provided the 26th Division's full array of unit dispositions, command decisions, and actions at all levels. At the lowest levels, doughboys fought hard but were badly outmaneuvered by experienced and hardened German veterans. Although those who participated in the battle knew the embarrassing outcome, the American press reported Seicheprey a huge success. Next is the 1st Division at Cantigny in May 1918. What makes Lengel's account of Cantigny different than the numerous articles and books written before now is his meticulous research and analysis on a battle that was purely symbolic. With no tactical advantage to capturing the village of Cantigny, American commanders wanted to prove that the 1st Division could fight and win, albeit a moral victory. A victory it was, but at a high cost. Lengel drills down into the ugly truth about attacking Cantigny—an expenditure and sacrifice of American soldiers just to make a point about the AEF's fighting ability.

In the same detail as Cantigny, Lengel articulates the veracity of the 2d Division at Château-Thierry, the marines at Belleau Wood, the 3d Division at the Marne River Defense, and American multidivisional attacks at Soissons and the Aisne-Marne Campaign. Lengel

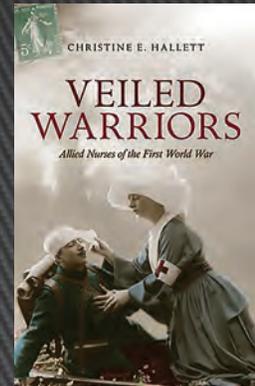
examines Belleau Wood the most, and though many useful lessons were learned in that small patch of woods, in many cases throughout the years legend has ruled over reality. The same can be said for most of the battles Lengel describes. However, he does assert that without a doubt, American formations packed a punch. He also states that enough evidence exists to prove that the Americans' entry into the war boosted the Allies' morale while discouraging the Germans.

Although detailed, this is an easy-to-read book written in a manner that should appeal to a wide variety of audiences. The military history scholar will appreciate the newly mined information and Lengel's analysis. However, the unfamiliar reader of World War I may appreciate the book even more. The trial by fire through which American doughboys persevered almost one hundred years ago is unknown by many. Lengel's excellent work will help educate the American public on what really happened in northeastern France. A highly recommended book that covers a gap between Richard S. Faulkner's *School of Hard Knocks: Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Forces* (College Station, Tex., 2012)—concerning America's unpreparedness and the demands of mobilization and Army expansion for World War I—and the many accounts of St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne campaigns.

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Veiled Warriors: Allied Nurses of the First World War



By Christine E. Hallett
Oxford University Press, 2015
Pp. xxii, 359, \$34.95

Review by G. Alan Knight

The First World War has achieved a well-deserved reputation as a contest characterized by incredible losses, the lives of combatants and non-combatants consumed or irreparably damaged by the carnage. A war of "firsts," it was not only a conflict on an industrialized scale never seen before because of unusual lethality resulting from developments in weaponry. But at the same time, it was a war in which one can observe, in some theaters, the modern beginnings of effective battlefield evacuation and the handling of the sick and wounded through levels of care provided within a system of echeloned medical treatment facilities.

The role of the nurse became central to this story, and in concert with medical officers and orderlies, humanitarian care of casualties was increasingly complemented by a new and developing emphasis on technical expertise. The blend of technical know-how, hands-on care, and a burgeoning sense of a unique professional identity was found especially in military nursing. The dedicated service and proficiency of nurses attending to the sick and wounded contributed to the advancement of the profession in general, and military nursing in particular, in some but not all the Allied nations. The duties of nurses expanded, sometimes by design, but often by necessity.

Historical trends in determining who provided care also affected military nursing. France in 1914 faced a nurse shortage caused by anti-clerical measures that had eliminated many trained nurses who were mostly members of religious orders. In Russia, military nursing was largely undertaken by volunteer laypersons affiliated with a religious organization and complemented by extensive use of poorly trained male orderlies.

Despite the wartime successes of military nursing from 1914 to 1918, the acceptance of an almost exclusively female profession, still developing, and the challenges faced by nurses who saw the war as their chance to make an important contribution to victory and equality, are part of a multifaceted story presented by Christine E. Hallett, a British nursing historian. Hallett portrays, with varying degrees of success, the wartime military nursing experience of the British, French, Belgians, Americans, Russians, Romanians, and of the British Dominions. She also points out that a number of nurses, professional and volunteer, lost their lives or suffered lifelong health impairments from their wartime work.

The fact that the magnitude of such a comprehensive undertaking was probably going to be overwhelming is something the author recognizes; and while she attempts to portray the military nursing contributions of all the aforementioned nations, she really achieves complete success only with her account of the British nursing experience, and to a lesser degree, the contributions of nurses from the Dominions. In short, she offers an admittedly Anglocentric perspective. Establishing the hypothesis that wartime military nursing was linked to the struggle for acceptance and recognition of this nascent profession, and in pursuit of a more generalized effort to diminish the dominance of male physicians in the patriarchal societies of the time, she is more successful in achieving the former objective. She posits a strong connection between professional nursing and the suffrage movement, but really only develops this theme in a limited fashion as it

evolved in Britain, and to a lesser extent, the United States.

Hallett's research is voluminous and relies heavily on the archived and published recollections of those who served, as well as a plethora of secondary sources. Sadly, wartime nursing was not well-documented in many countries, unavoidably affecting the author's efforts. Professional trained nurses, especially in the United Kingdom and in the United States, typically left either brief or understated accounts of their wartime services. In contrast, many of the volunteer nurses authored and published lengthy, detailed—and sometimes embellished—accounts of their service that have dominated the public perception of wartime military nursing.

For example, in the United Kingdom the most influential and widely published accounts were those of volunteer nurse Vera Brittain in her *Testament of Youth* (London, 1933), and in Russia the service and sacrifice of volunteer nurse Larissa Antipova, chronicled in Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (Milan, 1957). These and other works contributed to the image of the volunteer nurse, not the professional nurse.

In the United Kingdom, trained military nurses were often portrayed by authors such as Brittain in negative terms and credited with a more limited contribution to nursing than the members of Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs). The VADs, unlike the trained nurses, were often from the more well-connected and affluent ranks of society. Among wealthy women there was not only a strong sense of patriotism but also a pervasive belief that management of a large household with numerous servants uniquely qualified one to provide nursing care. Some women, often from the aristocracy, actually funded the raising of hospitals that deployed overseas. Generally successful, these founders did attract cadres of trained nurses supplemented by volunteers. Despite these internal issues, the author suggests that by war's end, the antipathy between the volunteers and professionals had largely declined, each group valuing the contributions of the other.

Hallett spends surprisingly little time addressing American military nursing but does comment on the prewar growth of the vocation, and the role of the Army Nurse Corps (organized in 1901) in providing trained nurses and ensuring entrance of only professionals into their ranks.

The author addresses the initial unwillingness of the British, in 1914 and early 1915, to supplement their available active, reserve, and territorial military nursing organizations despite documented needs, with the result that numerous British-trained civilian nurses (and also their American counterparts) volunteered to serve with a variety of organizations in France and Belgium.

Hallett also discusses the theme of inequality, suggesting that the service of many nurses, professional and volunteer, in some Allied nations was in part an effort to undermine societal male dominance. She posits that women, to include nurses, were historically not seen as equal because they did not put their lives at risk. As nurses, women reacted by willingly injecting themselves into the carnage of war. Many endured and actively sought the horrendous working conditions and the risks of far-forward service, displaying a degree of fortitude and frequently of heroism in their efforts that made them, in their own eyes, "veiled warriors" and the equivalent of the male combatants.

Interspersed in the narrative are valuable comments on treatment methods, the challenges of wound care posed by anaerobic bacteria, and the employment of some nurses as anesthetists. Hallett also comments on the development of a system for evacuating the sick and wounded, comparing the Western Front, where combat quickly evolved into trench warfare, with the more mobile warfare of the Eastern Front, and the disaster of Gallipoli—a "poster child" for an almost criminal lack of medical preparedness.

Allied battlefield medical care in the First World War, viewed from a nurse or "veiled warrior" perspective, is above all an indictment of initial medical readiness, ameliorated by frantic

efforts to correct such deficiencies, efforts whose successes owed much to the work of military nurses, professional and volunteer alike. Christine Hallett has produced a seminal work that is a valuable contribution to the war's medical history and to the early days of professional military nursing.

G. Alan Knight, a retired Medical Service Corps lieutenant colonel, is an independent historian whose postmilitary career included duty as curator of the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum. He holds a master's degree from Ohio State University, and a master's in history from Roosevelt University. A previous book reviewer for *Army History*, he has published articles and reviews in *On Point* and the *Journal of America's Military Past*.



Adapting to Flexible Response, 1960–1968



By Walter S. Poole
Historical Office, Office of the
Secretary of Defense, 2013
Pp. xvi, 467. \$41

Review by Nicholas M. Sambaluk

Walter Poole's *Adapting to Flexible Response, 1960–1968*, the second volume in the official history series on military acquisition by the United States, addresses a busy, tumultuous, and controversial period, covering Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara's tenure and also the period of

U.S. escalation in the Vietnam War. Poole's work is a richly informative history.

The book's organization is crucial to its utility. The first chapter sets context for the reader, concisely identifying strategic perspectives, precedent in U.S. approaches to strategy and acquisition, and a theme that would impact decision making throughout much of McNamara's time in the Department of Defense: "the Kennedy administration quickly imposed major changes in nuclear and conventional strategy, then set about creating the instruments needed to implement them, although the deployment of new systems lagged behind the shift in strategy" (p. 18).

Following the concise overview, Poole's book is arranged in a generally thematic format. Successive chapters cover topics such as McNamara's relations with the armed services, the limitations of fixed-price contracting, the difficulties involved in what one contractor called "unanticipated unknowns" in the research and development process (p. 95), and the experiences of the different armed services regarding acquisition.

For the Army, much of Poole's attention rightly goes to production problems on the M-14 rifle, McNamara's frustration with Army processes, and the adoption of the M-16 (pp. 133–41). However, the chapter also explores the travails of antitank and anti-aircraft missile development (pp. 154–59), McNamara's misadventure in attempting to codesign a battle tank with West Germany (pp. 148–52), and the successful development of the tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) antitank system (pp. 152–54). Chapters on the Air Force and Navy approach similarly varied topics, concluding that "switching to flexible response required a drastic reorientation" for the Air Force (p. 209) and that acquisition achievements with warships were marked by major challenges (p. 317).

Interspersed with the chapters addressing the Army, Air Force, and Navy acquisition experiences are three chapters dedicated to examin-

ing particular topics of likely interest in greater detail. First among these is the F-111 Aardvark, among the most infamous weapons systems of the 1960s. Intending to fulfill and display efficient development and acquisition processes, McNamara wedged a multirole swing-wing aircraft into the Air Force and Navy inventories, despite the fact that no variant of the aircraft was really suited to any of its potential roles: as an Air Force attack plane in the A model, a Navy fighter in the B model, or an Air Force strategic bomber with the C model. Interlocking developmental problems signaled trouble but did not dissuade McNamara, who tried to control the plane's complex teething problems by instituting Project ICARUS, a rare seventeen-month period in which top civilian officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense regularly met with industry leaders (p. 232).

The second of the special topic chapters addresses what Poole accurately terms a "mixed record" on space matters. The portion dealing with the competition between the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) over leadership in outer space is effective, as is the section discussing the cancellation of two major Air Force space projects, the Dynamic Soarer (Dyna-Soar) project and the Manned Orbiting Laboratory. As with almost all works discussing Dyna-Soar, Poole partly defers to McNamara's view—that Dyna-Soar and NASA's Gemini were "moving forward together" (p. 327). A more significant issue is that the space chapter is also noticeably short, and aside from addressing the cancellation of the two Air Force projects and the success of the Titan III booster rocket, it goes into little detail about defense activity in space, although the decade saw important work toward a satellite presence that deserves more than a passing mention in a single paragraph (p. 337).

The last of the topical chapters deals with the Vietnam War through 1968. Among the problems that Poole describes and explains, not all U.S. ground forces were familiar with the

M-16 rifle before arriving in-country (p. 341), the M113 personnel carrier left crew vulnerable and initially under-armed (p. 342), and riverine and ground attack technologies were initially unsuited to their tasks in Southeast Asia (p. 343). The book informatively explains problems with munitions, particularly regarding bombs. Before the Vietnam War, McNamara prodded the Air Force and Navy to reinvest in conventional bombs (p. 345). The focus on nuclear weapons and massive retaliation in the 1950s had left both services with too small an inventory of nonnuclear munitions to be able to support the kind of flexible response strategy that Kennedy officials contemplated. But the cluster and radio-guided bombs that the Air Force and Navy bought were very poorly suited to the kind of conflict that the armed forces were called upon to fight during the 1960s. Compounding the problem, McNamara tried to establish efficiency by calibrating bomb production with contemporary rates of consumption. The result was wartime bomb shortages and the need to hastily shift resources from other U.S. contingents elsewhere in the world while belatedly reacting to changes in tempo in Southeast Asia (pp. 344–49). A concise but effective study of smart bombs and countermeasures against interception appears here as well (pp. 350–59).

Poole notes that several development and acquisition projects that were success stories of the era nonetheless do not vindicate McNamara's philosophy as defense chief. With the Titan III booster rocket, "fixed-price incentives worked because development followed a consistently conservative course" (p. 337). Only two Army programs met scheduling targets during the period, and as Poole notes, the "Davy Crockett" tactical nuclear weapon must "otherwise . . . be labeled a failure" and development of Bell's Cobra gunship was significantly expedited because of its being based on the existing Iroquois utility helicopter (p. 168).

Adapting to Flexible Response is a well-researched and capably written

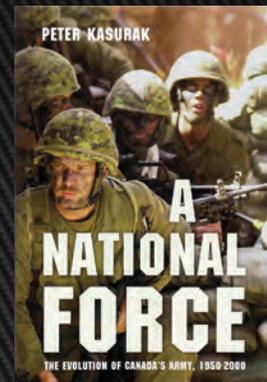
text about a profoundly complex and controversial set of issues. As Poole noted in his preface, "not all of Secretary McNamara's acquisition reforms can be judged successful. However, such judgements have been conflated with his management of the Vietnam War" (p. xii). The failures during the Vietnam War period were certainly not the sole fault of Robert McNamara, nor were his acquisition choices the only portion of his role in that war—but if there is any room for criticism of this book, it is the absence of a more critiquing appraisal of McNamara. On the second to last page, Poole remarks that "while the 1960s may not have been much better than other periods [regarding defense acquisition], they do not appear to have been any worse" (p. 391). This seems too forgiving a standard upon which to base evaluation of leaders who tried to sweep away precedent and strong-arm military practitioners on the specious grounds that the new defense secretary and his management models could revolutionize acquisition.

The book's strengths are its ample research, cogent organization, and engaging writing. For anyone interested in the weapons systems of the 1960s, patterns in defense acquisition, or well-written history unafraid to tackle otherwise dry topics, this book is highly recommended.

Nicholas M. Sambaluk is an assistant professor of Comparative Military Studies for the Air University's eSchool of Graduate Professional Military Education and the author of *The Other Space Race: Eisenhower and the Quest for Aerospace Security* (Annapolis, Md., 2015). A military historian specializing in the development and role of technologies on strategy and warfighting, Sambaluk taught at Purdue University, the United States Military Academy, and gave a course on European history and security topics to U.S. students overseas in 2012 for the University of Kansas.



A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950–2000



By Peter Kasurak
University of British Columbia
Press, 2013
Pp. xi, 348. \$37.95

Review by Blake Whitaker

Western military forces often claim that they are representative of the countries that they serve; however, that is not always the case. In Peter Kasurak's new book on the Canadian Army, he examines the winding road that the force took to become an institution that truly reflects the values and interests of Canadian society. The study is done through the lens of Canadian Army doctrine development from 1950 until 2000. Kasurak examines the emergence of the force from its colonial roots in both the First and Second World Wars, through the Cold War, and finally in the post-Cold War era.

After the end of the Second World War and the decline of British influence on the Commonwealth, Canadian identity was on the rise. As the Canadian government set out to develop its independent place in the world, the Canadian Army struggled to discover where it fit into that equation. As Kasurak points out, the Canadian Army had been an imperial force with no need to develop its own systems and doctrine; it simply followed the lead provided by the British Army. Additionally, the Canadian Army started out as a militia force with a small regular component to assist with mobilization. The onset of the Cold War in Europe changed the

policy goals of almost all Western governments. Canada's allies expected it to make a contribution to the defense of the Western world in the same way that the British and the Americans were. The author uses the Canadian contribution to the Korean War as an excellent example of international pressures affecting government policy. Kasurak does an admirable job of detailing the challenges the Canadian Army faced in simply fielding a force to send to Korea. The Canadians followed the British model of command and relied far too much on senior leaders to develop tactics and train troops; additionally, there was little institutional support for organizational learning. As the Canadian Forces rotated one brigade group out of Korea and replaced it with a new brigade, there was no knowledge exchanged between the forces.

The Canadian Army recognized that there were institutional shortcomings with regard to doctrine and standardization throughout the force. Furthermore, as the security landscape changed in the 1950s and 1960s, the Canadians were further challenged by their role in the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) alliance. The Canadian commitment to NATO defined the development of Canadian Army doctrine for almost forty years. The Army determined that it needed to focus on the development of systems to create doctrine. However in what form and who would be responsible for it were questions that were insufficiently answered. Responsibility for doctrine development and the establishment of Army educational goals was a subject of constant bureaucratic infighting for the duration of the Cold War. The 1960s were also a difficult period for the Canadian Army. The Army wanted to remain a "big army," as it had been in the Second World War and the Korean War. Successive studies done by the Army Council supported the creation of additional forces and maintaining Canadian commitments to NATO. As the Army advocated increased cooperation with NATO, the civilian authorities

became much more skeptical about the strategic need for the Army to remain as large as it was. After the Second World War and the Korean War, the Army retained much of its British structure, influence, and culture; however, Kasurak points out that the Army seemed to be stuck in the Imperial Era, whereas the Canadian nation had developed its own distinct identity. Until the late 1990s, the Canadian Army struggled to reconcile the changes that were taking place in Canadian culture and politics.

The advent of tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield completely changed the nature of the military strategy in Europe. Senior members of the Canadian Army advocated doctrine that had the use of tactical nuclear weapons at its foundation. However, this was a constant point of controversy between the military and civilian policy makers. Successive Canadian governments fought with the military leadership over the use of nuclear weapons and the usefulness of Canadian forces in Europe. By the end of the 1960s, civilian leaders in Canada had recognized that maintaining forces in Europe was a critical part of their commitment to NATO. Yet, this did not stop a number of Canadian politicians over the years from trying to renegotiate this commitment. Kasurak demonstrates this constant bickering between the Army and civilian leaders over nuclear policy and NATO-defined Canadian doctrine through the end of the Cold War. Yet, Canadian priorities in the Cold War were vastly different than they had been in the Second World War era. No longer was Canada looking to be a large contributor to an imperial system. The Canadian government and people wanted a small military capable of defending the homeland and of participating in peacekeeping missions. The Canadian Army on the other hand, wanted to be a "big army" and a key player in the NATO alliance. Only after the end of the Cold War and the tragedy in Somalia was order restored to the power structure in

Canadian National Defense. The disbandment of the Canadian Airborne Regiment signaled the end of the disconnected nature of the civil-military relationship.

Kasurak does an excellent job of outlining the paths to resolution of the civil-military policy divide. While some readers might expect the unification of the Canadian Forces to play a pivotal role in this discussion, the author has left it to other scholars to focus on the impact of 1968 unification on the military. One noteworthy component of this study is the inclusion of the Militia throughout the book. The Canadian Army is a descendant of the Militia force; therefore, it had an important role in the development, or lack thereof, of the Army as a whole. Kasurak clearly summarizes the political problems that persisted throughout the twentieth century between the regular force and the reserve force. Unlike the issues with the regular force, the Army was not able to resolve many of the systemic problems in the Militia.

This book is probably the most exhaustive study of Canadian Army doctrine and development in print. Readers should understand that Kasurak set out to produce a history of the doctrine of the Canadian Army and the development of the force as an institution representative of the nation that it serves. Anyone looking to understand the Canadian Army, its history, institutional culture, and relationship to the Canadian nation will not be disappointed in this book.

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DR. R. SCOTT MOORE



REGAINING THE ARMY'S MEMORY

After nearly more than a decade of war, the Army cannot fully recall where it has been nor what it has done. Quite simply, it lacks the historical memory to do so. True, most soldiers and many units do remember their wartime deployments, even if through myopic lenses, and a bevy of journalists and analysts continue to write of the battles and campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. But the Army's recounting is, at best, episodic. Perhaps no more than half of the units that fought in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM have received campaign participation credit; few can reconstruct their operations beyond individual and unit awards or public affairs releases. Almost none hold source documents that could be used to reconstruct their history. In 2013, the Army discovered that it lacked even a skeleton of an official record, requiring a scrambling effort over the past three years to rebuild its wartime archives. The history of more than a decade of combat has largely been reduced to anecdotes, reminiscences, and the occasional citation.

Some of the responsibility lies with the very technologies that should have made retaining source materials easy. With most planning, reporting, and command and control taking place electronically, usually by e-mail and shared files, information systems cannot keep up with the volume and diversity of the documents, let alone archive them in any meaningful way. Exchanges between commanders, once captured in neatly worded orders and letters, now comprise a dizzying array of e-mails in password-protected accounts, largely hidden from records managers and historians. Operational planning has become an interminable process of adjusting briefing slides, teleconferences, and meetings, none of which lend themselves to orderly documentation. The operational diaries that once captured it no longer exist. Add to this multilayered secure network systems offering limited access and periodic data purges intended to free up storage space, and the records that once formed the basis of history have disappeared. In truth, one can more easily track a Civil War regiment than retrace a unit today.

Equal culpability rests with the Army's organizational inattention to its history. With the drawdown imposing staff cuts, unit and command historians seem to be first on the chopping block. Justifiably or not, commanders perceive little value added from their historians. Too many see history as a public affairs tool, something to be touted on unit days or in the local post paper, at best a way to enhance unit

pride, but hardly a serious contributor to mission accomplishment. Those leaders who do seem to take an interest in history often do so from a perspective of myth and legend. Heritage replaces history; memories substitute for truth. The number of requests received by the Center of Military History (CMH) to rewrite lineages, change designations, validate honors never earned, or claim the pasts of other units would be comical if not so widespread. Commanders at all levels, well-meaning and adamant, simply seem unaware of their own histories and are apathetic to the role they must play in ensuring its accuracy.

Yet, in the end, Army historians must assume a large share of the responsibility for their own demise. Rather than aggressively inserting themselves into staff planning and decision making, using history to inform rather than entertain, too many field historians remain aloof from the very commanders they serve. Unit historical officers, usually soldiers without formal training, can be excused for not knowing their duties, a shortfall CMH is trying to address with new training programs and increased assistance visits. But at the higher levels, where the professionally educated historians reside, the deficit is harder to understand and much more difficult to correct. Yet this is where Army history potentially has its greatest impact. Issues of force structure, concept development, contingency planning, training and education, and manpower all contain important historical dimensions. Unfortunately, they too often remain unknown to leaders and their staffs. A recent comment by a senior officer, that the use of improvised explosive devices in Iraq could not be anticipated and offered an example of the changing nature of war, betrayed a remarkable historical ignorance. It also indicted his historian, who surely knew such weapons have been a recurring element in the past century of warfare. If we are to regain the Army's memory, then, as historians, we must prove to the Army we are necessary to its future.

Dr. R. Scott Moore
Director, Field Programs and
Historical Services Directorate





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