The Opening Fight at Gettysburg:  
A Modern Military Analysis

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Infantry unit commanders in the U.S. Army in the 1980s often found the units they commanded undergoing evaluation by higher headquarters to measure proficiency in the conduct of field maneuvers and battle tactics. During these years the U.S. Army used an objective training evaluation system called the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP). In order to obtain a desired level of objectivity, standardized checklists were derived for all phases of combat operations. The checklists were used for training and evaluation to measure demonstrated combat proficiency.

Although we had some good days and some bad days under the ARTEP system, the end result was a tough, highly trained combat unit. During those days, with my background in military history, I often wondered how commanders of the past would have measured up under the ARTEP system. Hence the origins of the excursion we are about to take.

What I propose is an analysis of the opening phases of the Gettysburg campaign and the first day of battle through the eyes of a modern (though now retired) professional soldier. In terms of process I will attempt to put some objectivity into the analysis. One of the chief faults of modern military history is the overly subjective nature of our analysis. If you have a favorite commander or unit in a battle, subjective analysis will allow you to build a conclusion that includes all that is favorable in the outcome without having to point out any of the negative aspects. My analysis will bring forth some objectivity and will also serve to explain what was going on, or should have been going on, in the minds of the commanders.

I should point out that we take this excursion with considerable risk. I mention this because one of the problems in viewing Gettysburg or any other Civil War battlefield is the tendency to analyze and make judgments about a battle that took place nearly a century and a half ago through eyes and minds schooled in modern battle techniques, paying little attention to the capabilities and military thinking of the era in which the battle was fought. This is not an exercise in which we analyze Civil War commanders by modern standards, but rather one in which we look objectively at a Civil War campaign and battle using a standard methodology.
One of the first challenges in this excursion is to determine the basis of what our objective analysis should be. What are the variables one can use in an analysis that would span nearly 140 years of warfare, a period which in fact spans a time period from the dawning of the industrial age through the dawning of the information age?

The modern army has developed a systematic methodology for battlefield analysis based on the concept of what we today call the battlefield operating systems or BOS. This methodology, documented in U.S. Army Field Manual 100-5, contains the factors shown below:

| Modern Battle Analysis Using Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS) |
|---|---|
| Intelligence | Mobility/Survivability |
| Maneuver | Logistics |
| Fire Support | Battle Command |
| Air Defense |

As you can see, the BOS methodology, while useful for a modern army, contains a couple points of analysis that would be unknown to Civil War commanders. Air Defense is one example. Although Professor Thaddeus Lowe’s small balloon corps was in operation during 1861 and 1862, it was not a close air support force in the modern sense requiring air defense. Likewise, the factors of mobility/survivability refer to highly mobile, mechanized ground and air forces equipped very much unlike Civil War units. Moreover, the BOS system is too far removed from the Civil War era to be of much value in our analysis.

A more balanced system of analysis can be found in the nine principles of war officially adopted by the U.S. Army in 1921 and still in use today. These principles were an outgrowth of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European military thinking and as a result were included in the body of knowledge taught to future Civil War leaders during their instruction at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The following chart depicts the Principles of War as we know them today, compared with the Principles of War as they were known in the Civil War era.

| Principles of War Compared |
|---|---|
| Today | Civil War Era |
| Objective | Objective Points |
| Offensive | Offensive |
| Mass | Concentration |
| Economy of Force | Maneuver |
| Unity of Command | Brief & Clear Orders |
| Security | Security |
| Surprise |
| Simplicity |

Even with the vast size of the volunteer armies raised in both the North and the South during the Civil War, there is no doubt that the West Point education of the soon-to-be-senior officers of the opposing armies played a crucial role in determining the methods used to carry out the war. Of the 977 living West Point graduates in 1861, 259 or 26.5 percent served in the Confederate army, and 638 or 65.1 percent served in the Union army. Moreover, the principles of war and
other principles of strategy and tactical methods were available for study by volunteer officers in a virtual flood of tactical drill manuals and reference books. Hence, the principles of war illustrated above should have been common knowledge for Civil War-era commanders, and those principles should thus prove useful in our analysis.

With that as an overview, we now begin our excursion using the principles of war as discriminators in analysis. While I will focus this analysis on the preliminary part of the Gettysburg campaign and the first day of battle, I will also carry forward into the second and third days of battle where necessary to drive home the point. We will begin with the principle of the objective.

**First Principle of War: Objective**

_Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective_

The Union army’s strategic objective was to bring the Confederate army to battle while maintaining the defense of the capital in Washington, D.C. This fact was made known in the very first days of the Gettysburg campaign to Major General Joe Hooker, commander of the Army of the Potomac. Having reported on June 5 the movement of the Confederate army away from its positions in front of him along the Rappahannock River line, Hooker suggested in a telegram to President Lincoln that he move his forces south of the river and attack the rear of the Confederate army. Hooker immediately received a telegram in reply from the President, which said in part:

… in case you find Lee coming to the north of the Rappahannock, I would by no means cross to the south of it. In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river, like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other. If Lee would come to my side of the river, I would keep to the same side and fight him …

This advice was repeated on June 10 when Hooker telegraphed to Lincoln “… will it not promote the true interest of the cause for me to march to Richmond at once?” Lincoln signaled back to Hooker:

I think Lee’s army, not Richmond is your sure objective point. If he comes toward the upper Potomac, follow on his flanks and his inside track, shortening your lines while he lengthens his. Fight him when the opportunity offers.

While it may not have been clear to Major General Hooker, it is clear to us that the president saw the Confederate army as Hooker’s objective. Nor did the strategic objective change later in the campaign when Major General George Gordon Meade replaced Hooker on June 28. In his first dispatch as commander of the Army of the Potomac, Meade wired to General Henry Halleck in Washington:

The order placing me in command of this army is received. … I can only now say that it appears to me I must move toward the Susquehanna [river], keeping Washington and Baltimore well covered, and if he [Lee] turns toward Baltimore, to give him battle.

Thus the commander of the Union army came to see the opposing army as his true objective. Likewise, from the outset of the Gettysburg campaign, Robert E. Lee, commanding the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, recognized that his strategic objective was to draw the
Union army into a decisive battle. Following the Battle of Chancellorsville in early May 1863, Lee found it difficult to achieve this purpose on the Rappahannock River line. In his words:

> The position occupied by the enemy opposite Fredericksburg being one in which he could not be attacked to advantage, it was determined to draw him from it. … It was thought that the corresponding movements on the part of the enemy to which those contemplated by us would probably give rise, might offer a fair opportunity to strike a blow at the army then commanded by General Hooker. …

Insofar as the strategic objective is concerned, both Meade and Lee got it right. It is not clear from the reports that Hooker ever figured it out, but Meade knew upon assuming command what his principal objective was. And among the many reasons for leading his army north out of Virginia, it is clear that Lee also saw the opposing army as his primary objective.

As an extension of the strategic objective, the operational objective for the Union army as the campaign wore on became one of finding the enemy and bringing him to battle. This is indeed what brought Brigadier General John Buford to Gettysburg and led him to initiate the first day of battle. Major General Alfred Pleasonton, commander of the cavalry corps of the Army of the Potomac, stated the operational objective in the following manner in his after-action report filed August 31, 1863:

> Orders having been issued for the advance of the army toward Pennsylvania on June 29, Buford’s Division moved to cover and protect the left flank of the line of march. … On 30 June … the two brigades (of cavalry) reached Gettysburg in the afternoon, just in time to meet the enemy entering the town and drive him back before he secured a position.

When Buford’s cavalry identified General James Pettigrew’s brigade of infantry advancing east along the Chambersburg Pike toward Gettysburg, the operational objective setting the stage for the first day of battle had been achieved. The Union army had found the enemy force, or at least a part of it. Ensuing events on the Confederate side concurrently helped shape the conduct of the first day of battle.

At the operational level, the Confederate army’s objective that set the stage for the first day’s battle became to determine the size and intent of the enemy force that had been seen in the Gettysburg area. According to Lieutenant General A. P. Hill’s after-action report:

> On the 29th I moved General Heth’s division to Cashtown, some eight miles from Gettysburg, following on the morning of the 30th with the division of General Pender, and directing General Anderson to move in the same direction on the morning of July 1st. On arriving at Cashtown, General Heth, who had sent forward Pettigrew’s Brigade to Gettysburg, reported that Pettigrew had encountered the enemy at Gettysburg but in what force he could not determine. A courier was then dispatched with this information to the general commanding, also to General Ewell, informing him that I intended to advance the next morning and discover what was in my front.

Thus the objectives setting the stage for the first day of battle for both armies became one of finding the enemy, or knowing of his presence, of finding as much information about him as possible. Having made it clear that the primary objective for both armies was the opposing enemy force, I believe we have to give both forces high marks for having a clear and proper objective with which to frame their intended purpose and subsequent operations.
Movements of the Army of the Potomac and Army of Northern Virginia from June 28 to July 1.
Second Principle of War: Offensive

Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative

Turning now to the principle of the offensive, we can see that it embodies the idea of seizing and retaining the initiative. That is, even though a clear objective might be assigned, it can only be attained through aggressive offensive operations designed to close with the enemy and bring him to battle.

On the evening of June 29, Meade’s Army of the Potomac was encamped in northern Maryland on a line extending roughly from Emmitsburg to Manchester. On the following day, Meade sent out various dispatches and orders that indicated his knowledge of the enemy’s location. Specifically, Meade knew that the Confederate infantry corps, commanded by generals James Longstreet and A. P. Hill, were at Chambersburg with, in the words of his assistant adjutant general, “evident disposition to advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg.” He also indicated in the same correspondence that Richard Ewell’s corps was at Carlisle and York.

Yet equipped with information relative to the location of the enemy, Meade chose to maintain his long arc of dispersed positions and told his corps commanders in a separate circular issued on June 30,

The commanding general has received information that the enemy are advancing, probably in strong force on Gettysburg. It is the intention to hold this army pretty nearly in the position it now occupies until the plans of the enemy shall have been more fully developed.

Moreover, as late as July 1, prior to receiving word of the outbreak of fighting just west of Gettysburg, Meade told his corps commanders via circular:

The Commanding General is satisfied that the object of the movement of the army in this direction has been accomplished … it is no longer his intention to assume the offensive until the enemy’s movements or position should render such operation certain of success.

These circulars and messages provide useful information regarding our analysis, and upon closer scrutiny they are a telling indictment of Meade relative to his forfeiting the initiative. As noted above, on June 28 he told General Halleck that he would advance north, protecting Baltimore and Washington, and would be prepared to fight should the enemy turn in that direction. General Halleck approved this plan and issued marching orders for the following day to the infantry and cavalry corps and the artillery reserve. Marching orders issued on June 29 for movement on June 30 pushed the Army of the Potomac further north toward the enemy. But on June 30, having already identified his opponent’s general location and direction of march, Meade stopped the forward movement of the Army of the Potomac.

Although Meade could not know it at the time, he had much more precise information as to the location of his enemy than Lee had relative to Meade’s army. Railroad employees in Pennsylvania’s Cumberland Valley between Greencastle and Harrisburg and scouts reporting to Major General Darius Couch, commander of the newly formed Department of the Susquehanna in Harrisburg, had been dutifully reporting the location and movement of the Confederate army throughout south-central Pennsylvania since before June 28. Couch in turn relayed this information to authorities in Washington, who sent the information on to Meade. As of June 29, the general dispositions of the Confederate army were so widely known that Pennsylvanian and former Secretary of War Simon Cameron was prompted to send the following telegram to President Lincoln:
We have reliable and undoubted information … that General Lee now has nearly if not quite 100,000 men between Chambersburg on the upper side of South Mountain, and Gettysburg, on the east side of the mountain and the Susquehanna River. … Within the next forty-eight hours, Lee will cross the Susquehanna River unless General Meade strikes his columns tomorrow (the 30th). … Let me impress on you the absolute necessity of action by Meade tomorrow, even if attended by great risk … if Lee gets his army across the Susquehanna, you will readily comprehend the disastrous results that must follow to the country.  

Clearly, Meade decided to stop the movement of his army toward the enemy not because he didn’t know where that enemy was, but rather because he didn’t know what they were going to do. In a message to John Reynolds on July 1, Assistant Adjutant General S. Williams (writing for Meade) states, “The commanding general cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to

In Meade’s defense, he still had to satisfy his superiors in Washington by maintaining a screen for the approaches to Baltimore and Washington. He also had some concerns about J. E. B. Stuart’s Confederate cavalry operating in the area of his right flank. However, if he had taken the initiative for offensive action against the dispersed Confederate army, both of these situations would have been resolved. Meade squandered a significant advantage and an opportunity that

*General George G. Meade and staff, September 1863. GNMP*
would have had a profound impact not only on the first day of fighting at Gettysburg but on the overall battle itself. On June 30 he decided to forgo any further large-scale movement toward his enemy, he gave up the opportunity to attack his enemy in detail while they were widely dispersed in unfriendly territory, and he forfeited the initiative, which he would not regain for the duration of the campaign.

Except for the work of the cavalry on the flanks, the seven infantry corps of the Army of the Potomac spent June 30 in static positions, or at best, making minor adjustments to their positions south and southeast of the known location of their enemy. The exception in this case is the 6th Corps, which marched a further fifteen miles northeast from New Windsor toward Manchester, Maryland, away from the reported positions of the Confederate army. Think of the possibilities of the outcome, not only of the first day of battle at Gettysburg, but for the entire battle, if on June 30 these seven infantry corps had made a more rapid and aggressive advance toward the enemy. As it was, upon completion of the movements of June 30, one-third of the infantry strength of both armies lay within ten miles of Gettysburg, with Union infantry outnumbering Confederate infantry by approximately 5,700 men. An additional 24,400 Union infantry were within fifteen miles of Gettysburg by the evening of June 30.

Think of the impact of the arrival of the Union 1st Corps (or even a part of it) on McPherson’s Ridge on the evening of June 30, or perhaps just a few hours earlier than it arrived on July 1. Would not the fighting on McPherson’s Ridge have had a much different outcome, one more favorable to Union success? Could they not have been able to attack Henry Heth’s lead Confederate division and then William Pender’s division, forcing them west to South Mountain?

We know that Major General Oliver O. Howard, commander of the Union 11th Army Corps, received orders from General Reynolds about 8 A.M. July 1 to move from Emmitsburg to Gettysburg. The 11th Corps completed their deployment at about 2 P.M., only to be attacked by Jubal Early at about 3 P.M. Had the 11th Corps arrived on the field in the early morning hours of July 1 rather than the afternoon, could they have occupied more favorable ground further north of the town to better interdict the arrival of Early’s division on the field -- while also addressing the earlier arrival of Robert Rodes’ division? With an earlier arrival, could the 11th Corps, like the 1st Corps, have been better situated to conduct offensive rather than defensive operations? You will arrive at your own answers to these questions. For myself, the answers are yes in all cases.

Looking beyond the first day’s battle, Meade had two excellent opportunities to conduct offensive operations with some likelihood of success. The first of these was on the second day after stopping Longstreet’s attack on the left flank and left center of the Union defensive line. Granted, there was not much daylight left as the Confederate attack began to grind to a halt, but a properly prepared and coordinated attack by elements of the 5th and the recently arrived 6th corps could have, at a minimum, pushed the Confederates back to their original attack positions on Seminary Ridge. The second, and best, opportunity was on the third day, following the attack by George Pickett, James Pettigrew, and Isaac Trimble on the center of the Union line. Had they been properly prepared and coordinated in the effort, the better part of a refreshed 6th Corps combined with a reorganized 5th Corps, could have counterattacked and regained the initiative recently lost to the Confederate army. I find that General Meade’s forfeiture of the offensive spirit along with the initiative had a major impact not only on the development and outcome of the first day of battle, but on the following two days as well.

What of General Lee regarding the principle of the offensive? We know that on June 29 Lee’s army was also dispersed. Longstreet and Hill were in the vicinity of Chambersburg and between Chambersburg and Cashtown, respectively. Ewell’s corps had two divisions in the vicinity of Carlisle and a third, Early’s, was in the vicinity of York.

The difference between Meade and Lee here is that on June 28, when he realized the close proximity of the Union army, Lee immediately issued orders for the concentration of the above-named formations in the vicinity of Cashtown and Gettysburg. On June 29 all of the Confederate units were moving or preparing to move accordingly.
But what was the purpose of Lee’s concentration? Military historian Matthew Forney Steele contends that Lee assembled his army east of South Mountain in order to threaten Baltimore and thereby induce Meade to move his army northeast to cover that city (which is exactly what Meade did). Steele further contends that had Lee assembled his army on the west side of the mountain in the Cumberland Valley, it would have in no way threatened Baltimore or Washington and would have left Meade free to cross the mountain range by the passes south of Cashtown Gap and interdict his line of supply and retreat.\(^{21}\)

Beyond that, Lee was concentrating his forces for the purpose of launching future offensive operations against the Union army while protecting his line of communications back to Virginia. He knew the problems inherent in trying to establish a defensive position in the area of South Mountain. No doubt it could have been a good defensive position. The problem was one of subsisting his army in unfriendly territory for the length of time it would have taken to fight a defensive battle against Meade’s army. Withdrawing his army into the Cumberland Valley west of the mountains could have been accomplished only with great difficulty, and in doing so, Lee could not have accomplished the strategic goals set out at the start of the campaign. In either case, if Lee had reverted to defense on the east side of the mountains or withdrawn west of the mountains, he would have been no better off than he was in the Maryland campaign the previous September. In Lee’s own words:
It had not been intended to fight a general battle at such a distance from our base, unless attacked by the enemy, but finding ourselves unexpectedly confronted by the Federal Army, it became a matter of difficulty to withdraw through the mountains with our large trains. At the same time, the country was unfavorable for collecting supplies ... a battle thus became, in a measure, unavoidable.\(^{22}\)

In this instance, General Lee operated with a higher degree of initiative than General Meade, with the result that Lee’s army was able to concentrate more quickly, with as much as twenty-four hours’ advantage, if not more, over his opponent, and they were able to fall upon a portion of Meade’s army on July 1 through offensive action. Thus, advantage goes to the Army of Northern Virginia in observing the principle of the offensive.

**Third Principle of War: Mass**

*The ability to exert sufficient combat power at the decisive time and place*

This leads us quickly to an analysis of the principle of mass. I say quickly because a number of factors associated with this principle have already been considered in the discussion of the offensive. In military terms we speak of the principle of mass as the ability to bring together sufficient combat power to accomplish the mission at hand. In some ways mass is a companion principle to the offensive because while offensive action requires seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative, it is extremely difficult to achieve mass if the initiative has already been forfeited. Such was the case for General Meade.

The essential problem for the Army of the Potomac in the initial phase of this battle was the inability to bring together sufficient combat power at the essential time – July 1 – and place – the battlefields west and north of Gettysburg. The army’s lack of mass forced it onto the defensive, although Meade had an apparent predilection to fight defensively under any conditions. Moreover, the hard fighting conducted by Union 1st Corps units notwithstanding, the fact that the Army of the Potomac was able to hold onto Cemetery Hill at the end of the first day’s fighting was more a function of Lee’s army running out of steam than of the Northerners massing sufficient combat power to stop them.

Meade’s inability to create sufficient mass at the critical point is directly related to his previously mentioned hesitation to consolidate his forces and move aggressively toward the known location of the enemy prior to the battle. His policy of “wait and see what the Confederates are going to do” gave Lee time to advance his forces east through the Cashtown Gap, west from York and south from Carlisle and Harrisburg, arriving at the critical point at the critical time.

As further proof of the Confederate ascendancy on the principle of mass on July 1, I offer the observation that when Lee finally reinforced the attack of Heth’s division with William Pender’s division plus elements of Rodes’ division and a two-to-one advantage in artillery, the Army of Northern Virginia was able to wear down the Union 1st Corps battle line through weight of numbers, eventually forcing the Union troops back through and around the town to Cemetery Hill. By the time fighting ended late in the afternoon, the Confederacy had brought into action at least 23,000 infantry versus a combined force of 18,800 Union infantry and cavalry. In addition, the Confederates had a greater number of cannon available, ninety-five versus sixty for the Union.\(^ {23}\)

However, it appears from all accounts that Lee was not aware of his numerical advantage. At the critical juncture when Union forces were in retreat, he continued to hold back Richard Anderson’s division of A. P. Hill’s corps as a reserve force rather than committing it in exploitation or pursuit. One would think that an experienced commander such as Lee, even in the absence of his cavalry, would have had a sense of the moral and physical advantage he enjoyed over his opponent and created additional mass in the attack by sending in Anderson’s division.
and continuing the pursuit onto Cemetery Hill.

The Confederate failure to take Cemetery and Culp’s hills late in the day on July 1 ultimately proved to be Lee’s undoing for the entire course of the battle. During the Union retreat between 4 and 5 P.M., there were seventeen brigades of Confederate infantry on the field: four brigades in each of Pender’s, Heth’s, and Early’s divisions, and five brigades in Rodes’ division. There were also four more brigades in Anderson’s division in reserve in the vicinity of Herr’s Ridge. In contrast, there were only twelve brigades of Union infantry (six brigades each of the 1st and 11th corps) plus Buford’s two cavalry brigades in the area. In hindsight we know that this was the point at which the Union army was at its weakest. Had Lee aggressively continued the attack, creating mass against a proper objective (a retreating enemy) at the decisive point (Cemetery Hill) and decisive time (during or shortly after the Union retreat to Cemetery Hill), he probably would have achieved a significant victory in a one-day battle at Gettysburg.

If the Union 1st and 11th corps had lost Cemetery Hill on July 1, Meade’s army would have had to withdraw to the defensive line already selected behind Pipe Creek in Maryland. Moreover, they would have had to defend that long line (sixteen miles as laid out in Meade’s Pipe Creek circular) with the aforementioned Union 1st and 11th corps having already sustained significant losses. Edwin Coddington credits the Union 1st and 11th corps with casualties of 5,500 and 3,000, respectively, during the first day of fighting. If he had defeated part of the Union army at Gettysburg, Lee would have bettered his odds in terms of numbers had he subsequently continued an advance toward Baltimore and Washington.

Instead, Union forces retained and consolidated their forces on Cemetery Hill. Even on July 2 and perhaps on July 3, Lee would have had a better chance of success had he combined offensive action and mass against Cemetery Hill. Arguably, it was the weakest link in the three and one-half mile-long Union defensive position. It was a salient position, susceptible to attack from two sides simultaneously. As large as the Union army would grow to be in and around Cemetery Hill, a concurrent and convergent attack by massed artillery fire followed by infantry maneuver would have forced the Union army to fight in two directions at once. Such an attack would have divided its combat power and altered the numerical odds in favor of the Confederates. Further, an attack against Cemetery Hill would have put Confederate forces closer to their line of march and line of communications than the areas attacked on July 2 and 3. There would have been no lengthy movement into attack positions as Longstreet encountered on July 2. The sunken road along Long Lane occupied by Rodes’ division and the position from which Early attacked along Winebrenner Run would have offered attack positions within 500 yards of the objective rather than the 1,400 yards of open ground the brigades of Pickett, Pettigrew, and Trimble encountered on July 3. Confederate artilleryman Lieutenant Colonel Edward Porter Alexander said of the July 3 Confederate attack:

… the point selected for Pickett’s attack was very badly chosen – almost as badly chosen as it was possible to be. … I think any military engineer would instead, select for attack the bend of the fishhook just west of Gettysburg.

Additionally, there were positions in and near the town from which artillery could be positioned to provide preparatory and supporting fires for an infantry attack. Granted there were not numerous artillery positions for this purpose, especially east of the town, but, as Alexander noted, there were positions from which enfilade and converging artillery fires could have been directed against the objective. Moreover, these positions would have been more within the shorter range Confederate artillery than the positions from which they had to fire during the attacks on the Union left and center on July 2 and 3.
Fourth Principle of War: Economy of Force

*Employ all combat power available in the most effective way possible*

The principle of economy of force is a corollary to the principle of mass. Having violated, or in the best case, been physically unable to apply the principle of mass, it is difficult to give the Army of the Potomac exemplary marks in the observation of the principle of economy of force. Yet there are some positive aspects in the manner in which Reynolds, Howard, and Abner Doubleday fed arriving brigades and regiments into the first day’s fight, sending them to the most threatened points to stem the tide of the Confederate advance. In truth, however, economy of force employed by the Union army at this point in time was a measure forced on them due to the manner in which they arrived on the field, rather than as an elective method of employment.

This is not to say that the Army of Northern Virginia should receive high marks either. Although Rodes’ and Early’s divisions would arrive on the battlefield at very opportune times, they arrived more as a result of their orders to move to the Cashtown-Gettysburg area rather than as a definitive plan to arrive on the field prepared to go immediately into battle.

Analyzing the application of the economy of force principle requires answers to a two-part question: Is all available combat power employed, and is it employed effectively? With regard to the Union army on the first day, all available combat power was certainly employed – there were no idle watchers. The key word here is *available.* Buford’s two cavalry brigades effectively delayed the forward movement of the advancing Confederate infantry until the arrival of the Union infantry at mid-morning. These Union infantry brigades were then fed into the fight upon their arrival on the field, where their commanders attempted to establish coherent and defensible lines of battle. Having done what was expected of them, Buford’s cavalry was then positioned to prevent the enemy from turning the flanks. Fortuitously, reserve positions were established at the Seminary and on Cemetery Hill. The Seminary position proved useful in further delaying the Confederate advance, while the Cemetery Hill position successfully served as a rally point for the retreating Union forces. In all practicality, given the forces available, the entire first day’s battle was an economy of force mission for the Union army.

For the Confederate army however, the initial part of the battle developed with its forces arriving on the field and being thrown into the battle basically off the march. Heth’s division advanced and was slowed, then stopped, by Buford’s cavalry. Heth came on again, this time against the Union infantry brigades, when he was stopped once more. After being reinforced by Pender’s division, and in conjunction with infantry brigades of Rodes’ division, they pushed back the Union 1st Corps line. Pender passed through Heth and broke through the Union 1st Corps units at the Seminary. Meanwhile, Early’s division, in combination with George Doles’ brigade of Rodes’ division, confronted the Union 11th Corps and succeeded in driving it from the field. Until this point, most of the Confederate forces available were employed and placed in what should be effective positions (see the principle of maneuver, below). However, as noted above, Anderson’s division (7,000 men) was held out of action in a reserve position near Herr’s Ridge. Consequently, General Lee missed an opportunity to exploit his success and deliver what could have been a crippling blow to the Union army on the first day. Again the two-part question: Regarding the Confederate army, was all available combat power employed? No. Was it employed effectively? No.

Analysis of the application of this principle on the second and third day of the battle provides a more interesting study. By late afternoon of July 2, the Union army had occupied a fishhook-shaped defensive position dominated by the high ground of Culp’s Hill, Cemetery Hill, Cemetery Ridge, and the Round Tops. Starting at the right of that line in the area of Spangler’s Spring, the defensive line stretched 3.4 miles around to the Round Tops at the left end of the line. The soundness of this line as a good defensive position would be proven by the failure of the Confederate army to break it after two days of battle. Moreover, the shape of the line afforded the Union commanders the ability to exercise control of their troops through the use of interior
lines. Given an engaged infantry strength of 71,811 men and 358 cannon, General Meade had the theoretical capability to deploy just over 21,000 infantry soldiers and 105 cannon per mile for defense of the position.\textsuperscript{29}

In contrast, General Lee had a much more difficult situation facing him late in the afternoon of July 2. The extreme left of his line rested more than two miles east of Cemetery Hill. There the Stonewall brigade, commanded by Brigadier General James A. Walker of Ewell’s corps, was in position along the Hanover road to protect against a possible Union advance from that direction and to protect the Confederate flank from being turned by Union cavalry known to be in the area. Starting at that point his lines ran west through the town to Seminary Ridge and then south along the ridge to the right end of the line, where Hood’s infantry division would move into its attack positions. The length of the line described measured 7.1 miles, more than twice the length of the Union line.\textsuperscript{30} Given an engaged infantry strength of 57,535 men and 266 cannon, General Lee had the theoretical capability to deploy just over 8,100 infantry soldiers and 37 cannon per mile of offensive frontage, less than half the combat power density of his opponent.\textsuperscript{31} Additionally, the shape and extent of the line placed him at the disadvantage of having to operate on exterior lines, thus compounding his communication and reinforcement challenges.

The situation in this regard was much the same on July 3, except that the Union line was slightly lengthened while the Confederate line was somewhat shortened. Meade lengthened his line by placing Thomas Neill’s brigade from the 6\textsuperscript{th} Corps further out on his right flank and Lewis Grant’s and David Russell’s 6\textsuperscript{th} Corps infantry brigades further out on the left end of the line astride the Taneytown Road in order to further protect his left flank. For the Confederates, the Stonewall brigade was withdrawn after dark on July 2 to rejoin Edward Johnson’s division in its attacks against Culp’s Hill. Given these small adjustments in the lines, the combat power density ratios did not change much, even in light of the casualties sustained on both sides the previous day.

For two days of the battle the Union army was on the defensive along its fishhook-shaped line as previously described. At first thinly held, this line was reinforced as more units arrived in the battle area throughout the day on July 2, to the point that the 5\textsuperscript{th} Corps units were available as a reserve positioned in area of the Baltimore Pike. Later, the arrival of the 6\textsuperscript{th} Corps increased the size of the reserve available to General Meade. The extent of the forces available to him, the nature of the terrain those forces occupied, the density of those forces on that terrain, the operational advantage of interior lines, and a large artillery reserve centrally located to react to any contingency combined to give Meade a decided edge in observance of the principle of economy of force.

Observation of the principle of economy of force proved much more difficult for the Confederate army on the second and third days of battle. The essential problem was that the Confederate battle line was much too long for the forces available, particularly when Lee had decided that he was going to attack the Union forces. A long-standing rule of thumb in warfare suggests that for an attack of a position to be successful, the attacking force must have at least a force ratio of three to one against the force being attacked. In other words, in order to successfully attack a position, the commander of the attacking force must mass his combat power. As we have already seen, General Lee was either unwilling or unable to do so.

A solution to the problem would have been for General Lee to shorten his battle line while repositioning his forces to create the mass necessary for successful offensive operations. As early as the evening of July 1, General Lee discussed with and then ordered Ewell to withdraw his forces from east of Gettysburg and bring them around to a position west of the town, thus significantly shortening his line. Ewell asked permission to maintain his line because he thought he could take Culp’s Hill. With respect to this situation Alexander wrote:

General Lee consented, but it turned out early next morning that the position could not be taken. Yet the orders to come out from the awkward place he was in
Ewell maintained his position in and east of the town, and the Confederate line remained thinly spread for the duration of the battle. When Longstreet conducted the Confederate main attack on the second day, his two divisions were stopped short by the Union defense. Ewell’s supporting attack was both late and ineffectual, and only one division of A. P. Hill’s corps participated at all. Even if Longstreet’s attack had been successful, there was no force available to exploit success and finish the job.

Similarly on the third day, one of Longstreet’s divisions and two of A. P. Hill’s divisions made the main attack into the Union center in the afternoon, while Ewell’s supporting attack against the Union right was forestalled by a Union counterattack at Culp’s Hill early in the morning. Longstreet’s remaining two divisions sat idly by opposite the Union left. Once again no force appeared to be designated or available to follow up and exploit any success that might have been won. With respect to the second and the third day, were all available Confederate forces employed? No. Were they employed effectively? No.

**Fifth Principle of War: Maneuver**

*Place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through skillful employment of troops*

The principle of maneuver speaks to the skillful employment of troops, which seeks to place the enemy at a disadvantage. Although arriving Union brigades and regiments were employed with skill, as I alluded to earlier, the troops were moved only in reaction to ongoing Confederate attacks – not with the aim of placing their adversary at a disadvantage. Union troops were forced by Confederate strength and initiative to deploy immediately upon arrival in the battle area with little thought to gaining a tactical advantage over their adversary.

On the other hand, for the Confederate army to maneuver its troops effectively, Lee needed sure knowledge of the composition and disposition of the enemy force. In this battle, Lee did not have that information, due to the lack of sufficient cavalry. I will discuss the issue of Confederate cavalry, or the lack of it, under the principles of security and surprise.

The first day’s battle offers us an interesting contrast in the theory of skillful employment of troops. On the one hand we have the arrival of Rodes’ division on and in the vicinity of Oak Hill with a textbook opportunity to attack the Union 1st Corps in the flank and rear. Rodes botched the opportunity. He attacked hastily, in an uncoordinated manner, and with only three-fifths of his division. Edward O’Neal’s brigade was repulsed, Alfred Iverson’s brigade was nearly wiped out in Forney’s field, and Junius Daniel’s brigade basically wandered off on its own hook, contributing little of material benefit in the early going. Although Henry Baxter’s and Gabriel Paul’s Union brigades had a great deal to do with Rodes’ failure, the end result was a poor maneuver which wasted a position of advantage and by no means exhibited skillful employment of troops.

On the other hand, we have the arrival of Early’s Confederate division. Deploying off the march, his four brigades were skillfully handled, delivering an attack which dislodged the preemptory hold of the Union 11th Corps on the ground north of town and in short order compelled its withdrawal back to the town and eventually to Cemetery Hill, a circumstance which did much to further dislodge the adjacent Union 1st Corps.

Beyond the first day we have some interesting things to consider relative to the principle of maneuver. In as much as General Meade had chosen to assume the defensive for the battle, there were limited opportunities for him to maneuver. However, as mentioned previously, the nature of their position afforded the Union commanders the ability to operate on interior lines. Meade did
attempt to take advantage of his interior line position on the second day by maneuvering units to counter the ongoing Confederate attack. The first of these attempts was moving John Caldwell’s 2nd Corps division and James Barnes’ and Romeyn Ayres’ 5th Corps divisions to the left and front, respectively, to counter Longstreet’s attack on the Union left. The maneuver of these forces to the threatened point of attack did much to slow if not stop the Confederate advance. In Meade’s second attempt at maneuver he directed the movement of Alpheus Williams’ and part of John Geary’s 12th Corps divisions from Culp’s Hill to Cemetery Ridge to counter Longstreet’s attack. Although these units did not arrive at Cemetery Ridge until after the Confederate attack had played out, Meade at least demonstrated his willingness to maneuver in the face of the enemy. However, Meade and his subordinate commanders gave up the opportunity to maneuver against the enemy in any form of counterattack following the cessation of Longstreet’s attack on the second day and the repulse of Pickett’s charge on the third day. Moreover, Meade made only a feeble attempt to maneuver against his opponent as they withdrew from the field on July 4 and after.

Having assumed the offensive for the remainder of the battle, the Confederates had numerous opportunities to maneuver against the Union defense. General Lee rejected Longstreet’s suggestion to maneuver the Union army out of its defensive position by moving south of the Round Tops thus turning its left flank and threatening its line of retreat and reinforcement. While we will not know if this method of attack would have been successful, it certainly captures the spirit of the principle of maneuver – place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through skillful employment of troops.

My views on the defects in the employment of Confederate combat power have already been noted in discussing the principles of mass and economy of force. Rather than attempting to place his enemy at a disadvantage by skillful employment of troops, General Lee attacked him directly, and as the tactical situation evolved, attacked him frontally along a broad front. Matthew Forney Steele saw the situation on the second day as follows:

It is hard to conceive of a worse conducted attack than that of July 2nd. ... The plan of battle had in view successive attacks beginning at the right and progressing toward the left. The Confederates had already used the same method on four occasions – at Seven Pines, Gaines Mill, Frazier’s Farm and Malvern Hill – and always with poor success.33

The Confederate maneuver against the Union position of July 3 saw much the same thing, a frontal attack by less than one-third of his force into the center of the Union defense. Given the results of the previous day’s maneuver the results should have been predictable. Steele continues:

On the morning of July 3rd, after Pickett had come up with his division, Lee had only thirty-seven brigades; Meade had fifty-one brigades. Sedgwick having brought up the Sixth Corps; the weak and strong points of the position had been developed in the fighting of the day before; the troops were more carefully disposed; and the position was more thoroughly prepared for defense.34

**Sixth Principle of War: Unity of Command**

*For every objective seek unity of command and unity of effort*

Unity of command is important in this battle, important indeed in any battle of the size and scope of the one fought here. We see some excellent examples of this on the first day insofar as the Union army is concerned. John Buford, the man who sets the stage for the fighting to follow, is to be commended for recognizing the importance of the dominant terrain to the west and south of the town and deploying his forces in such a manner as to preserve that terrain for use by his
army. Reynolds also looms important in continuing that effort upon his arrival on the scene. Indeed there appears to be an excellent spirit of cooperation between these two men. That Reynolds was the first of the corps commanders on the scene at Gettysburg was no accident. On June 30 General Meade had sufficient foresight and confidence in Reynolds to place him in command of the left wing of the Army of the Potomac, composed of the 1st, 3rd, and 11th corps. Until his fall, Reynolds was the right man at the right place and right time.

Doubleday also appears to have done well under the arduous circumstances in spite of subsequent attacks upon his efficiency and reputation by General Henry Slocum. Beyond that, there appeared to be little unity of command in the Union situation on July 1 after the fall of John Reynolds. In proof, I point out a dispatch Buford sent to General Pleasonton, commander of the cavalry corps, at 3:20 P.M. on July 1 in which he said

… At the present moment the battle is raging on the road to Cashtown, and within short cannon range of this town. … Reynolds was killed early this morning. In my opinion, there seems to be no directing person.

P. S. We need help now.

This is a stinging indictment, perhaps of Doubleday, but more so of Howard, who was the senior man on the field when the message was sent. We are of course aware that Meade would send Winfield Scott Hancock, junior by date of rank to Howard, to Gettysburg to take over matters until Meade arrived. Hancock did not arrive until about 4:30 P.M., as the retreating troops from the Union 1st and 11th corps began arriving on Cemetery Hill. There was then a disagreement between Howard and Hancock over dates of rank and who had authority over whom. Fortunately this disagreement did not stand in the way of completing the consolidation of the army on Cemetery Hill. Still, we have a curious situation regarding General Slocum, commander of the 12th Corps. Although Slocum outranked both Howard and Hancock, he showed some hesitation in advancing his two divisions to Gettysburg even after it was obvious the battle had commenced and after he had been summoned there by courier message from Howard. Further, Slocum showed some reluctance to assume command of the situation from Howard and Hancock and did not do so for nearly two hours after arriving at Gettysburg. Nonetheless, it is an interesting commentary on the state of the command situation within the Union army at the height of the battle.

The situation was not that much better on the Confederate side. Any battle that begins as a meeting engagement between two armies, as this one did, is difficult to command and control. Add to this the uncertainty and difficulty in coordinating a large army trying to concentrate from dispersed points, and we have a very challenging command environment. In spite of those conditions, I think it fair to point out some problems in the Confederate chain of command on the opening day of battle.

First, General A. P. Hill and his subordinate commanders can be faulted for at worst disobeying and at best disregarding General Lee’s instructions not to precipitate a general engagement until the army was brought together. Although the results of the first day’s fighting can be called a Confederate victory, it could easily have turned out much differently had the Army of the Potomac been better situated on the terrain.

Likewise, General Ewell can be faulted for his failure to continue the attack in the late afternoon and early evening to seize Cemetery Hill and Culp’s Hill. Although it can be argued that by that time Ewell’s troops were too played out by hard marching and equally hard fighting to continue the attack, it is obvious that General Lee’s habit of using discretionary orders proved to be disadvantageous in this instance. On the other hand, had General Lee been able to give Ewell assurances that units of A. P. Hill’s corps would be available to cooperate in a coordinated attack against those positions, the situation might have come out differently.
Note that this principle also includes consideration of unity of effort. Both commanders experienced some problems in this regard. Certainly General Dan Sickles’ advance of his 3rd Corps into a forward and exposed position on July 2 contradicted the intent of unity of effort within the Union army’s defensive scheme. Some historians and students of the battle have criticized General Meade’s council of war convened on the evening of July 2 as a sign of a weak and ineffectual commander. I see it as a wise move on his part in ascertaining from his subordinate commanders the condition of his army while seeking their advice and gaining unity of effort for what would follow the next day.

General Lee’s army was beset by problems with unity of effort throughout the battle. There were problems getting attacks coordinated between commands, problems in getting attacks launched when desired, and problems in providing sufficient artillery fire support for the infantry maneuvers. In short, lack of timing, coordination, and unity of effort were chief causes of the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg.

In summary, it can be said that neither side possessed a distinct advantage where the principle of the unity of command is concerned. I am satisfied that there were sufficient positive and negative factors present for both armies to call the unity of command issue a draw between the two armies and their chains of command.

Before we leave the question of unity of command, I feel compelled to comment on some overall command issues regarding both armies. Although General Lee crossed the Potomac River with a quality, well-trained, and highly experienced army, he had some serious concerns about the leadership of that army. As we know, in the wake of Chancellorsville, the Army of Northern Virginia went through a massive reorganization in large measure to compensate for the loss of General “Stonewall” Jackson. Always in Lee’s mind during this campaign was his absent chief subordinate, upon whom he had previously placed so much trust and confidence.

Part of Lee’s concern on the eve of the campaign, only a few weeks prior to July 1, was the extent of his leadership losses at Chancellorsville and the extent of the reorganization which placed two of his three infantry corps and five of his nine divisions under men who previously had served either briefly, or not at all, in their present capacities. Moreover, six of the thirty-seven brigades were under new commanders, and another half-dozen brigades were under colonels whom Lee considered unready for promotion.38

In contrast to Lee, all of whose corps and division commanders were West Point graduates except for one Virginia Military Institute graduate (Robert Rodes), General Meade had only fifteen academy graduates among the twenty-six generals who filled those vital positions in the Army of the Potomac. Of the seven infantry corps commanders, all but Sickles were West Point graduates. However, not one of the seven infantry corps was commanded at Gettysburg by the general who led it into battle at Antietam, nine months previously. Of the infantry division commanders, only Doubleday, Barnes, Ayres, John Gibbon, Alexander Hays, Andrew Humphreys, Horatio Wright, Albion Howe, and John Newton were West Point graduates. This meant that nearly half of Meade’s major subordinate commanders were non-professionals. Not that being a professional soldier was any guarantee of success. More to the point was their lack of experience. One-third of Meade’s senior leaders had been assigned to their present positions within the eight weeks since Chancellorsville.39 Even more telling was the fact that Meade was the fourth commander of the Army of the Potomac since Antietam.40 Given the recent turnover of senior commanders in both armies, it is a credit to generals Lee and Meade that their commands were as unified as they were during the battle.

Overarching all of this was the appointment of Meade to command an army just three days prior to the battle. He had been a solid performer in combat as the commander of a brigade, a division, and a corps. However, success at the lower echelon of command is no guarantee of success at the higher level, especially a command of the size of the Army of the Potomac facing a formidable adversary such as Lee, who had been in command of his army for thirteen months prior to the Battle of Gettysburg. Meade’s inexperience in command, like that of a large number
of his subordinates, was bound to have some effect on the conduct and outcome of this battle and must be taken into account.

Upon his appointment as commander of the Army of the Potomac, it was not at all certain that Meade had the necessary quality to be a good army commander. In a letter to his wife written on June 3 from the army headquarters in Taneytown, Meade himself admitted, “I continue well, but much oppressed with a sense of responsibility and the magnitude of the great interests intrusted to me.”

The Seventh Principle of War: Security
Never permit the enemy to acquire unexpected advantage

The Eighth Principle of War: Surprise
Strike the enemy at a time or place or in a manner for which he is not prepared

The principles of surprise and security are corollaries. In fact security can be described as those methods taken to ensure that the enemy does not surprise you; while surprise can be described as those methods taken to break the enemy’s security. Under the modern Battlefield Operating System, these two principles are combined under the single heading of Intelligence.

In mid-nineteenth-century parlance it was still intelligence of the enemy, his location, and his intent, to which these principles refer. Analyzing the situation confronting the contending armies on and before July 1, I have to give the nod of approval to the Army of the Potomac in having the upper hand over the Army of Northern Virginia regarding these two principles.

It is clear that the Union army knew much more about the location of its adversary than did the Confederate army. As early as June 24, a dispatch from General Hooker to General-in-Chief Halleck in Washington confirms that Ewell’s 2nd Army Corps had crossed north of the Potomac River into Maryland. As noted earlier, there was a continuous flow of intelligence through Harrisburg to Washington and Meade’s headquarters regarding the movements of the Confederate army once it crossed into Pennsylvania. In contrast, General Lee was much surprised to learn on June 28 from General Longstreet’s scout Henry T. Harrison that the Union army had crossed the Potomac River three days earlier. Indeed the Union army had not only crossed the Potomac on June 25 but elements were as far north as Middletown, Maryland.

On the eve of the battle, Meade knew where each of Lee’s infantry corps was as well as the general location of Stuart’s three cavalry brigades. Lee knew very little about the location and disposition of his opponent, a situation that would plague him throughout the battle.

Apologists for Lee fault Stuart for leaving the army commander in the lurch in regard to intelligence gathering. While it is true that Stuart allowed himself to be sidetracked and then detained from his intelligence-gathering mission, Lee had alternatives. Often forgotten is that Lee had four other brigades of cavalry at his command to provide the necessary reconnaissance and security in Stuart’s absence.

Brigadier General John Imboden’s command of 2,100 men was assigned to screen the western flank of the army and forage for supplies during the advance into Pennsylvania. The brigades of Beverly Robertson and “Grumble” Jones (3,000 men between them) screened the Blue Ridge passes during the northward movement of the army to prevent the lines of communications and re-supply from being interdicted by Union forces.

While it can be argued that it was not possible to relieve these forces from their assigned missions in order to accompany the main army, certainly Brigadier General Albert Jenkins’ 1,100-man brigade, then moving with Ewell’s 2nd Corps, could have performed the necessary reconnaissance duties. In any event, General Lee chose not to make the necessary adjustments to arrange for himself a long-range cavalry reconnaissance force in Stuart’s absence. The strategic
result was that Lee was surprised by the close proximity of the Union army relative to his own while his army was still dispersed.

The tactical result was an infantry force advancing to Gettysburg early on July 1 to conduct a reconnaissance in force mission which more properly belonged to cavalry – the end result of which was the initiation of a battle General Lee would most certainly have wished had not taken place under the circumstances in which it unfolded.

In summary, neither commander permitted the enemy to acquire unexpected advantage. Indeed, no unexpected advantage was sought by either side. Neither was surprise a factor. There would not be a maneuver developed where the enemy was struck at a time or place for which it was unprepared. Rather, the entire battle, especially the second and third days, emerged as an old-fashioned slugfest between the two contending forces.

**The Ninth Principle of War: Simplicity**

*Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders to ensure thorough understanding*

Turning now to the last principle, that of simplicity, let me say that in military operations, nothing is ever simple. In the modern army we are accustomed to operating within the framework of a sound plan of operations while adhering to the commander’s intent for how the operation should take place. Short, concise mission orders are the rule rather than the exception while working within the operations plan framework.

On analysis, we find both generals Lee and Meade exercising command in large measure through discretionary orders. Though these orders were generally uncomplicated, they were at times less than precise. This was, after all, General Lee’s accustomed operating style, especially when working with the departed General Stonewall Jackson. After Jackson’s death Lee said of him, “I know not how to replace him. God’s will be done. I trust He will raise up someone in his place …”

Well, Jackson was not at Gettysburg. Dick Ewell and Ambrose Powell Hill were there in his place, and the system broke down. Lee wanted Ewell to continue his attack late on the first day to secure the heights south of the town. However, his orders to Ewell were so discretionary that the 2nd Corps commander persuaded himself to wait to attack the following morning, by which time it was much more difficult to gain success. As already mentioned, A. P. Hill and his subordinates disregarded their commander’s intent and initiated a general engagement long before it could be properly coordinated and supported. Once at Gettysburg, the dispersion of Confederate forces on their long exterior line compounded the communications and coordination challenges which face any army on campaign. These challenges were especially troubling to General Lee, in that two-thirds of his force was commanded by senior generals new to their positions. It is no coincidence that at no time during the second and third days of battle did General Lee meet with his senior commanders collectively to coordinate the next phase of the battle. The dispersion of his forces on a long exterior battle line made such a meeting impractical, if not impossible.

Meade is also open to criticism in this regard. Maintaining an advance on a broad front, be it rapid or slow, requires detailed plans. Although his intent is quite clear in his orders, his choice of maneuver combined with discretionary provisions for his subordinate commanders, hint at a lack of resolve on his part. By today’s standards, both generals Lee and Meade would have failed the combat orders writing exercises at Fort Leavenworth’s Command and General Staff College.

**Summary**

Our modern military analysis of the opening fight at Gettysburg, and the strategic movements which set the stage for it, indicate that both armies get passing marks for having initially oriented on a proper objective – the enemy force. We also find that General Lee was more closely aligned
with the principle of the offensive but falls short in observance of the principles of mass and economy of force. With a shorter interior line and a larger force available to him, General Meade has little difficulty in achieving mass and economy of force on his superb defensive position. The principles of maneuver and unity of command posed a problem for both armies. The Army of the Potomac gets the upper hand where security and surprise are concerned, and both armies are subject to criticism where simplicity is concerned.

So much for an objective analysis of the Gettysburg campaign and battle. While our analysis accentuates the negatives at the expense of the positives, we must bear in mind that we have made this analysis with the advantage of hindsight, an advantage not enjoyed by the participants in the battle. Also, time and properly interpreted scholarship have lessened if not removed the fog of war, again, a luxury not enjoyed by the participants of the battle. We must also remember that in the final analysis the men who fought here, be they Northerners or Southerners, fought and died for a cause they firmly believed in. In that light, we can forgive what imperfections might have existed in relation to the rules of warfare while commending them for their dedication to their cause and for the valor with which they fought.

Notes

2 Ibid., 2-4.
4 The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1889) [Hereafter cited as OR; all citations from Series 1 unless otherwise noted], Series 1, 27(1), 30.
6 Ibid., 34.
7 Ibid., 35.
8 Ibid., 61.
9 OR, 27(2):305.
10 OR, 27(1):913.
11 OR, 27(2):607.
12 OR, 27(3):416.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 458.
15 Ibid., 375. Marching orders issued June 28 for movement June 29 directed the 1st and 11th corps to Emmitsburg, 3rd and 12th corps to Taneytown, 2nd Corps to Frizzellburg, 5th Corps to Union Mills, 6th Corps to New Windsor, artillery reserve to camp between Middleburg and Taneytown, and the headquarters to Middleburg. Cavalry corps to guard the right and left flanks and the rear.
16 Ibid., 402. Marching orders issued June 29 for movement June 30 directed the 12th Corps to Littlestown, 5th Corps to Union Mills, 6th Corps through Westminster to Manchester, 1st Corps to the Marsh Creek crossing between Emmitsburg and Gettysburg, artillery reserve to Piney Creek crossing between Littlestown and Taneytown, and the headquarters to Taneytown.
17 Ibid., 409.
18 Ibid., 460.
19 For the Union army, the 1st, 11th, and 12th corps were within ten miles of Gettysburg; the 3rd and 5th corps were within fifteen miles; and the 2nd and 6th corps were within twenty-five miles. For the Confederate army, Heth’s, Pender’s, and Rodes’ divisions were within ten miles of Gettysburg as of the evening of June 29.
30. Early’s division was within fifteen miles; Anderson’s, Hood’s, and McLaws’ divisions were within twenty miles, and Johnson’s and Pickett’s divisions were within twenty-five miles.

20 OR, 27(1):701.


22 OR, 27(2):309.


24 Stannard’s brigade of the 3rd Division of the 1st Corps is not included in these numbers as it did not arrive on the field until approximately 5 P.M. See OR, 27(1):351.


27 Ibid.

28 Distances measured are as indicated on the Bachelder map, *Position of Troops – Second Day’s Battle* (New York: Endicott and Company, 1876).

29 Infantry and artillery strengths have been taken from John W. Busey and David G. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, NJ: Longstreet House, 1986), 230.

30 Bachelder map.

31 Busey and Martin, 230.

32 Alexander, 234. See also Coddington, 364-365.

33 Steele, 388.

34 Steele, 390.

35 OR, 27(3):415.

36 OR, 27(1):924-925.


39 Assigned since Chancellorsville were corps commanders Hancock and Sykes and division commanders Caldwell, Hays, Humphreys, Barnes, Ayres, Wright, and Barlow.

40 Tenures of command in the Army of the Potomac were: George B. McClellan, August 15, 1861 to November 9, 1862; Ambrose E. Burnside, November 9, 1862 to January 26, 1863; Joe Hooker, January 26, 1863 to June 28, 1863; George G. Meade, June 28, 1863 to December 30, 1864 and January 11 to June 27, 1865. Stewart Sifakis, *Who Was Who in the Civil War* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1988), 406, 93, 317, 441.


42 OR, 27(1):55.

43 Ibid., 143. On June 25 the 1st, 3rd, and 11th army corps and the artillery reserve had crossed the Potomac River at Edwards’ Ferry. The 1st Corps moved to Barnesville, Maryland; the 3rd Corps moved to the mouth of the Monocacy River on the north bank of the Potomac; the 11th Corps moved to Jefferson, Maryland; and the artillery reserve camped near Poolesville, Maryland.

44 Freeman, 690.