SPECIAL HISTORY REPORT

TROOP MOVEMENT MAPS, 1862

HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

MARYLAND - W. VIRGINIA

by

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PREFACE

On September 15, 1862, Colonel Dixon S. Miles surrendered Harpers Ferry and the 12,000 Union soldiers defending it to General Thomas S. (Stonewall) Jackson and a portion of the Army of Northern Virginia. Many of Miles's men had not fired a shot, and in spite of 3 days of battle and siege there were relatively few casualties on either side. Never before had so many American soldiers been captured at one time and never since under such unfortunate circumstances. Miles's surrender allowed Jackson's men to march quickly north and join General Robert E. Lee and the remainder of the Army of Northern Virginia in time to participate in the battle of Antietam. Had Miles held out a few hours longer he might either have been relieved by the Army of the Potomac or he might have delayed the reunion of the Army of Northern Virginia long enough so that it might have fallen prey to the dilatory McClellan and the Army of the Potomac.

Of course, no one really knows what might have happened had Miles tried to hold out longer, but the Federal War Department could not ignore the Harpers Ferry fiasco. It had to affix blame for it and render punishment. Therefore, a special military commission was appointed--a body to take testimony, affix blame, and recommend punishment. This was done without delay. As time passed, the siege and surrender of Harpers Ferry became only a brief chapter of the Antietam Campaign and was all but forgotten.

In the months that followed the Antietam Campaign the War Department strengthened the defenses of Harpers Ferry and, except for a few days during the Gettysburg Campaign, the Union Army occupied the town throughout the rest of the war. Although a famous place, the town played only a minor role in the rest of the war and merited little attention from Civil War historians.

This study is an effort to re-create some of the events that occurred during this one chapter of the Harpers Ferry story and, through the use of the accompanying troop movement maps, to relate them to the site. It has proven almost impossible to do this accurately. The official reports of the affair, while comparable to those of other Civil War engagements, leave great gaps in the story and seldom relate specifically to the terrain. The testimony before the military commission was directed toward the conduct of the troops and their officers and, though revealing, seldom was concerned with the land. Witnesses often referred in their testimony to a map that the commission had at hand but which unfortunately is not among the records of the hearing.

This study is not a pioneer effort, however. The way was paved with helpful studies written by the staff of Harpers Ferry National Monument soon after the park was created. These studies probed into many facets of Harpers Ferry History and gave particular attention to historic resources. They were done principally by Historians Charles Snell and Arthur Sullivan and are listed in the bibliography. They provided excellent background for this effort and are valuable resources in themselves.

My thanks are due also to Historian Edwin C. Bearss, whose expertise as a historian is well known to all having any familiarity with the subject. His cooperation was most helpful and extended to a climb up Maryland Heights and a hike to Solomon's Gap. I am grateful also to Mary Gebbia, whose patience in reading the hand-written manuscript was exceeded only by her industry and skill in typing it; to Barry Mackintosh, who reviewed it; and to Linda Wedel and Barbara Hudson of the Denver Service Center, who edited and typed the manuscript in its final form.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE iii

I. THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN AND HARPERS FERRY 1

A. Lee Opens His Maryland Campaign 1
B. The Federal Army Reacts 2
C. Colonel Miles and the Defenders of Harpers Ferry . . 3

II. HARPERS FERRY AND MARYLAND HEIGHTS: A DESCRIPTION . . . 7

III. ELK RIDGE: SEPTEMBER 12, 1862 11

A. McLaws Moves on Elk Ridge 11
B. Captain Hibbetts Disputes Kershaw's Advance 11
C. Kershaw and Barksdale Push On 12
D. Major Hildebrandt Opposes Kershaw 12
E. Major Hewitt Occupies Maryland Heights with the 32d Ohio and 126th New York 13

IV. MARYLAND HEIGHTS: SEPTEMBER 13, 1862 15

A. Daybreak: The Federal Skirmish Line is Reinforced and Falls Back 15
B. Kershaw Drives the Federals from Abatis to Breastwork 16
C. The Breastwork and the Troops Behind It 17
D. Kershaw and Barksdale Attack the Breastwork 19
E. The Federals Fight and Flee 20
F. The Federals Re-form 22
G. Maryland Heights's Other Defenders 23
H. Casualties on Maryland Heights 25

V. HARPERS FERRY AND BOLIVAR HEIGHTS 27

VI. HARPERS FERRY: SEPTEMBER 13, 1862 31

A. The Federal Positions South of the Potomac 31
B. Captain Russell Rides for Help 33

VII. THE CONFEDERATES CLOSE THE RING 35

A. Walker Occupies Loudoun Heights 35
B. Jackson Arrives and Issues Orders 35
C. Maryland Heights, September 14 and 15 36
D. Hill's Division Deploys and Advances 37
E. Ewell's Division Deploys 38
F. Jones's Operations on the Left 39
G. Crutchfield Fires from Loudoun Heights 39

VIII. SEPTEMBER 14, 1862, IN THE FEDERAL CAMP 41

A. Federal Preparations 41
B. The Federal Right 42
C. The Federal Left 43
D. Last Minute Meetings: September 14 and 15 45
E. The Cavalry Skedaddles 46

IX. SEPTEMBER 15, 1862, AND AFTER 49

A. The Last Battle 49
B. The Surrender 50
C. The Aftermath 54

X. THE HARPERS FERRY MILITARY COMMISSION 57

XI. EPILOGUE 61

XII. MAP: TROOP POSITIONS, SEPTEMBER 13, 1862 65

XIII. MAP: TROOP POSITIONS AND MOVEMENTS, SEPTEMBER 15, 1862 75

APPENDIXES 85

A. Colonel Miles and Confederate Prisoners of War 87
B. Mrs. Charles J. Brown 89

BIBLIOGRAPHY 91

I. THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN AND HARPERS FERRY

A. Lee Opens His Maryland Campaign

After his Army of Northern Virginia had driven Major General John Pope's Army of Virginia from the field of Second Manassas to the shelter of Washington's defenses, General Robert E. Lee viewed its accomplishments with satisfaction. It had virtually removed Federal forces from Virginia's soil and had disrupted Federal operations in North Carolina in the bargain. And yet there were still 2 months of good campaigning weather left before winter set in. What should he do? He pondered the matter and decided to cross the Potomac into Maryland. Such an invasion, he believed, would:

a. prolong the present state of affairs and inflict further injury on the enemy;

b. aid the citizens of Maryland in any efforts they might make "to recover their liberties."[1]

And so Lee determined to march his army north and cross the Potomac east of the Blue Ridge, holding the Federal forces in Washington and Baltimore. Once his lines of communications and supply through the Shenandoah Valley were clear, he would deploy in western Maryland and invite attack.[2]

At the time of the Maryland Campaign Lee's famed army was organized into two corps of infantry and a division of cavalry, each with its supporting artillery and an artillery reserve. Major General James Longstreet commanded one corps, and his divisions in turn were commanded by Generals Lafayette McLaws, Richard H. Anderson, David R. Jones, John B. Hood, and John G. Walker. Major General Thomas J. Jackson commanded the other corps, which included divisions commanded by A. R. Lawton (Ewell's Division), Ambrose P. Hill, John R. Jones, and Daniel H. Hill. General James E. B. Stuart

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1. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 128 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 19, pt. 1, p. 144 (Hereafter cited as O.R.; all references are to Series 1).

2. Ibid., p. 145.

commanded the cavalry division. In addition there were 77 batteries of artillery. Jackson's Corps and McLaw's and Walker's divisions of Longstreet's Corps would figure most directly in the action at Harpers Ferry.[3]

Although the Army of northern Virginia had been victorious, it had not prospered. Its men had a serious lack of shoes, were poorly clad and short of blankets, wore dirty clothes, and were infested with lice. The army lacked transportation and was short of food and other supplies. Straggling was a serious problem; the army's strength as it entered Maryland was down to 50,000 men, although these were veterans and by and large could march and fight. The generals, experienced and able, would give a good account of themselves.[4]

Lee's Army crossed the Potomac at White's Ford and on September 6 reached Frederick, Maryland. There, possibly to his surprise, Lee saw that the Union forces still sat astride his line of communications at Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg.

This situation could not be tolerated! To rectify it he split up his small army, ordering Jackson to march his corps to Martinsburg, secure it, and then move east and take Harpers Ferry. McLaws's and Anderson's divisions were also to advance on Harpers Ferry by way of Pleasant Valley and Maryland Heights, and General Walker was to take his two brigades back to Virginia, advance up the Potomac to Loudoun Heights, and assist Jackson from there. As soon as they had seized Harpers Ferry these scattered units were to hurry north again and reunite with Lee and the army near Boonsboro, Maryland. They set out on the 10th to execute Lee's order.[5]

B. The Federal Army Reacts

In the meantime there was tremendous activity in the Federal camp. Pope's divisions were released from their strength with the Army of Virginia and returned to the Army of the Potomac and to the

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3. Ibid., pp. 803-10

4. James V. Murfin, The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and the Maryland Campaign of 1862 (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1965). Chapter 3 contains a description of the army. This book is one of the most recent and best accounts of the campaign and provides excellent background material on the events outlined in this report.

5. O.R., 19:145. This was the famous Special Order Number 191.

command of Major General George B. McClellan. McClellan commenced their reorganization and rejuvenation and marched them north toward Frederick in the shadow of his elusive foe. The Union Army reached Frederick on September 12th, 2 days after Jackson and McLaws had departed for Harpers Ferry.[6]

The Federal garrisons in the Potomac Valley were assigned to the 8th Corps and were under the command of Major General John E. Wool, whose headquarters were in Baltimore. Two of Wool's principle subordinates were Colonel Dixon S. Miles, who commanded at Harpers Ferry, and Brigadier General Julius White, in charge of Federal forces at Martinsburg, Virginia. Wool instructed White not to abandon Martinsburg before the enemy arrived, but if he were approached by a force of as many as 20,000 men, he might fall back to Harpers Ferry. White's force, which was given permission to retreat under the above conditions, numbered 2,500 men![7]

On September 11 it became clear to White that he was threatened by the approach of a large enemy force. He ordered that such public property as could be saved be placed on a train for Harpers Ferry; he then set fire to the remainder and departed. On the 12th his units--the 65th Illinois and 125th New York Infantry regiments and the 12th Illinois Cavalry Regiment--and Phillips's Illinois Battery arrived at Harpers Ferry. White found the Harpers Ferry garrison preparing to receive approaching Confederates, and so, with a "magnanimity equal to his valor" but with some disregard of the responsibilities falling to him as the ranking officer present, White waived his rank and placed himself under the command of Colonel Miles.[8]

C. Colonel Miles and the Defenders of Harpers Ferry

Colonel Miles was 58 years of age in September 1962 and was an old professional soldier. A native of Maryland, he had graduated from West Point in 1824. After being commissioned in the infantry, his assignments were no doubt routine, but they enabled him to participate as a captain in the war with Mexico. Distinguished, gallant, and meritorious conduct gained him two brevets. At the

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6. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

7. Ibid., pp. 520, 524.

8. Ibid., pp. 524-25.

outbreak of the Civil War he was the colonel of the 2d Infantry and at Bull Run commanded a division that constituted the army's reserve. But Miles was ill and drunk at Manassas and so, while others gained rank and distinction, he was placed on leave awaiting orders. Restored to active service in March 1862, he was put to work overseeing the safety of a section of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad--a necessary job but hardly the sort of assignment one would expect for a hero of the Mexican War and a pre-war colonel in the Regular Army.[9]

After White's arrival in Harpers Ferry the Federal force there numbered about 14,000 men organized into 10 infantry regiments; 2 regiments, two battalions (or squadrons), and one independent company of cavalry; two batteries (or companies) of heavy artillery; and four batteries of light artillery. This force was not distinguished by long service. The 39th New York, under Colonel Frederick D'Utassy, was the oldest unit present, having fought at Bull Run and Cross Keys, Strasburg, and Harrisonburg in the Shenandoah Valley. Its closest rivals in length of service were the 32d and 60th Ohio Volunteer Infantry regiments, the former in existence for a year and the latter with seven months service. The 32d had campaigned some in what became West Virginia, and both had opposed Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley.[10]

Three regiments had been on duty in the Potomac Valley, guarding the vital Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and presumably the canal as well. These were the 65th Illinois Infantry, which had come in with White from Martinsburg, and the 1st and 3d Infantry regiments of Maryland's Potomac Home Brigade.[11]

There were, thus, six infantry regiments with some military experience. The remainder--the 12th Regiment, New York State Militia; the 111th, 115th, and 126th New York Volunteer Infantry regiments; the 87th Ohio; and the 9th Vermont--were either three-month regiments with obviously limited experience or were regiments with no significant experience at all. One regiment, the 126th New York, had been organized for only 3 weeks. Its men scarcely knew how to load their rifles.[12]

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9. George W. Cullum, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, 3d ed., 6 vols., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1891), 1:334-35; O.R., 2:378, 438-39.

10. Frederick H. Dyer, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, 3 vols. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), 3:1418, 1511, 1524; O.R., 19:549.

11. Dyer, Compendium, 3:1075, 1232, 1234.

12. Ibid., pp. 1410, 1448, 1449, 1450, 1453, 1454, 1536, 1652.

The cavalry was somewhat more experienced than the infantry. Cole's two-company Maryland Battalion and Companies H and I of the 1st Maryland 211 had 2 years service in Northern Virginia and in the Potomac Valley. The 8th New York also had nearly 2 years experience and had campaigned in the Shenandoah Valley. The Loudoun Rangers, a Federal regiment of Virginians recruited locally, had been skirmishing 3 months in the Harpers Ferry area and knew the country. The 12th Illinois had only 6 months experience and no campaigning and the 7th Squadron, Rhode Island Cavalry, was only a three-month unit.[13]

The batteries also had a variety of experience. Rigby's had 2 years service and had campaigned in West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. Potts's had a comparable background and both would demonstrate their abilities later. Phillips's and von Sehlen's batteries were green units and the service of both Graham's and McGrath's batteries had been in fortifications. This mixed bag was to face the brigades of Stonewall Jackson![14]

On September 6 Colonel Miles had organized his command into four provisional brigades plus a collection of independent units. White's three regiments and battery were melded into this provisional organization after their arrival on September 12.[15]

The independent units under Miles's direct command included most of the garrison's cavalry and Colonel William P. Maulsby's 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Maulsby's Regiment had the responsibility of guarding the downstream approaches to Harpers Ferry in the Sandy Hook area until late on the 12th when it withdrew to the bridgehead opposite Harpers Ferry. Maulsby received cavalry support from a portion of Potts Battery and from the 87th Ohio.[16]

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13. Ibid., pp. 1029, 1228, 1229, 1376, 1628; Augustus W. Corliss, History of the Seventh Squadron, Rhode Island Cavalry (Yarmouth, Ma.; Old Times Office, 1879), p. 9.

14. Dyer, Compendium, 3:1043, 1116, 1119, 1384, 1495.

15. O.R., 19:526.

16. Ibid., pp. 533, 557.

Two brigades occupied Bolivar Heights. Colonel Frederick D'Utassy commanded the crest area closest to the Potomac and had four infantry regiments: the 39th, 111th, and 115th New York, and the 65th Illinois after its arrival from Martinsburg. He was supported by von Sehlen's and Phillips's batteries. Colonel William H. Trimble held the sector near the Charlestown Pike. His units included his own 60th Ohio, the 126th New York, the 9th Vermont Infantry regiments, and one battery--first Potts's then Rigby's.[17]

A third provisional brigade under Colonel William G. Ward occupied Camp Hill above Harpers Ferry. Ward had his 12th New York State Militia, the 87th Ohio Infantry Regiment, Graham's Battery, and another battery--first Rigby's then Potts's. He was reinforced on the 12th by the 125th New York but lost the 87th Ohio to Colonel Maulsby.[18]

A fourth brigade occupied Maryland Heights--this one commanded by Colonel Thomas H. Ford. Ford had his own 32d Ohio Infantry Regiment, a battalion of the 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, McGrath's Battery, and about seven companies of cavalry. Ford was to become the tragic figure at Harpers Ferry. A self-made man, Ford had commanded an Ohio company in the war with Mexico, had been a Republican lieutenant governor of Ohio under Governor Salmon P. Chase, and had performed adequately in the recent campaigns in the Shenandoah Valley. Ford was ill at Harpers Ferry and was to have military problems whose solution would have defied a Napoleon.[19]

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17. Ibid., p. 526.

18. Ibid., pp. 526, 556, 560.

19. Ibid., p. 556; A. A. Graham, History of Richland County, Ohio (Mansfield, Ohio: A. A. Graham & Co., 1880), pp. 703-4.

II. HARPERS FERRY AND MARYLAND HEIGHTS: A DESCRIPTION

The town of Harpers Ferry hugged the river banks and hillsides of Virginia west of the Shenandoah River and south of the Potomac River at their confluence. Established because of the power potential created there by the falls of the Shenandoah and Potomac, the town had been the location of a United States armory and arsenal and the Hall Rifle Works. John Brown disturbed its tranquility in 1859 with his highly publicized raid and made it a household word. Its industry was destroyed at the outbreak of the war, but its strategic importance meant that it was garrisoned alternately by both armies.

There were no bridges over the Shenandoah at Harpers Ferry at that time but there were fords upstream. Logic dictates that to hold the town, the occupying force would have to control the surrounding Maryland, Loudoun, and Bolivar heights. This could mean the manning of a perimeter 6 or 7 miles in circumference depending, of course, on the location of outer defensive works. Although extensive fortifications were constructed later, such fortifications did not exist, except in the most rudimentary way, in September 1862.[1]

In large part this strategic importance resulted from the rivers and the gaps carved by the Potomac through the Blue Ridge and the Appalachian chain to the east. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and the road between Frederick and the Shenandoah Valley funneled through these gaps. Whoever controlled Harpers Ferry controlled the important communications lines from Washington to the west.

Although strategically important, the town was nearly impossible to render secure. Maryland Heights frowned down upon it from across the Shenandoah to the southeast. Bolivar Heights, 1.5 miles to the west and comparatively low, was the town's principal protection as long as it was in friendly hands.

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1. Three unpublished reports contain helpful information on the appearance and features of Harpers Ferry in September 1862. They are Arthur L. Sullivan, "Documentation of Historical Base Map, Harpers Ferry Vicinity, September 15, 1862," dated September 6, 1961; Charles W. Snell, "The Fortifications at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in 1861 and Jackson's Attack, May 1862," dated February 9, 1960; and Charles W. Snell, "A Report on the Federal Fortifications at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, and of the Confederate and Union Troop Movements during the Siege of Harpers Ferry, September 12-15, 1862," dated December 1, 1959.

The town itself was connected to Maryland and points east by a bridge serving the B & O Railroad. In 1862 a pontoon bridge also crossed the Potomac a short distance north of the railroad bridge.

Maryland Heights is the name given locally to the southern end of Elk Ridge, whose granite bluffs dominate Harpers Ferry from the Maryland side of the Potomac. From the Potomac here at Harpers Ferry the ridge extends northerly for 10 miles to Antietam Creek, where it fades into its surroundings. It forms the west wall of Pleasant Valley.

The ridge's crest begins at a point about 1.4 miles up the steep slope from the Potomac. There the slope ends in a knob at an elevation of 1,380 feet, and from there the ridge extends north at an elevation of about 1,400 feet to Solomon's Gap 4.5 miles away. At the gap the elevation falls off only to about 1,325 feet and climbs immediately to the 1,480-foot level where it is increased by knobs exceeding 1,500 feet in altitude. From these knobs north for 5.5 miles the ridge loses height and fades away.[2]

South from Solomon's Gap (which is just above Yarrowsburg) the base of the ridge under its eastern and western slopes begins at the 600-foot level, and the ridge base is about 1.5 mile wide. Its steep slopes flatten at the 1,380-foot level and permit a crest whose width varies from 100 to 1,000 feet. Although this crest seems relatively flat when viewed from a distance, its surface varies, and it has a number of knobs and outcroppings made more formidable than their height would suggest by their rugged character.

This character stems, of course, from the granite formations and rocks so evident on its surface and from the vegetation covering the hill. Deciduous trees, bushes, and vines grow thickly there and in 1862 limited visibility to far below effective rifle range.[3]

The slopes of the ridge are rocky and uneven and are covered with growth where the rock allows. However, on the west slope just above the Potomac at the 600-foot elevation is a shelf. This plateau

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2. Maryland Heights and Elk Ridge are shown on USGS Maps, Harpers Ferry Quadrangle and Keedysville Quadrangle, Scale 1:24,000.

3. O.R., 19:608, 648.

is about one quarter of a mile square and is level enough to permit cultivation. In 1862 it was the site of Unsell's farm. Nearer the river at the same level is an extension of this shelf. Guns posted here commanded Harpers Ferry, Bolivar Heights, and the Potomac approaches below it. It was also a convenient stopping place on the trail or road from Harpers Ferry to the crest of Maryland Heights.

There was a narrow flood plain at best between the end of Elk Ridge and the Potomac. Upstream from the railroad bridge this space was shared by the canal and its towpath and by a road. At a point about .8 of a mile from the bridge the road left the river and ran north along the base of the ridge toward Sharpsburg and other towns in the Cumberland Valley. At the Maryland end of the railroad bridge the railroad shared the flood plain with the canal and with the road, which led downstream to Knoxville and Brunswick and joined side roads running north into Pleasant Valley. Although the road, railroad, and canal had strategic importance, it was the section of the road along the Potomac upstream from the Harpers Ferry bridges and along the west slope of Maryland Heights that would figure most significantly in the action on Maryland Heights and the story prior to the final siege.

This road connected Harpers Ferry with a side road or trail that turned up the hill at a ravine about one half mile upstream from the railroad bridge, followed the ravine to the shelf, crossed it in an easterly direction, and went more or less directly up the slope to the 800-foot level. There it split, the right fork continuing one quarter of a mile across and up the nose of the heights until it reached a cross trail. This cross trail ran from the bluffs overlooking the town straight uphill to the crest, where it continued along the ridge to Solomon's Gap. The left fork of the trail joined the crest road just west of the south point of the crest.

There was little other development on Elk Ridge. An observation tower, a 15- to 25-foot cribbed log structure, stood atop a knob on the ridge above the point where the left fork of the Harpers Ferry trail joined the trail along the crest. Presumably this tower was just tall enough to provide observation over the trees. North of the tower about 400 yards Captain John T. Whittier of the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, had erected a breastwork that extended across the ridge from a rock ledge overlooking Pleasant Valley. North of it there was a slashing and an abatis. Beyond were woods that in 1862 concealed only one or two small abatis, which the Federal defenders of the ridge considered too unimportant to mention.[4]

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4. Ibid., pp. 543, 569, 570, 608, 614, 672, 681, 772, 863, 867.

III. ELK RIDGE: SEPTEMBER 12, 1862

A. McLaws Moves on Elk Ridge

In accordance with Lee's instructions on September 11th Major General Lafayette McLaws led his division and that of R. H. Anderson through Brownsville Gap into Pleasant Valley. McLaws sent Wright's Brigade of Anderson's Division with two guns to the point of the Blue Ridge above Weverton to block that entrance to the valley from the east. He left Semmes's and Mahone's brigades behind to block Brownsville and Solomon's gaps and other passes to his rear. Kershaw's and Barksdale's brigades were ordered to climb through Solomon's Gap to the crest of Elk Ridge and move south along it to Maryland Heights while Cobb's Brigade kept pace with them and supported them from the valley below. McLaws and Anderson with Wilcox's, Featherston's, Armistead's, and Pryor's brigades moved down the valley keeping pace with Kershaw and Cobb. At sundown General Anderson ordered Pryor's Brigade to Weverton to assist Wright in blocking that important pass. Pleasant Valley and Elk Ridge were then occupied and Harpers Ferry's communications with Frederick and the northeast severed.[1]

On September 12 Kershaw's and Barksdale's brigades, under Joseph B. Kershaw, climbed the mountain toward Solomon's Gap behind a screen of five companies deployed as skirmishers, a heavy force considering that the main body must have been moving in column on a narrow front. Kershaw found the gap only lightly manned, he thought, by Union cavalry. In this he was probably right, for the 7th Squadron, Rhode Island Cavalry, had pickets in that area supported by pickets of the 32d Ohio. The cavalrymen fell back and Kershaw's men pushed warily on.[2]

B. Captain Hibbetts Disputes Kershaw's Advance

Soon Kershaw met a stronger force. Colonel Thomas H. Ford, 32d Ohio, who commanded on Maryland Heights, had expressed a preference for infantry at his outposts--cavalry was too mobile and could get away too easily in time of danger; infantry might hold a little longer. Three companies of infantry were in Kershaw's path. Captain Jefferson J. Hibbetts was there with his company of the 32d Ohio, and the 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, was represented by Companies H and I under Captain Charles J. Brown and Lieutenant Stephen L. Bridge. Presumably Hibbetts was in command of this small

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1. O.R., 19:863; Murfin, Gleam of Bayonets, p. 140.

2. S. B. Pettengill, The College Cavaliers, A Sketch of the Services of a Company of College Students in the Union Army in 1862 (Chicago: H. McAllister & Co. Printers, 1883), p. 65; O.R., 19:863.

force. They met Kershaw's skirmishers somewhere on the crest, traded shots, and fell back. However, they maintained contact with Kershaw until the Federals abandoned Maryland Heights, and Hibbetts, who was shot in the ear, particularly distinguished himself.[3]

C. Kershaw and Barksdale Push On

After the first exchange of fire, Kershaw's brigades threatened and pressed the thin Federal skirmish line back along the crest and west slope of Elk Ridge. Kershaw's own line of skirmishers extended across the crest and to his right down its western slope in the direction from which danger might threaten--possibly almost to the foot of the ridge and the road there. In the meantime his main column trudged behind the left of the skirmish line along the wagon track on the crest of the ridge. South Carolinians on the right skirmished with what they believed were cavalry. After an arduous walk they came to an abatis of felled trees about 1 mile south of the gap. They met brisk fire there and Kershaw ordered Major J. M. Bradley, who commanded skirmishers on that part of the line, to push on. He did and carried the abatis with ease. There was more crashing through the thickets as the Confederates moved forward. One company, presumably on the skirmish line on the right, became lost for a time. It was slow going not only because of the plentiful natural obstacles but because of the threat posed by the concealed Federal riflemen.[4]

D. Major Hildebrandt Opposes Kershaw

As Kershaw moved south more Federals arrived to oppose him. Major Hugo Hildebrandt of the 39th New York left Bolivar Heights and crossed the Potomac with six of his own companies and two from the 115th New York. When he reached Ford's headquarters at McGrath's Battery, Ford reshuffled Hildebrandt's force and sent him toward Solomon's Gap with four of his own companies and two from the 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. The route that he followed is not clear--it was a trail that Hildebrandt found so dangerous and overgrown that he could scarcely ride over it on his horse. When he neared the gap he

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3. O.R., 19:542, 609, 612, 710. Captain Hibbetts commanded his regiment with the rank of colonel in the closing months of the war.

4. Ibid., pp. 63, 862; J. J. McDaniel, Diary of Battles, Marches and Incidents of the Seventh S.C. Regiment (n.p., n.d.), p. 11. That the Confederates might have approached the road is assumed from Major Corliss's belief that they blocked his movement over the Sharpsburg Road. Corliss, Seventh Squadron, Rhode Island Cavalry, p. 10.

sent out two companies as skirmishers but found that the brush and terrain did not permit them to operate in their usual way. Soon they met Confederates and received their fire; Hildebrandt deployed the remainder of his force, only to find that the Confederates outnumbered him. He therefore pulled back to a strong position to await attack.[5]

No attack came but soon Hildebrandt's men heard firing to the right toward the crest. Two of the Maryland companies with him were engaged. He took his whole force to support them and remained there until dark, when they all marched back to see Colonel Ford.[6]

Hildebrandt's movements do not relate in an obvious way to those of Hibbetts. Apparently Hildebrandt kept to the west slope while Hibbetts picketed the crest. Hildebrandt's description of the poor quality of the trail followed indicates that it might not have been one of the main trails to the crest described earlier. His position at the end of the day, with his two flank companies near the crest, must have been close to that occupied by Hibbetts even if the two forces were not united. With the hindsight of a century later it can be wondered why, if the Federal skirmishers were in supporting distance of one another, they did not operate as a unified body and why Hildebrandt left the ridge at dusk instead of remaining to do the work that obviously had to be done. Because of the dearth of source materials and information, these questions defy logical explanation. Possibly insight into the situation can be gained by noting the events of the following day.

E. Major Hewitt Occupies Maryland Heights with the 32d Ohio and 126th New York

There were few if any Union troops behind Hibbetts on the crest of Elk Ridge during the skirmishing of September 12. The closest force available to support him was his own regiment, the 32d Ohio, and they were held at Captain Eugene McGrath's position to protect his guns. But in mid-afternoon Miles sent over the 126th New York and Hildebrandt and his companies of the 39th and 111th New York. When these additional troops became available Ford ordered the 32d Ohio and 126th New York to the crest of the ridge to support Hibbetts and to watch the approach from Sandy Hook to the east. Major

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5. O.R., 19:601.

6. Ibid.

Sylvester M. Hewitt of the 32d Ohio led his regiment up the slope and posted them facing east in a picket line along the crest facing Sandy Hook. Captain Abraham M. Crumbecker of the 32d was placed in charge of the right of the line near the observation tower and most of the 126th deployed behind the skirmish line north toward Solomon's Gap.[7]

Colonel Miles also gave Major Hewitt an unusual order. He was to take a bundle of "combustibles" and place it, under guard, at a place on Maryland Heights where it would be visible to both McGrath's Battery and the batteries on Bolivar Heights. If the Federal troops on Maryland Heights were forced back, Hewitt was to ignite the bundle and thus signal the batteries to open fire on the area vacated. For some reason--perhaps he forgot--the bundle was never lighted.[8]

There was light firing when the men of the 126th fell in behind the skirmish line. They could hear shouting and other noise from the Confederate side, indicating that the Rebel line, though out of sight, was not far away. They expected an attack, but it was late in the day and none came. The men on both sides settled down for the night, their arms at the ready.[9]

When it became quiet Major Hewitt left the crest and rode down to see Colonel Ford. The two talked of the need for reinforcements, and Ford sent Hewitt over to see Colonel Miles. Hewitt roused Miles, who had gone to bed, and told him of the situation on Maryland Heights. Miles promised him two cannons and three more regiments for the crest at daybreak. One of the regiments was to be used on the west slope to threaten Kershaw's right.[10]

Thus ended the 12th of September at Harpers Ferry. The day had seen light fighting between two experienced Confederate brigades and fragments of inexperienced Union regiments, accompanied by noisy and ineffective artillery fire. Although the trap was closing, there still was time to salvage the situation on Maryland Heights. However, the fragmented use of troops and the lack of a single directing force on the battle line itself promised grave problems for the 13th.

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7. Ibid., pp. 542, 566, 567, 571, 607.

8. Ibid., pp. 566, 568, 569.

9. Ibid., p. 607.

10. Ibid., p. 568.

IV. MARYLAND HEIGHTS: SEPTEMBER 13, 1862

A. Daybreak: The Federal Skirmish Line is Reinforced and Falls Back

Before daybreak on the 13th, Company B, 126th New York, joined Captain Hibbetts on the skirmish line and the remainder of the regiment, which was almost totally inexperienced, formed to support him behind an abatis. Miles's promise of reinforcements was as yet unfulfilled. In fact, the first troops to arrive came direct from Colonel Ford. Captain Charles H. Russell, 1st Maryland Cavalry, had talked with Ford the night before about the serious situation that faced them. According to Russell, Ford observed:

> Well, Captain these fellows are pressing closer upon us, driving in our pickets. . . . Tomorrow one of two things has got to be done, we have got to drive them from the hill or they are going to drive us from it.

He went on to say that Miles had offered him reinforcements, but they would be green troops and would do him more harm than good. He would rather have a few good experienced men in whom he could have confidence.[1]

At this point Russell remarked that his cavalrymen were useless, mounted, but he would dismount them and take them to the crest if Ford wished. Ford accepted this offer and asked Russell to report with his men about daylight, which he did. Ford then told him to take the men to the crest and report to Major Hewitt, who asked him to use his men independently as "sharpshooters." This pleased Russell, and he led his men to the skirmish line, where they found Hibbetts's men and those of Company B.[2]

As Russell and his men approached the skirmish line a shot from the underbrush ahead sent a minie ball into the thigh of a sergeant at the head of his column. This was real war! The men of Company B viewed it with alarm and headed for the protection of their comrades behind the abatis in the rear. Russell placed his men behind trees

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1. O.R., 19:607, 707. The abatis is mentioned by Kershaw on page 863.

2. Ibid., p. 727.

and rocks where they could use their carbines effectively and went back to bring Company B forward again. With the aid of its officers he did so, and they deployed again on the skirmish line.[3]

Minie balls zipped through the trees shortly after dawn and the Federal skirmishers heard increased commotion in the Confederate area. There were shouts, a drum roll, and the command "Forward!" Kershaw advanced and the thrashing and crashing noises in the brush told the Union force that trouble was on the way. This was too much for most of the nervous skirmishers and they headed back in a hurry for the main line; others fell back in a more deliberate fashion. As a line of battle developed at the abatis the force there was joined by two companies of the 39th New York. All told there were four, possibly five, regiments represented here.[4]

B. Kershaw Drives the Federals from Abatis to Breastwork

Kershaw attacked at about 7:00 A.M. His South Carolinians advanced in two lines, with his 7th and 8th regiments in the first line (the 8th on the right) and the 2d and 3d regiments in the second line, covering the 7th and 8th respectively. Barksdale's Brigade followed in the rear. They had not gone far when the 8th bumped into a rock ledge of which they evidently had no warning, and stalled. Colonel D. Wyatt Aiken's 7th Regiment wasted no time but advanced briskly in the face of heavy fire. The Union soldiers behind the abatis are said to have fired four shots apiece--if so the fire could have been momentarily intense. The first shots seemed to make Aiken's men recoil--perhaps it was only their skirmishers falling back to make way for the main line. Seeing this the men of the 126th, falsely sensing a victory of some kind, cheered. But their cheering was short-lived. Discipline and experience prevailed and the South Carolinians came on, threatening the Federal line in front and flank. This was too much; the uneasy Bluecoats fell back, tripping over vines and rocks that cluttered the way. Most converged on the wagon track and raced along it to their next refuge--a breastwork 400 yards to the rear. There was a gap in this fortification where the track passed through, and there at the opening stood the 126th's commander, Colonel Eliakim Sherrill, revolver in hand, waiting to rally his fleeing men. Gesturing with his weapon he directed his 126th into line behind the logs. There they and others from the skirmish line caught their breath, steadied their knees, and prepared for another stand.[5]

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3. Ibid. Hewitt positioned this line about one quarter mile from the breastwork. According to Ford it was about 400 to 500 yards from the breastwork erected by Captain Whittier. Ibid., pp. 543, 570.

4. Ibid., pp. 568, 607, 672, 727, 862; Arabella M. Willson, Disaster, Struggle, Triumph, The Adventures of 1,000 Boys in Blue (Albany: The Argus Co., 1870), p. 71.

5. O.R., 19:604, 607, 863.

C. The Breastwork and the Troops Behind It

The retreat from the abatis was covered by the skirmishers of the 32d Ohio and the 39th New York, who soon joined the 126th behind the breastwork. As Kershaw's line pushed them beyond the abatis, troops behind the breastwork peppered them with minie balls and drove them back beyond the abatis to the shelter of the trees.[6]

The breastwork was of logs and tree limbs piled together, cut, no doubt, from the clearing between the work and the abatis to the front. It had been thrown up only 2 days before by Captain Whittier's Company F, 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, which had been on Maryland Heights for 3 or 4 months. Its right rested on a rock outcrop overlooking the precipitous east slope, and its unfinished left petered off among the trees on the west slope.[7]

The force behind the work was fragmented and shaky. Much of it, probably more than 500 men, was from the 126th New York. Two hundred men from this regiment had been left behind in Harpers Ferry; its Company A was posted somewhere down the slope, perhaps near the battery, and Company G was in the rear of the work in the picket line overlooking Pleasant Valley. Also present were three companies of the 39th New York left on the crest by Major Hildebrandt, Companies H and I of the 1st Maryland Cavalry under Captain Russell, and Captain Hibbetts's company of the 32d Ohio.[8]

Captain Hibbetts's was only one of the 32d Ohio's companies on the crest under Major Hewitt. Three others joined the above force after the barricade was manned, and Crumbecker's Company was watching the east slope. Hewitt throught later that he might have had 350 men on the crest in addition to Crumbecker's force.[9]

Crumbecker at this time had his own company plus the two companies from the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, and Company A of the 126th New York. After his return to the battery Major Hildebrandt reinforced Crumbecker with two companies of the 39th New York.[10]

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6. Ibid., p. 608.

7. Ibid., pp. 543, 608, 710.

8. Ibid., pp. 542, 602, 672, 727, 734; Willson, Disaster, pp. 59-60.

9. O.R., 19:542, 572.

10. Ibid., pp. 542, 602, 713; Willson, Disaster, pp. 59-60.

The last arrivals on the crest were the companies of Lieutenant Colonel S. W. Downey's 3d Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Colonel Miles had sent Downey to Maryland Heights, and Colonel Ford had ordered him to the crest with five of his own companies plus three of the aforementioned 32d Ohio. When Downey reached the crest, somewhat in advance of his winded troops, he heard the sound of firing and bullets zipping through the trees. When his companies arrived he hurried them into the line behind the barricade and reported to Colonel Sherrill. The two colonels divided the line between them, Sherrill taking the left and Downey the right. Now the battle was on.[11]

The location of the various units behind the breastwork cannot be determined with accuracy. The 126th New York was the first regiment back from the abatis and apparently was more or less in the first line. Its right was at the precipice overlooking the valley and its left was beyond the work and down the west slope. Company A was elsewhere, and G was back by the observatory somewhere with Crumbecker. Companies C and F were near the center, with D on their left and K, B, and part of H probably on the right; the remainder of H was 40 rods beyond the left and down the slope.[12]

The location of the other units is equally vague. The historian of the 126th, reflecting the regiment's pique perhaps, reported that the companies of the 1st and 3d Maryland regiments and the 39th New York formed behind their left and were so posted that their fire endangered the men of the 126th. On the other hand Colonel Downey testified that he stood behind the right center, and one can assume that some of his companies must have been nearby.[13]

Following the retreat to the breastwork there was a lull of perhaps 30 to 60 minutes while the Confederates prepared to continue their assault and the Federal forces organized to meet it. Sherrill posted his regiment as indicated above. Downey approached from Ford's headquarters and Hewitt no doubt tried to keep an eye on things from the observation tower to the rear. There was no single commander on the crest--some apparently thought that Hewitt was in charge, but he denied it. Sherrill was the ranking officer there, but he had no military experience and apparently was concerned only for his regiment, which of course, was the largest body of men at hand. Ford was the only man on the Heights recognized as the overall commander, and he was sick hundreds of yards away.[14]

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11. O.R., 19: 614.

12. Willson, Disaster, pp. 59-60, 67.

13. Ibid., p. 59; O.R., 19: 614, 734.

14. O.R., 19:576, 734.

The composition of the Federal force behind the breastwork was a handicap obvious in hindsight, although it might not have been perceived then. There was no homogenity in the defending force. The largest unit present was the 126th New York and, as indicated above, only about 60 percent of it was at hand. In addition its officers and men did not know Ford or any of the other ranking men on Maryland Heights. Had there been a deliberate attempt to splinter the forces represented there, a better job could scarcely have been done. The 32d Ohio, one of the better units available to Miles, was divided and serving in three locations; the 39th New York, another experienced force, was also divided into three parts; and the 3d Maryland Cavalry had units in at least two places. Therefore, the force behind the breastwork was a fragmented group of strangers, not a team, without a leader and, for the most part, with little training and experience in the art of war. Opposing them were two well organized and experienced brigades under tried commanders.

D. Kershaw and Barksdale Attack the Breastwork

After the Federals had fallen back to the breastwork, the Confederates delivered their final blow. Catching their breath, the 7th and 8th regiments advanced again but found it hard indeed to make headway through the slashing in the face of the fire from the breastwork. They paused and fired deliberate crashing volleys that struck fear into the hearts of the defenders of the barricade, some of whom hardly knew how to load and fire their own guns. At this point Kershaw ordered Colonel James D. Nance's 3d South Carolina forward through the ranks of the 7th. Nance advanced but also found that the terrain and fire from the works meant rough going. Instead of pressing the attack home he tried to soften the Federal position with fire and sent off a message to Kershaw suggesting a flanking movement against the enemy's right.[15]

Kershaw had already considered these tactics and at the beginning of the attack had ordered Barksdale to form an extension of his two lines and push along the east slope of the ridge to his left. As Nance paused in his advance Kershaw learned that Barksdale's 17th Mississippi Regiment had reached the Union right. His order to Nance to hold his fire so that the Mississippians might move against the Union flank was being delivered when the Mississippians' fire, plus events unknown to him, made his order unnecessary.[16]

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15. Ibid., pp. 608, 863, 867, 868.

16. Ibid., p. 583.

E. The Federals Fight and Flee

The appearance of Kershaw's Carolinians emphasized the need for some adjustment in the Union line. Major William H. Baird of the 126th feared that the right would be turned and rushed 40 men to its defense. There they fired into troops that they saw filing by their flank on the steep slope below--Barksdale's men perhaps. There were similar fears about the left as the butternut line seemed to shift that way. Captain Philo D. Phillips of the 126th hurried Company C and a portion of D from their places in line and sent them down the slope to the left to meet that threat.[17]

But soon there was real trouble. A minie ball struck Colonel Sherrill in the face creating a serious, bloody wound; the mainstay of the 126th, he fell and was carried away. Many of his men panicked and fell back toward the observatory, leaving the breastwork to their cooler comrades and to the men commanded by Captains Hibbetts, Russell, and Brown and by Colonel Downey. These troops numbered perhaps 500 in all.[18]

As the retreating portion of the 126th fell back toward the observatory in their rear, Major Hewitt met them and tried to rally them. Hewitt had a command post of sorts for the 32d Ohio at the observatory and remained thereabouts with Lieutenant Adam Carnes of his regiment. From the observatory they could see some of the surrounding country and keep contact with Crumbecker's picket line that guarded the east slope of the ridge. While Hewitt was busy with the 126th, Crumbecker approached him with the news that the Confederates were flanking their right in force. Then, in accordance with Colonel Miles's instructions of the previous day, Hewitt sent Carnes forward with orders to Hibbetts, Russell, Brown, and others still at the barricade to hold on as long as possible and then fall back in good order.[19]

Carnes mounted a horse and rode forward waving his hat and shouting. Captain Russell, who saw him coming, referred to him later as a "cavalier." Hewitt's message, as communicated by Carnes's excited gestures and shouts, was not to hold and fall back in good order, but fall back! His appearance was the straw that broke the camel's back, the pretext for retreat for those inclined and the order to retreat for those who might have stayed. The Federal line broke and rushed to the rear.[20]

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17. Ibid., p. 608; Willson, Disaster, p. 60.

18. O.R., 19:728, 735.

19. Ibid., pp. 733, 734.

20. Ibid., p. 728.

The confusion of the battle was nothing to that of the retreat. The 126th New York became the scapegoat--perhaps because there were so many of them and they could be identified by their cap ornaments, and perhaps because they deserved to be. At any rate down the trails from the observatory area streamed tired, hot, confused, and scared men. The flight had begun really before the retreat to the breastwork, and while it was going on Colonel Miles and his aides met a hundred men of the 126th at the pontoon bridge. Denying that he had ordered a retreat, Miles told his aides to line up these stragglers and march them back to McGrath's Battery.[21]

The battery position was a convenient collection point. Major Hildebrandt of the 39th New York was the ranking officer there and had two of his companies and two companies of the 32d Ohio to support the battery. When fleeing soldiers came down from the heights he formed his men across the trail to receive them with fixed bayonets. Thus, he dammed some of the flood.[22]

All the men of the 126th did not flee this quickly. Company F received special comment in Lieutenant Carnes's testimony for its bravery. The men with Baird on the right found their retreat cut off by Rebels who had gotten into the works and had to fall back directly and hurriedly to the observatory, jumping from rock to rock. Once there Baird collected them and marched them toward the battery.[23]

Lieutenant Samuel A. Barras, adjutant of the 126th, had gone down the slope ahead of Baird and with the help of Miles and others had collected stragglers from his regiment and ordered them back in formation. Finally, when 500 were assembled, Major Baird led them back up the hill. After they had climbed some distance a lieutenant rode up and told them to halt where they were, because an order to fall back was on the way. Baird complied and they waited for future developments. Later the lieutenant returned and told Baird to move back quietly and in good order. McGrath was spiking his guns when they reached his battery, and Colonel Ford joined them there and accompanied them to the pontoon bridge. They met the two companies left there and recrossed the river.[24]

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21. Ibid., pp. 580, 645.

22. Ibid., p. 602.

23. Ibid., pp. 608, 772.

24. Ibid., pp. 608, 609.

F. The Federals Re-form

In the meantime Companies C and D held their position on the left, guarding that flank along with companies from the 39th New York, the 32d Ohio, and the 1st Maryland Cavalry. Captain Phillips heard of the withdrawal, but disregarded orders to retreat until some of McGrath's shells fell nearby. Then he withdrew to a second position where Major Hewitt posted him on the right of some troops of the 32d Ohio.[25]

This was probably the force and action described by Colonel Downey. On receiving the order to fall back Downey reacted with anger, took the courier's horse (Carnes's perhaps), and rode off to find Colonel Ford. Along the way he met Major Charles L. Grafflin of the 3d Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, whom Major Hewitt had posted with four companies behind the observatory to cover the retreat. Instructing him to stay there Downey continued on down the slope until he met Colonels Miles and Ford. Both denied having ordered a retreat and ordered him to retake the lost position. Downey went back up the slope, announced that he was in command, and rode off to get more help from Colonel Ford.[26]

Grafflin deployed one of his companies as skirmishers and advanced his mixed force back toward the breastwork. They ran into the enemy about 400 yards from the observatory and the skirmishers fell back on the main body. Some of Grafflin's men fell back after the first volley but Grafflin occupied a good position and held it until Downey's return. Downey came with two companies of the 115th New York, which he placed on Grafflin's left, making a line that extended across the ridge's crest. There was skirmishing for an extended period of time, but the Confederates obviously did not press their advantage. Finally, about mid-afternoon, orders came for Downey to withdraw, and he moved his force off the ridge in good order.[27]

During the course of this latter action on Maryland Heights, there were those in the Federal force who were not eager to fight. Some officers complained to Downey that their men would not fight, and Downey

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25. Willson, Disaster, pp. 63, 68, 69.

26. O.R., 19:614, 615.

27. Ibid., pp. 615-20.

had misgivings about the officers as well. At one time he asked a group of stragglers for volunteers to help retake the crest, and only five men stepped forward--he did not know their names but thought them to be from the 126th. He also posted men with orders to shoot stragglers who might try to flee toward the battery.[28]

G. Maryland Heights's Other Defenders

All of the soldiers on Maryland Heights were not defending the breastwork at the crest. As indicated above, Major Hildebrandt had two companies of the Garibaldi Guards at the battery and two companies of the 32d Ohio. Their mission was to protect the battery, which needed no protection, so they deployed instead as a provost guard to halt straggling.[29]

The 115th New York arrived about noon, 900 strong and as green as grass. Colonel Simeon Sammon, its commander, left two companies at the battery and proceded under the direction of Major John A. Steiner, 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, to a knob about 500 yards to the north, where it was feared that the Confederates might place a battery. It was a lonely vigil; their visibility was limited to a few yards, and they saw only a half-dozen Confederate skirmishers, probably Mississippians from Barksdale's Brigade. They remained in this position until late in the afternoon (two companies might have gone forward to a schoolhouse) when Steiner ordered them back. They returned without incident, picked up the two companies that Downey had taken to Maryland Heights, and crossed back into Virginia.[30]

The 7th Squadron, Rhode Island Cavalry, was also on Maryland Heights on the 13th but was not actively engaged. Like Ford's other units it had camped there west of McGrath's Battery before the battle and it had remained in camp during much of the morning. At one time some of its men guided infantry from Harpers Ferry to the crest of the ridge, and after the fighting became hot they assisted in halting stragglers at McGrath's Battery. Then, before the collapse was complete, they were sent with their horses across the river to Camp Hill where, presumably, their horses would be safe until they could be better employed. Why Ford did not make better use of this unit is something of a mystery.[31]

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28. Ibid., pp. 615-16.

29. Ibid., pp. 542, 602.

30. Ibid., pp. 544, 625-27, 695, 703, 709.

31. Pettengill, College Cavaliers, pp. 67-69.

A few men from the Loudoun Rangers were also there. Fearing capture and the vengeance of their fellow Virginians, they buried their company records in a thicket and carefully camouflaged the spot.[32]

One more unit remains to be accounted for--McGrath's Company B, 5th New York Heavy Artillery. This battery had been on the hill since June 1 and was something of a pivot around which military matters on Maryland Heights turned. It was armed with three guns--two 9-inch and one 15-inch--supplemented just before the battle with four brass fieldpieces, probably Napoleons. These guns were protected by earthworks and, as indicated above, were supported by infantry that might better have been deployed elsewhere. The battery's position gave it a field of fire up and down the river valley and toward Bolivar Heights. Its guns could also be sited north along Elk Ridge. Unfortunately, the visible field of fire in that direction, where danger threatened, was limited to a 100-foot clearing cut by the battery. Beyond were trees and brush which obstructed vision and concealed targets, causing the fire to be ineffective and making the battery more of a liability than an asset.[33]

McGrath began firing in support of infantry on Maryland Heights on September 12th when Kershaw advanced into Solomon's Gap. Most of the firing to the north and northeast must have been done by his four fieldpieces, though it was said that his "big guns" fired toward Solomon's Gap. He continued this firing on September 13th, his guns and the shells passing overhead making so much noise that Major Baird testified that the din drowned out the sound of musketry on the heights. Noise does not kill under such conditions, however, and few Confederates suffered from McGrath's effort.[34]

McGrath received orders to spike his guns and leave them behind as he retreated to Harpers Ferry. Late in the afternoon of the 13th, when most of the infantry had gone, he dumped the spiked guns from their carriages and joined Graham's Battery on Bolivar Heights.[35]

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32. Briscoe Goodhart, History of the Independent Loudoun, Virginia Rangers, 1862-1865 (Washington: Press of McGill and Wallace, 1896), pp. 53-54.

33. O.R., 19:697.

34. Ibid., pp. 547, 612.

35. Ibid., pp. 537, 547.

The Confederates did not press their attack against the Federals at McGrath's Battery, and the units there retired in good order. Colonel Ford himself rode from the ridge in the van of the 126th New York, and less than 200 of the defenders of Maryland Heights failed to recross the river into Harpers Ferry.[36]

H. Casualties on Maryland Heights

An estimation of casualties based on reports of the units involved indicates that of the 4,600 men available to Ford, only about 160 were killed or wounded. On the Confederate side Barksdale had 11 killed and wounded out of 960 engaged, and Kershaw, 213 out of 2,001 engaged. Of the regiments involved, only one Confederate regiment, the 3d South Carolina, had more killed and wounded (113) than the 32d Ohio (68) and the 126th New York (55). Such casualties were small when compared with those suffered by many units at Antietam and in later battles, but they were significant nonetheless and reflect some serious fighting on Maryland Heights.[37]

The 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, commanded by Colonel William P. Maulsby, had custody of the pontoon bridge across the Potomac. Maulsby had guarded the approaches to Harpers Ferry from the east with five of his companies, eight of the 87th Ohio, and two guns of Potts's Battery. Maulsby's force had been posted east as far as Sandy Hook and had included Samuel C. Means's Company of Loudoun Rangers and Henry A. Cole's Squadron of Maryland cavalry. Miles ordered Maulsby back to the bridge area on the 12th when outpost duty became dangerous. There was some skirmishing and cannon fire at the bridge but it amounted to little. Maulsby's men witnessed the traffic over the bridge and, as the fighting ended on the 13th, under orders from Miles, Maulsby prepared to destroy the structure. He detailed a lieutenant and some enlisted men to cut the ropes and destroy the pontoons but had second thoughts and ordered them to delay their work until he talked further with Miles. The bridge was never threatened by Confederates and was there for Union forces to use on their way out of town after the surrender.[38]

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36. Ibid., pp. 544, 609.

37. Ibid., pp. 537, 549, 860, 861.

38. Ibid., pp. 538, 547, 556, 557, 755.

V. HARPERS FERRY AND BOLIVAR HEIGHTS

After they evacuated Maryland Heights Colonel Ford's troops crossed the Potomac into Harpers Ferry, the arena of operations on September 14 and 15. Harpers Ferry was, and is, at and near the base of a hill at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. The Potomac flows there in a southeasterly direction, the Shenandoah north of east, and the rivers unite at an angle of about 45 degrees. The land mass within this angle is bounded by the Shenandoah on the southeast and east, and Loudoun Heights is beyond the river. The Potomac flows by it on the north and the land mass extends westerly to and beyond Bolivar Heights 2 miles west of the rivers' junction.[1]

The point of land between the rivers is similar to a narrow triangle, its sides formed by the rivers and its base by two narrow ravines that eat into it from either stream. These ravines are about .9 of a mile from the confluence and constitute the triangle's base. Along its river sides the triangle is faced by steep slopes, 250 feet high, that dominate the rivers' narrow flood plains. In 1862 the Potomac flood plain just above the confluence contained the ruins of the destroyed arsenal and upstream contained only the right-of-way of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The Shenandoah flood plain, including Virginius Island, was somewhat broader and contained the Hall Rifle Works, the Winchester and Harpers Ferry Railroad, a road now called Shenandoah Street, and numerous town buildings. The triangle is and was traversed by a road now called High Street, which ran from the confluence uphill through Harpers Ferry to Bolivar, Bolivar Heights, Halltown, and Charlestown. This road was lined with houses in Harpers Ferry and with scattered buildings as it climbed out of the valley onto the plateau forming the hill's uneven crest.

This crest is about 400 yards wide and forms an uneven plateau 300 feet above the rivers below. The highest portion of the plateau is near the ravines that nearly sever it (the base of the triangle)

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1. The area as it exists today is shown on USGS maps, Harpers Ferry Quadrangle and Charlestown Quadrangle, Scale 1:24,000. See also "Sketch of the Vicinity of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia," by William Luce, scale 1,000 feet to an inch, NA, RG 77; and "Preliminary Sketch of the Defenses on Maryland Heights and of Adjacent Country," surveyed Aug. 28 to Oct. 6, 1863, by Capt. N. Micheler and John Weyss, scale 8 inches to 1 mile, NA, RG 77.

.9 of a mile west of the confluence. That portion of the plateau between the Shenandoah and High Street contained imposing houses associated with the arsenal, but more important it was the scene of a rather permanent campsite of the Harpers Ferry garrison. For this reason it was called Camp Hill. The camp and the hill were protected on the west by an earthwork, with bastions at each end, which extended across the crest at the top of the slope above the bisecting ravines.[2]

Beyond the ravines the space between the rivers widens into a rough plateau bisected by the Charlestown Pike. Though cut by ravines that descend to the rivers, the land climbs gradually over 200 feet from the base of Camp Hill to the crest of Bolivar Heights nearly 400 feet above the Potomac. The village of Bolivar, which consisted of a few houses, was located along the Charlestown Pike just west of Camp Hill.

Bolivar Heights is a ridge 200 to 400 feet in height extending from the bend of the Potomac 2 miles west of the confluence southwesterly about 2 miles to the Shenandoah. The Charlestown Pike crosses it about 1.3 miles south of the Potomac and at that point loses about 100 feet in elevation. From this point a lane descended southeast across the fields 500 yards to the head of a ravine and followed along it another 500 yards to the Shenandoah. To the northeast, Shenandoah Street, which swerved out of the Shenandoah flood plain near the west slope of Camp Hill, joined the Charlestown Pike about .7 of a mile west of Bolivar Heights.

In 1862 a country road followed the west base of Bolivar Heights all the way from the Potomac to the Shenandoah. The land south of the pike, between the road and the river, is uneven and cut by ravines on the river slope. Troops might move over it on its west slope but would find movement on the east slope extremely difficult.

The crossroads settlement of Halltown was on the turnpike about 1.7 miles west of Bolivar Heights, and Charlestown was 2 miles west of it. The land between Halltown and Bolivar Heights to the east was undulating and wrinkled by gentle low limestone ridges that paralleled Bolivar Heights. The terrain itself would have offered no real obstacle to the Confederates' movements.

Little is known about the ground cover at this time. It can be assumed that such areas as were suitable for cultivation were in pasture or crops and that the ravines and steep slopes were wooded. Much of

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2. O.R., 19:526, 527, 765.

the west slope of Bolivar Heights was covered with trees and there were woods in the ravine area south from Bolivar Heights, at the turnpike's crossing, to the Shenandoah.

The Union garrison had not made the area west of Camp Hill more defensible by the construction of fortifications. By the evening of September 14 they had only a shallow trench along the crest of Bolivar Heights north of the Charlestown Pike and there were lunettes at the Charlestown Pike to protect cannons posted there. The only defense between Bolivar Heights and the river were a number of trees cut down to form an abatis of sorts in the area of a ravine in front of the Federal position.[3]

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3. Ibid., pp. 527, 562, 962.

VI. HARPERS FERRY: SEPTEMBER 13, 1862

A. The Federal Positions South of the Potomac

While Ford's men fought their futile battle on Maryland Heights their comrades south of the Potomac began to feel the tightening of the Confederate noose. Colonel George L. Willard's 125th New York Infantry was out on picket duty that afternoon and evening and it may be assumed that other regiments shared this routine assignment. Colonel Maulsby's force, a mixture of companies from the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, and the 87th Ohio, guarded the eastern approach to the town down toward Sandy Hook, skirmished with the advancing Rebels there, and gradually pulled back to the Harpers Ferry bridge where they rested virtually undisturbed.[1]

There was more obvious action at the battery positions. The Confederates captured 47 cannons at Harpers Ferry including those on Maryland Heights; only about thirty guns had been used against them. The Federal batteries were placed in the following positions:[2]

The Middle Department's Consolidated Morning Report of the 4th Brigade, Harpers Ferry, September 12, 1862 (NA, RG 94) listed 18 cannons on Camp Hill. Of these, four were mountain howitzers, which, had they been manned, would have been a poor match against the guns of the Confederates. Assuming that the five batteries at Harpers Ferry were manning 26 to 28 guns, depending on the amount used by Graham's Battery, and that 3 had been left on Maryland Heights, there must have been about 16 unused cannons within the Harpers Ferry perimeter. As indicated, however, at least four were unserviceable.

Elements of four batteries occupied Bolivar Heights. Silas Rigby's 1st Indiana Battery was at the Charlestown Pike on the left of the line. It had six 24-pounder howitzers--good guns for close work against infantry but not the best for counter battery fire. If any unit gained glory at Harpers Ferry, Rigby's battery was the one.[3]

Captain John von Sehlen's 15th Indiana Battery was posted to the right of Rigby near the center of the ridge. Von Sehlen had six rifled

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1. O.R., 19:547, 560, 705.

2. Ibid., pp. 526, 527, 547, 548.

3. Ibid., pp. 547, 650.

pieces, all 3-inchers--three bronze and three iron guns. A Confederate shell exploded one of von Sehlen's limbers during the battle and some said that he fired the last cannon shot of the siege.[4]

Two batteries were on von Sehlen's right. The closest was Lieutenant John C. Phillips's Battery M, 2d Illinois Artillery. Phillips had four rifled six-pounder James guns--not the best to be had at that time. During the course of the siege the battery's guns would suffer two broken carriages and a broken axle. Phillips's guns must have been posted near the right of the line on Bolivar Heights.[5]

On the afternoon of the 13th Captain John H. Graham of Company H, 5th New York Heavy Artillery, took position at the right of the Bolivar Heights line with one 20-pounder Parrott and a Napoleon. Captain Graham also had guns on Camp Hill under Lieutenants George F. Leek and Charles H. Cundell and at the end of the battle claimed to have had portions of his battery in five different places. Graham's two guns were behind a small work. Some of the vagueness associated with Graham's locations might be due to the probability that his company was augmented by McGrath's. McGrath, in fact, was said to have been in charge on Camp Hill on September 15.[6]

The other Federal battery present was commanded by Captain Benjamin F. Potts. Potts's troops were infantrymen of Company F, 32d Ohio Volunteer Infantry, but they were armed with two Napoleons and four 3-inch rifles. They were not allowed to accompany their parent regiment to Maryland Heights, but instead four of the six guns were assigned to Colonel Maulsby and supported his units. The two remaining guns were posted on Camp Hill on the 13th and 14th.[7]

The fate of Harpers Ferry was symbolized by these five batteries--as long as they fired there seemed to be hope; once they stopped firing, the infantry regiments would be vulnerable to the fire of the Confederate batteries. Without their supporting batteries, the garrison could last only minutes.

The Union infantry was organized into four provisional brigades thrown together for reasons of necessity and convenience. D'Utassy's Brigade was on Bolivar Heights. It was composed of the 65th Illinois

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4. Ibid., p. 664.

5. Ibid., pp. 547, 686.

6. Ibid., pp. 547, 661, 662, 732.

7. Ibid., pp. 547, 655.

Infantry and the 39th, 111th, and 115th New York regiments supported by von Sehlen's, Phillips's, and Graham's batteries. Trimble's Brigade was on D'Utassy's left at the Charlestown Pike. Colonel Charles H. Trimble of the 60th Ohio had his own regiment, the 126th New York, and the 9th Vermont regiments. On the 15th his command was reinforced by the 32d Ohio, the 125th New York, and the 3d Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Trimble's regiments were supported by Rigby's Battery alone until the 14th when Potts joined Rigby.[8]

The other units present were those of Colonel Maulsby, who led the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, and the 87th Ohio Infantry Regiment. These units occupied the town and guarded the bridges over the Potomac. Colonel William G. Ward's 125th New York National Guard Regiment and a portion of Graham's Battery occupied Camp Hill.[9]

B. Captain Russell Rides for Help

The loss of Maryland Heights caused alarm and concern in Harpers Ferry. Its garrison now expected an attack from the converging Confederates but hoped for relief from McClellan's army before it came.

That army was not far off. Major General William B. Franklin's Corps on its left was closest to Harpers Ferry. It proceeded deliberately from Buckeystown toward Burkittsville and Crampton's Gap, less than 10 miles away. Miles did not know this, of course, and on the night of the 13th he took steps to contact McClellan. He called in Captain Charles H. Russell, who with Companies H and I of the 1st Maryland Cavalry had fought so well on Maryland Heights, and ordered him to pass through the enemy's lines and "try to reach somebody that had ever heard of the United States Army, or any general of the United States Army, or anybody that knew anything about the United States Army, and report the condition of Harpers Ferry." Specifically Russell was to find McClellan and tell him that Miles's force had subsistence for only 48 hours and if not relieved by that time would have to surrender the place.[10]

Russell, the "Fighting Parson," selected nine men and set out on his adventure. The little force rode up the Virginia side of the Potomac, forded the river at the mouth of Antietam Creek, dashed around some Rebel pickets, and headed east toward South Mountain.

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8. Ibid., p. 553.

9. Ibid., pp. 526, 527, 732.

10. Ibid., pp. 526, 720.

There it ran into some infantry pickets but took a side road and avoided them. It passed straight over South Mountain and made its way to Middletown, meeting General Jesse L. Reno there, who gave Russell a fresh horse. Leaving his men behind, Russell galloped east to McClellan who was at Frederick. He reached McClellan about mid-morning after what must have been one of the hardest rides of the Civil War.[11]

He did not tarry here. In response to his report McClellan dispatched a courier to urge Franklin forward and sent Russell off after a half hour's rest to guide him. Russell reached Franklin about 3:00 P.M. as the corps was making its way through Crampton's Gap. The gap taken, Franklin rested his corps for the night. At dawn on the following day they heard the roar of distant artillery at Harpers Ferry. Later as Franklin deployed his corps to face a line of Confederates opposing him, the distant firing ceased. Assuming correctly that the silence meant that Miles had surrendered, Franklin gave his attention to other things and failed even to mention Russell and Harpers Ferry in his report of the Antietam Campaign.[12]

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11. Ibid., p. 720.

12. Ibid., pp. 374, 375, 721, 722.

VII. THE CONFEDERATES CLOSE THE RING

A. Walker Occupies Loudoun Heights

The Federals retreating into the false security of Harpers Ferry were playing the Confederates' game. As they battled on Maryland Heights Confederate Brigadier General John G. Walker advanced up the south bank of the Potomac, sent a reconnaissance force to Loudoun Heights, and, finding it unoccupied, took possession of it with the 27th North Carolina and 30th Virginia regiments of Manning's Brigade without firing a shot. He placed the remainder of his division in a "strong position to prevent the escape of the enemy down the right bank of the Potomac." On the following morning, the 14th, he had Captain Thomas B. French post three Parrott guns of his own battery and two rifled guns from Branch's Battery (a Virginia battery attached to Ransom's Brigade under Lieutenant M. A. Martin) on Loudoun Heights and established a signal station there to communicate with Stonewall Jackson.[1]

B. Jackson Arrives and Issues Orders

In the meantime Jackson had moved from Frederick to Williamsport, crossed the Potomac on the 11th, and on the 12th occupied Martinsburg hot on the heels of General White and his fleeing force. Jackson wasted no time. His divisions, Hill's in the lead, then headed toward Harpers Ferry and at about 11:00 A.M. on the 13th (as Ford's men broke from the breastwork on Maryland Heights) Hill came in sight of the Federal positions on Bolivar Heights. There they paused and all three divisions--Hill's, Ewell's, and Jackson's own--under Brigadier General J. R. Jones went into bivouac around Halltown just 2 miles west of the Union position on Bolivar Heights. This pause was necessary to give Jackson time to learn whether Walker and McLaws had reached their necessary positions on Maryland and Loudoun heights.[2]

Jackson soon made contact with McLaws and Walker by courier and set up a signal station to maintain this contact. While this was being done he issued orders for his attack on the following day. He ordered Hill to move southeast to the Shenandoah and advance downstream along it toward Harpers Ferry. Brigadier General A. R. Lawton,

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1. O.R., 19:912.

2. Ibid., p. 953.

commanding Ewell's Division, received orders to advance along the turnpike directly toward Harpers Ferry in support of Hill, and J. R. Jones was told to demonstrate against the Union right near the Potomac with one brigade and a battery while the remainder of his division moved along the turnpike in support of Hill. In the meantime the 12th Virginia Cavalry was to watch the Potomac to keep the enemy from escaping along it. Jackson also signalled McLaws to watch the enemy from his side of the river. Thus, it appears that Jackson had taken the needed measures to close all routes of escape except that used by the Federal cavalry the following night.[3]

Captain J. L. Bartlett, Jackson's signal officer, reported of the 14th that "my signal flag was up at daylight, and my glass bearing on Loudoun Heights after sunrise." His distant contacts included Major E. F. Paxton, who was apparently located on Loudoun Heights, and McLaws's signalmen on Maryland Heights. The messages of the 14th dealt with the use of artillery and the disposition of Union and Confederate troops to the east. Finally, after the artillery opened fire, Bartlett relayed Jackson's special orders concerning the Confederate deployment outlined earlier.[4]

In later years Walker claimed credit for initiating the last action at Harpers Ferry. He wrote that Jackson had given Miles 24 hours to surrender and that he (Walker) knew from the fighting he could see to the east at South Mountain that such delay meant peril for Lee's army. When he received no response from a signalled request to open with his artillery, he ordered his regiments on Loudoun Heights to take position in view of the Federals and draw their fire. When they did this his cannons naturally replied and the action was thus begun. The Confederates fired toward the area of the "Barbour House," now the National Park Service's Stephen T. Mather Training Center on Camp Hill.[5]

C. Maryland Heights, September 14 and 15

After the firing died down on Maryland Heights and the Confederates held the ridge, Kershaw's men salvaged such Federal equipment as could be carried off and used and destroyed the rest that fell into their

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3. Ibid., pp. 854, 953, 954.

4. Ibid., pp. 958, 959.

5. Ibid., p. 913; Robert U. Johnson and C. C. Buel, Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 3 vols. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1956), 2:609.

hands. Barksdale's men descended to the point of the mountain and rested. On the following morning Major A. H. McLaws, the division quartermaster, opened a track up the east slope of the ridge so that two Parrott guns of Read's Battery and two guns from Carlton's Battery could be dragged to the top. Under the direction of Major S. P. Hamilton, Captains J. P. W. Read and H. H. Carlton placed their guns at an unidentified place above the town and below the crest and opened fire on the Federal troops below.[6]

But McLaws did not permit the victors of Maryland Heights to rest upon their laurels. All troops but the 13th Mississippi Regiment and two cannons from Read's Battery left the ridge at daylight on the 15th. Thus, the Federal force was contained on the north by only a weak guard and the Shenandoah separated them from Loudoun Heights. The danger lay with Jackson's force that threatened from the angle between the Shenandoah and Potomac west and south.[7]

D. Hill's Division Deploys and Advances

In response to Jackson's order Hill's six brigades moved to their assigned positions. They probably used the road leading south from Halltown to the Shenandoah and thus were able to move far beyond the Federal left. Two brigades moved to the tracks of the Winchester and Harpers Ferry Railroad along the west bank of the river and turned north. Branch's North Carolinians, headed by the 7th Regiment, probably led the way; Gregg's South Carolinians followed them and brought up the rear. The 7th brushed aside a few skirmishers and sometime after midnight, using ravines leading up from the flood plain, reached higher ground in the "rear" of the Federal left. Then they formed, Branch on the left and Gregg on the right slightly to Branch's rear.[8]

Hill's four other brigades--Pender's, Archer's, Field's, and Thomas's--under Pender's direction followed a closer route, keeping to the high ground above the river. Thomas was in general support of the entire division and no doubt was held much to the rear. Their objective was an "emminence" that for them marked the "left" of the

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6. O.R., 19:655, 854, 855, 864.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., pp. 980, 985, 987, 993, 997, 998.

Federal line. When they reached the area of the railroad they deployed, Field's Brigade on the right, Archer in the center, and Pender on the left. As they moved north, Archer's left held to the road that follows the base of Bolivar Heights. When they reached a point near the Federal position and in the shadow of the hill, Archer shifted his brigade to the right. By this time darkness had fallen and the movement halted for the night.[9]

The artillery supporting Hill's Division followed and went into position on a hill about 2 miles south of the works on Bolivar Heights, probably the ridge above today's Millville. Some of the guns fired from there into a woods south of the enemy's works--a futile effort that must not have lasted long. The rifled section of McIntosh's Battery then moved behind the infantry to a point only about 800 yards from the Federal works. Crenshaw's Battery joined him there before dawn along with sections from Braxton's, Pegram's, and Davidson's batteries. Crenshaw's Battery constituted a reserve on the following morning and then relieved Braxton, whose ammunition was exhausted. At the close of the siege Crenshaw and Pegram advanced to positions 400 yards from the Federal line and were there at the time of the surrender.[10]

E. Ewell's Division Deploys

In the meantime Ewell's Division deployed to support Hill on the left. The axis of its advance was the Halltown or Charlestown Road. The division had camped a mile beyond Halltown and its brigades then had moved from the bivouac toward Harpers Ferry in three columns--one on the road and one on each side of it. After passing through Halltown they deployed again and marched to the woods on Schoolhouse Hill. Lawton's and Trimble's brigades went to the right of the road, Hays's to the left, and Early's took up a position in support of Lawton. When they reached the hill, Early's Brigade shifted from the rear of Lawton across the road to the support of Hays's Brigade. The batteries of the division, less Brown, Dement, and Latimer, went into position on each side of the road. Here they remained throughout the night. When morning came Lawton shifted further right toward Hill, but the movement was unnecessary. Surrender came without the need for additional action.[11]

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9. Ibid., pp. 980, 1000, 1004, 1006. Archer said they were 150 yards from the Federal position. If so this was the edge of the abatis that screened the Federal line that developed between Rigby's Battery and the Shenandoah.

10. Ibid., p. 984.

11. Ibid., p. 966.

F. Jones's Operations on the Left

The other division, Jackson's own now under John R. Jones, had two roles. One of its brigades was to guard the left and demonstrate against the enemy's right while the others remained in reserve. Thus, on the morning of the 14th Jones took Winder's Brigade (later known as the Stonewall Brigade), less the 2d Virginia Regiment, which had been detached to provost duty in Martinsburg, and Poague's and Carpenter's batteries to the left. The infantry chased some cavalry from a hill near the Potomac, northwest of Bolivar Heights and in front of the Federal right, and the batteries occupied positions on it. While they fired at the Federals on the 14th, Winder's Brigade rested behind the hill in support. Winder was joined later by Starke's Brigade and Brockenbrough's Battery. Starke had moved by a farm road to the left and had taken a supporting position behind Brockenbrough's Battery, which was probably beyond Elk Run from the hill occupied by Poague. Brockenbrough fired the remainder of the day while Starke's men rested quietly nearby. After darkness Starke moved forward closer to the Potomac and occupied a wooded ridge overlooking the river near a road to Bolivar Heights. His mission was to block that escape route from Harpers Ferry. When morning came Starke's Brigade returned to the support of Brockenbrough's Battery and remained there until the surrender. The remaining brigades--Jones's own and Talliferro's with Wooding's, Caskie's, and Raine's batteries--continued in reserve.[12]

G. Crutchfield Fires from Loudoun Heights

There remains one other Confederate effort to describe. Walker's guns on the crest of Loudoun Heights were particularly effective against the Federal batteries and troops on Camp Hill but, apparently, were not effectively employed otherwise. Their success made it apparent that guns posted on the west slope of Loudoun Heights would be most helpful in support of Hill's attack on the Federal left and the left position on Bolivar Heights. Such guns could pound the Federal left and rear while Ewell's pieces on Schoolhouse Hill fired against the front. Ten guns from the batteries of Brown, Garber, Dement, and Latimer were collected under the direction of Colonel Stapleton Crutchfield. Lieutenant John H. Chamberlayne of Jackson's staff led them south and across the river at Kelly's Ford and back down the east side of the river to a shelf above the Confederate position. It was hard going and required cutting a path over a portion of the route. Their presence was concealed by the morning fog but was known to worried Federal officers to their front.[13]

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12. Ibid., pp. 954, 1011, 1016; Edward A. Moore, The Story of a Cannoneer under Stonewall Jackson (New York: The Neale Publishing Co., 1907), pp. 138-39.

13. O.R., 19:527, 541, 962, 966; Charles Gibson Chamberlayne, Ham Chamberlayne--Virginian (Richmond: Press of the Dietz Printing Co., 1932), p. 109.

VIII. SEPTEMBER 14, 1862, IN THE FEDERAL CAMP

A. Federal Preparations

Sunday, September 14, promised to be a fair fall day after a chilly night. Union pickets were relieved and the routine of camp life set in motion. The men of the 60th Ohio had low morale and it was probably lower still among the short-term regiments and those that had been driven from Maryland Heights. Some temporary lift might have come from the rumor that Miles had sent for help and that reinforcements would arrive that day, but it must have been short-lived.[1]

Artillery fire interrupted the Union garrison's morning routine. Graham's guns dueled with Walker's on Loudoun Heights and by early afternoon Mile's five batteries were exchanging fire with Confederate guns in at least five different locations. This lasted for the rest of the day and Lieutenant Henry M. Binney, Miles's aide, reported that "The cannonade is now terrific; the enemy's shot and shell fall in every direction; houses are demolished and detonation among the hills terrible."[2]

Actually it was more noisy than lethal. Binney's report no doubt reflected the attitude of his comrades, but they had little basis for comparison. Later battles would give some of them better perspective, but on the 14th of September 1863 they were much impressed. The 60th Ohio had an easy time to begin with--they watched shelling from the west, which fell short, and they watched firing from Loudoun Heights, which fell among the cavalry units and trains to the east of them. When it crept toward them they saw the advisability of digging in--possibly the smartest thing they had done since leaving Ohio. The 9th Vermont, or that portion of it then in camp near Rigby's Battery, moved to the west slope of Bolivar Heights to avoid the fire from Loudoun Heights. They were secure there for a time; then Hill's guns appeared near the Charlestown Road in their rear and forced them back to the east side of the ridge.[3]

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1. Charles E. Smith, Diary, Sept. 14, 1862, privately owned. Smith was a member of the 32d Ohio Volunteer Infantry; Louis B. Hull, Diary, Sept. 14, 1862, in Harpers Ferry NHP files. Hull belonged to the 60th Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

2. O.R., 19:538.

3. Hull Diary, Sept. 14, 1862.

Others nearby were less gainfully employed. When the projectiles from Loudoun Heights fell among Ward's command on Camp Hill Colonel Willard of the 125th New York reported that his men "left in considerable disorder" toward the cover of a ravine and were not rallied until late in the afternoon. The 32d Ohio also went to a ravine--"marched" was the word used--to "shun the balls and shells." Reportedly, "they liked the music the balls made but did not like to have the shells cut too close."[4]

B. The Federal Right

On the right the brigade commander, Colonel D'Utassy, was an old soldier and apparently an energetic one. He had been commissioned in the Austrian service 20 years earlier and had been in the Crimean War. Now in another war at Harpers Ferry, he was vocal in his opposition to defeatism and the abandonment of Maryland Heights. He capped a day of unusual effort by issuing an order for rations to be cooked and canteens filled and observed that they might be attacked on the morrow and that their only hope was in conquering the enemy! The brigade's watchword was to be "Victory or Death."[5]

D'Utassy wanted action and urged on a number of occasions that the infantry be permitted to cut its way out of Harpers Ferry. He also wanted to retake Maryland Heights.

At Colonel Daniel Cameron's suggestion he asked and received permission to send a force to Maryland Heights and ordered two companies each of the 65th Illinois and 39th New York under Major John Wood of the 65th to go over. They retraced the steps of the previous day's retreat and climbed the ridge as far as McGrath's Battery's position. There, with little or no interference from the Confederates, they recovered four of the brass fieldpieces spiked and abandoned by McGrath, four caissons (or limbers), and a cart. They also brought off a wagonload of powder and claimed later that had they had a way of carrying it they could have salvaged more. On their return D'Utassy collected the tailors in his brigade and put them to work making powder bags for 12-pounder guns from the 65th Illinois Regiment's woolen drawers.[6]

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4. O.R., 19:560; Smith Diary, Sept. 14, 1862.

5. O.R., 19:599, 628.

6. Ibid., pp. 636, 665.

Colonel D'Utassy was aggressive in other ways too. On his orders Major Hildebrandt took four companies out to reconnoiter. They contacted the enemy before noon, skirmishing with what they believed to be cavalry, and stayed out until after dark.[7]

The firing by Graham and von Sehlen and the shells fired at those batteries no doubt kept the right alert during the day, but after darkness set in the men must have settled down. Shortly after dark Colonel Jesse Segoine of the 111th New York at the left of D'Utassy's Brigade received orders to extend his regiment to the left and did so. It was very dark and there was much stumbling. After the shift was completed and sentinels posted, there was a clattering of horses' hooves on the stones of the slope and some Confederate cavalry dashed among them. The 111th and the riders exchanged fire and the Rebels rode off, leaving five dead New Yorkers behind them.[8]

C. The Federal Left

As indicated in the above account of Confederate activities on September 14, the major threat of the day was against the Union left. There were only limited resources to counter this threat. Colonel Trimble had three regiments near the Halltown Road--two facing west with Rigby's Battery and one, the 9th Vermont, facing south. Beyond the 9th Vermont to the left a gap nearly one half mile in breadth was plugged only by Lieutenant Colonel Downey's 3d Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade.

Miles visited Trimble about mid-afternoon at Rigby's Battery. This apparently was before the Confederate threat became obvious and Miles left without giving Trimble any authority to take appropriate measures in the event of emergency. The test came shortly after when Downey requested reinforcements from Trimble. Trimble did not feel that he could spare his own three regiments and did not have authority to order up help from Camp Hill. Therefore, he sent a courier to look for Miles or White. Miles could not be found and White was ill, so the courier came back without the needed authority. Trimble sent him off a second time to White to tell him of the problem. White appeared shortly thereafter and ordered Downey to be supported by four companies of the 9th Vermont--a stopgap measure necessary because

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7. Ibid., p. 602.

8. Ibid., pp. 683-84. There are no Confederate accounts of these incidents and their casualties are unknown.

the 125th New York, which might have been so used, could not be relied on. Later Miles ordered the 32d Ohio to Downey's support and the 125th New York was also placed in a support position.[9]

The September 14 action on the Federal left lasted until dusk. Confederate reports made little of it, reporting it only as an advance against skirmishers, for to the experienced Confederate general officers it was a small affair. Federal accounts are few and scanty and without details, speaking only of repulses and heavy casualties inflicted on the foe--imaginary casualties by and large. Private Charles E. Smith recorded that the 32d Ohio marched out against the Rebels and fired on them. At dark the Confederates advanced in solid lines, firing heavy volleys that forced the 32d back and badly cut up its Companies A and D.[10]

When the firing died the Federals took stock of the situation and took measures to meet the next day's threat. In an effort to meet the Confederate advance along the Shenandoah Colonel Miles posted the 87th Ohio and a howitzer along the river at or near "Rifle Island." The cannon probably was sited down the railroad track. Colonel Henry B. Banning posted his skirmishers so that they would connect with those of the 3d Regiment on his right.[11]

That regiment was probably Colonel Willard's 125th New York. Two companies of the regiment had supported two of Potts's guns during the afternoon, but after the fighting died at least nine were on line with the regiment, which occupied a ravine on a road leading down to the Shenandoah. Four companies on the left were protected by a fringe of woods, while those on the right were on open ground. Potts's cannons were posted behind the regiment's right.[12]

The 3d Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, was on the 125th's right, and the 9th Vermont was posted beyond it. About midnight, after things had quieted and possibly after the moon's light illuminated the battlefield, Colonel Willard left his regiment and with Colonel Downey and Stannard went to talk with Colonel Trimble. The three

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9. Ibid., pp. 527, 538, 541, 586, 742; G. G. Benedict, Vermont in the Civil War, 2 vols. (Burlington: The Free Press Association 1886-88), p. 195.

10. Smith Diary, Sept. 15, 1862.

11. O.R., 19:538, 548, 586.

12. Ibid., pp. 541, 654.

regimental commanders were worried about the guns that the enemy had placed on Loudoun Heights. These guns would be able to enfilade their lines and make then untenable. Trimble listened to their pleas but told them that they were in the positions ordered by Colonel Miles and that these positions could not be changed. Some slight adjustments were made in the lines of the 3d Maryland and 9th Vermont about 4:00 A.M. and then the infantry awaited its fate.[13]

D. Last Minute Meetings: September 14 and 15

Between Sunday evening and Monday morning there were many worried conversations. At about the time the cavalry was to ride out some infantry officers visited Miles and asked him why the infantry could not go out also. Although there were only two of them and neither was a brigade commander, Miles displayed great patience with them and showed them his last telegram from Halleck--probably that of September 5--which ordered him to hold to the last moment. He said that they still had ammunition and not until it was all gone would he talk of evacuation or surrender! Miles's attitude in this was a constant one--according to others he did not even consider a removal to Maryland Heights consistent with his instructions to hold Harpers Ferry.[14]

About midnight von Sehlen, Graham, Potts, and Rigby also visited Miles. All expressed concern about the batteries that the Confederates were placing in positions to enfilade them. Miles apparently appreciated their position and observed that he expected that Bolivar Heights would be enfiladed the following morning from every direction.[15]

There was one other conference held that night. General White asked Major Henry B. McIlvaine about the possibility of massing the various cannons on one front--somewhere in the area of Rigby's position--and fighting it out there. It was a poor idea born of desperation and could not even be given consideration--there were not enough horses equipped to move the cannons.[16]

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13. Ibid., pp. 541, 561, 562.

14. Ibid., pp. 584, 745.

15. Ibid., p. 584.

16. Ibid., pp. 531, 750.

E. The Cavalry Skedaddles

The Federal force in Harpers Ferry included about 1,500 cavalrymen. The units present were the 8th New York Cavalry and 12th Illinois Cavalry regiments, the 7th Battalion, Rhode Island Cavalry, and Cole's Maryland Cavalry Battalion, two companies of the 1st Maryland Regiment, and a few men of the Loudoun Rangers. Colonel Arno Voss of the 12th Illinois was the ranking cavalry officer present.[17]

The various cavalry units were posted between Bolivar Heights and the rivers, where they might be safe when not engaged. The 7th Rhode Island was in a ravine on Camp Hill facing Loudoun Heights, and the Loudoun Rangers were on Hall Island. The other units were no doubt posted in sheltered areas nearby.[18]

On the night of the 13th Colonel B. F. Davis of the 8th New York and Lieutenant Colonel Hasbrouck Davis of the 12th Illinois spoke to General White about the cavalry riding out of the trap. The two Davises were prime movers in the affair, though Captain Samuel C. Means of the Loudoun Rangers, who knew the country and who feared that he might be hanged as a renegade Virginian if captured, might well have urged the action upon them. After talking with White, the Davises took their proposal to Colonel Miles. They argued that the cavalry was of no use in Harpers Ferry, that there was no forage for the horses, and, if worse came to worse, their horses and their equipment would be handsome prizes for the Confederates.[19]

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17. Ibid., pp. 526, 538; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:613. The strength of the cavalry force was estimated at from 1,500 to 2,000 men. According to morning reports for September 12, the following units had the number of troops indicated on that date: 8 N.Y.C.-614; 7 R.I.C.-146; Cole's Cavalry-127; and 1 Md. C-135. See Consolidated Morning Report of the 3d Brig., Maryland Heights, Sept. 12, 1862. On August 20 the strength of the 12 I.C. was 557 in the Consolidated Report of the 8th Army Corps. All are in the Returns of the Middle Department, NA, RG 94.

18. Goodhart, Loudoun, Virginia Rangers, p. 58; Pettengill, College Cavaliers, p. 73; Henry King Norton, Deeds of Daring or History of the Eighth New York Volunteer Cavalry (Norwich, N.Y.: Chenango Telegraph Printing House, 1889), p. 25; and William H. Nichols III, "The Siege and Capture of Harpers Ferry by the Confederates, September 1862," in Personal Narratives of the Events in the War of the Rebellion Being Papers Read before the Rhode Island Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society, 4th ser., no. 2 (Providence, 1889), p. 31.

19. O.R., II, 526; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:613; and Goodhart, Loudoun, Virginia Rangers, p. 55. Apparently the horses were considered of greater value to the army than the men were to Miles--an interesting commentary.

Miles called a meeting of the cavalry commanders to discuss this proposal. Present were Voss, the Davises, Major A. W. Corliss, and Lieutenant Hanson T. C. Green of the 1st Maryland Cavalry. According to General White, Miles and the Davises exchanged sharp words over the route to be taken. The cavalrymen proposed to ford the Shenandoah and move toward Washington, but Miles vetoed their plan and instead ordered them to cross the pontoon bridge over the Potomac and move north upstream toward Sharpsburg. The news of their departure was to be kept from the infantry to avoid its demoralization and a possible route. Miles ordered the march to begin at 8:30 P.M. on the 14th.[20]

Miles's orders for the march were published in Special Order 120, dated September 14. They stipulated an 8:00 P.M. departure; Voss, as ranking officer, was to command. The troops were to form in Shenandoah Street with their right at the quartermaster's office and the line extending west along the street.[21]

The cavalrymen groomed and fed their horses and prepared for their escape. At dusk they moved as quietly as possible to their places on Shenandoah Street and formed with the Loudoun Rangers and Cole's Battalion on the right, the 12th Illinois and 18th New York next in line, and Companies H and I, 1st Maryland Cavalry, on the far left as the rear guard. They travelled light--their tents, baggage, and a brass band were left behind. At a quiet command they moved to the right in a column of twos behind Lieutenant Green and their civilian guide, Thomas Noakes, and walked their horses across the bridge. As the troops passed up the street they could see someone along the side distributing something to the riders. Some feared that they were being given religious tracts, but the gifts proved to be packages of tobacco. The sutlers, foreseeing doom, were disposing of their stock to their regular customers![22]

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20. O.R., 19:526, 538, 630; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:613; Pettingill, College Cavaliers, p. 81. Miles believed that the cavalry could not safely ford the Shenandoah at Harpers Ferry. He was probably correct, as was learned by General White after the siege. See O.R., 19:718.

21. Pettengill, College Cavaliers, p. 77.

22. William M. Luff, "March of the Cavalry from Harpers Ferry, September 14, 1862," in Military Essays and Recollections, Papers Read Before the Commandery of the State of Illinois, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, 4 vols. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1894), 2:40; Pettengill, College Cavaliers, pp. 77, 78, 82; Norton, Deeds of Daring, p. 28; and O.R., 19:770.

When the pairs of troopers reached the Maryland side of the river they turned left along the road at the base of Maryland Heights, formed a column of fours--or tried to--and moved off as fast as they could go. One company--Company D, 12th Illinois Cavalry--turned right instead and rode toward Sandy Hook until it met Confederate pickets. It then turned around, retraced its steps, and fell in with the column once again.[23]

The column followed the road to Sharpsburg. It moved as fast as possible but the march was difficult. It was so dark that the route was indicated sometimes only by the sparks made by horseshoes striking rocks, and horses collided at unexpected stops. The troopers rode through woods and fields, met and avoided Confederate pickets, passed by Sharpsburg, cut north toward Williamsport, and at dawn captured a Confederate train of 97 wagons. Finally they reached Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and safety and received the only glory that the Federal Army was accorded for the siege of Harpers Ferry in 1862.[24]

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23. Pettengill, College Cavaliers, p. 83; Norton, Deeds of Daring, p. 28.

24. James V. Murfin, Gleam of Bayonets, describes this cavalry exploit in some detail. It is also described by Luff, Pettengill, and Norton in their respective histories previously cited.

IX. SEPTEMBER 15, 1862, AND AFTER

A. The Last Battle

The action began again on the morning of September 15 as soon as targets became visible. Because an autumn mist, probably thickened by smoke, hung over the battlefield, some gunners could not see their targets and fired only in the directions they had fired the day before. Rigby's and Potts's batteries seemed to be the targets for much of the Confederate fire, but in the words of General White they replied "rapidly and well." Lieutenant Leek's section of Graham's Battery on Camp Hill also recieved special mention for the good work it did that day.[1]

This firing went on for about an hour, until Phillips's and von Sehlen's guns ran out of ammunition, as did Graham's 20-pounder Parrotts on Bolivar Heights. Soon only Potts and Rigby continued their performance in this one-sided affair.[2]

While the cannons fired, the Federal infantry took such cover as they could find and awaited their fate. The regiments near the prime targets--the batteries of Rigby and Potts--were especially vulnerable.

Fortunately, the 60th Ohio had the shelter of a shallow trench but the 32d Ohio, which had no such protection, lost many men. The 126th New York also took its share of the pounding and eight or ten of its men were killed together in a ditch. The 9th Vermont was in a peach orchard on the line of fire between Crutchfield's guns and Rigby's Battery and received some of Crutchfield's fire plus sabots flying off Rigby's round shot. In an attempt to protect his men from this double threat and also to keep their minds occupied, Colonel Stannard marched his regiment forward and back, in an out of the target area.[3]

In the better tradition of the Civil War the ranking officers continued to make themselves conspicuous. White and Trimble both road their horses in sight of the troops. Trimble remarked that

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1. Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:613; O.R., 19:527, 528, 539, 548.

2. O.R., 19:548.

3. Smith Diary, Sept. 15, 1862; Hull Diary, Sept. 15, 1862; and Benedict, Vermont, p. 196.

he had ridden along the line of the 126th New York and 60th Ohio to make sure that those regiments were in readiness to meet an attack. He observed that it was too dangerous a place for a man on horseback to stop to make a "particular investigation," for the air was full of missiles and he preferred riding to standing still.[4]

Shortly before daybreak on Monday, September 15, Colonel Miles and his aides, Lieutenants Henry M. Binney and John L. Willmon, rode out to Bolivar Heights.

As they approached the infantry lines the Confederate batteries opened fire in a greeting that was a harbinger of things to come. They first visited the plateau east of Rigby's position and found General White already there directing the positioning of two cannons--probably guns of Potts's Battery. They tarried there for a few minutes and then rode down to the right of the line where they dismounted and climbed to the top of the ridge. While there they met Captains Phillips and von Sehlen, who reported that their ammunition was expended. They then rode south and met General White again.[5]

B. The Surrender

At this meeting Miles told White that he had learned about the supply of artillery ammunition. He expressed his fears about the Confederates' ability to enfilade the entire position and his concerns for his men. He apparently voiced the necessity of a surrender, but White was reluctant to respond directly. Instead White suggested that a council of war be held before such an action was taken. Miles assented to the suggestion, and Binney rode off to get Trimble and Willmon to summon D'Utassy.[6]

The officers gathered on the slope of Bolivar Heights with shot and shell falling around them. True to form, D'Utassy urged that they cut their way out--a rather impractical suggestion considering the forces involved and their deployment. Miles declared this was nonsense--it was too late for such an action. According to D'Utassy's recollection Miles stated that he had pretty well made up his mind already, but that at White's suggestion he had called them together. Trimble, as the junior officer present, was asked to speak first.

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4. O.R., 19:749.

5. Ibid., p. 584.

6. Ibid., pp. 584-85.

Trimble replied that, in his opinion, only surrender was possible under the circumstances. (Later he testified that he believed that they could not have held out longer than an hour.) D'Utassy then spoke again and said that he would not surrender as long as he had a cannon shot. Miles became impatient with him again, cursed, and asked how many shots he had. To find out, D'Utassy sent for von Schlen and Phillips, while the rest bided their time. From these two they learned what Miles had already known--these two supporting batteries had only three rounds! D'Utassy then said that he would surrender only on honorable conditions.[7]

At this Miles turned to White and asked him to go out and make terms. D'Utassy again chimed in to remind White that he would surrender only on honorable conditions--namely, if his officers could retain their side arms and if the men would not have to file through enemy lines--perhaps as the British were forced to do at Yorktown. White, with some impatience, remarked that he expected to do better than that and rode off to treat with the enemy.[8]

As the small group broke up they displayed white cloths. Soon there were white flags everywhere. On being criticized for this by nearby infantry Miles remarked that the white flags were only a request for a cessation of hostilities. The Confederate fire appeared to stop at this time, but 15 minutes later it resumed.[9]

D'Utassy's men soon learned that the truce meant their surrender. On his return to his brigade D'Utassy ordered his men to remove the nipples and locks from their rifles (at least the nipples) and to get rid of them so that the rifles could not be used again. He also ordered them to remove their flags from their staffs and turn them over to him. Later he explained that he was within his rights to do this because White had not yet talked with the Confederates.[10]

In an amendment to his official report, White outlined the following reasons (paraphased below) for surrendering:

a. The loss of Maryland Heights and its occupation by the enemy in a force superior to their own. [This was a false assumption.]

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7. Ibid., pp. 539, 594.

8. Ibid., p. 599.

9. Ibid., pp. 539, 585; Hull Diary, Sept. 15, 1862.

10. O.R., 19:599, 606.

b. Their long range artillery ammunition was expended.

c. The hope of reinforcement had gone. [This was also a false assumption.]

d. The strength of the enemy in their front, exclusive of the forces on Maryland and Loudoun heights, was double their own, and the strength of the enemy in artillery was still greater.

e. There appeared no good object to be obtained by the additional sacrifice of life without a reasonable hope of success.

f. The vote of the council of war was unanimous in the opinion that further resistance was useless.

In later years he added the following reasons for the surrender:

a. The commanding officer had lost confidence in their ability to defend the place.

b. There was no reason to believe that their attenuated line could withstand the enemy's assault.

c. Their geographical position was inferior to that of the Confederates.

d. The loss of life occasioned by awaiting an assault could not be justified.[11]

The Confederates did not see the white flags immediately, and their cannons thundered after Federal resistance ceased. Miles and his aides were walking down the slope of Bolivar Heights to their horses when a shell exploded behind them. A fragment struck Miles in the left leg, tore the flesh away, and created a mortal wound. Binney applied a handkerchief as a tourniquet and wrapped Miles in a blanket. He then ordered six men to carry him to an ambulance. Thus Miles left the field.[12]

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11. Ibid.; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:613-14.

12. O.R., 19:539.

The Confederate guns opened fire again after Miles was wounded. A Confederate horseman, perhaps Lieutenant Chamberlayne of Jackson's staff, finally signaled the batteries to cease fire by waving a Confederate flag as he rode through the Federal camp.[13]

In the interval between the decision to capitulate and the acceptance of terms the Union garrison made ready to surrender. D'Utassy's men completed the sabotage of their rifles; when orders came to hoist a white flag, D'Utassy drew his men up in a line of battle, ordered them to stack arms, and awaited the arrival of the Confederates. Some of Trimble's men did the same but, it may be assumed, without the flair exhibited by D'Utassy's Brigade. Many men broke their arms and could not stack them.

One of Trimble's regiments, the 9th Vermont, tried to avoid the whole thing. Colonel Stannard marched his regiment down to the Shenandoah and hurried at the double-quick toward the pontoon bridge at Harpers Ferry. Someone caught him near the bridge before he was able to cross and forced him back to Bolivar Heights and surrender.[14]

In the meantime General White was on his way to see Stonewall Jackson. After making himself presentable he rode out the Charlestown Turnpike with a staff of unknown size and composition. Near the crest of Bolivar Heights--probably on the west slope--he met Henry Kyd Douglas of Jackson's staff, whom Jackson had sent forward to ascertain the meaning of the flags of truce. Douglas escorted White to Jackson and on the way they were joined by A. P. Hill.[15]

The contrast in appearance between Jackson and White pleased Douglas. Jackson, he recalled, was the "dingiest, worst-dressed, and worst-mounted general," while White rode a handsome black horse, was carefully dressed, and had untarnished gloves, boots, and sword. The terms were unconditional surrender, with A. P. Hill being given the task of handling the surrender details.[16]

These details reflected both generosity and, perhaps, haste. The garrison was paroled, not to serve again until regularly exchanged.

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13. Hull Diary, Sept. 15, 1862.

14. O.R., 19:599; Hull Diary, Sept. 15, 1862; Benedict, Vermont, p. 197.

15. Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:626.

16. Ibid.

Individuals were permitted to keep personal property and officers were allowed to keep their side arms. The enlisted men kept their blankets and overcoats, and each regiment received the loan of two wagons to haul baggage and other property. Refugees found within the town were permitted to return to their homes unmolested.[17]

Apparently the Confederates did not intend that the provision covering refugees apply to blacks who were present as employees of the various Union regiments. When Trimble learned of this he spoke to General Jackson, who referred him to Hill. Trimble immediately ordered the blacks with the units under his command to the interior of the regimental areas, where they were placed under guard, and then went to see Hill. After waiting some time--D'Utassy was bending Hill's ear about five horses--Trimble talked with Hill. Hill permitted all blacks identified by Trimble to be given passes. These were obtained, but the next day, when the 60th Ohio marched out, a Confederate major attempted to separate its blacks from it. At this Trimble drew his pistol, ordered the major to step aside, and marched his men and camp followers over the pontoon bridge to Maryland.[18]

C. The Aftermath

After the surrender terms had been agreed upon the Confederates took possession of Harpers Ferry. One man thought he saw Stonewall Jackson among them riding a dun horse and "dressed very common." He thought Jackson's soldiers were the dirtiest and greasiest men he had ever seen. They fraternized freely and rather than confiscate individual equipment or property sought to buy or trade it. Strangely enough the sutler of the 60th Ohio was also not molested and gave his wares to the regiment so that the Rebels would not get them.[19]

One of those who entered the Union camp was Sergeant John H. Worsham of the 21st Virginia. Worsham alone climbed the hill soon after the surrender, stepped over the breastworks, and found himself surrounded by Union soldiers who eagerly inquired what Jackson was going to do with them. He no doubt made an appropriate reply and then proceeded to confiscate a pistol that struck his fancy. Spying some tents with a horse tethered nearby, he went over and untied and mounted the animal. At this point he was interrupted by a Union colonel who stepped from a tent and politely informed him of the terms of surrender, which, of course, placed his horse off limits to Sergeant Worsham. Worsham acceded gracefully, gave the horse back, and in turn

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17. O.R., 19:528; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:614.

18. Whitelaw Reid, Ohio in the War, 2 vols. (Columbus: Eclectic Publishing Co., 1893), 1:360.

19. Smith Diary, Sept. 15 and 16, 1862.

was invited into the tent for "lunch as he called it." Worsham did not report the colonel's name but was pleased to note that he had several bottles on the table.[20]

Leaving Hill's Division behind to supervise the surrender, Jackson set out for Sharpsburg immediately, by way of Shepherdstown, with the other divisions of his corps. Walker followed, crossing the Shenandoah above the town and moving on to Shepherdstown. McLaws covered their withdrawal in Pleasant Valley, sent his trains over the pontoon bridge toward Shepherdstown, and followed on the night of the 16th. Hill remained in Harpers Ferry until the morning of the 17th when he too marched away, leaving only Thomas's Brigade behind to take care of last details. Hill was able to report the capture of 11,000 men, 12,000 arms, and the loss of three men killed and eight wounded.[21]

Once their paroles were completed the Federal units were also free to leave, as long as they did not obstruct the Confederate departure. In fact, White testified later that he and A. P. Hill discussed the Union regiments' fording the Shenandoah and marching to Washington down the Virginia side of the Potomac, because they might leave sooner that way and run less chance of running out of rations. Hill and White went out to check the possible fords nearby and used a mounted man to test the depth of the water. They gave up the fording idea when the horseman went into a hole and almost drowned.[22]

In the meantime Lieutenant Binney saw that Miles was carried into town and made as comfortable as possible. While awaiting death Miles thought of the siege and was considerate enough to name those whom he knew personally to be deserving of special credit. Those mentioned were General White, Major McIlvaine, Captains McGrath and Graham, Lieutenant Barras, the orderly sergeant of von Sehlen's Battery, and a sergeant in Graham's Battery. He gave special credit to everyone in Rigby's, Potts's, and Phillips's batteries for courage "displayed against tremendous odds of guns and position."

Of his own role he remarked that "He had done his duty, he was an old soldier and willing to die." He thought that they had done well against an army of 40,000 (the Confederate strength must have been

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20. John H. Worsham, One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry, ed. James L. Robertson, Jr. (Jackson, Tenn.: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1964), p. 85.

21. O.R., 19:855, 856, 914, 955, 981.

22. Ibid., p. 718.

closer to 25,000), and he could not understand why the government had been so slow in coming to his aid. Colonel Miles died at 4:30 P.M. on September 16 without knowing of the charges to be made against him. He was buried on the following day in Baltimore's Sweet Air Cemetery. On the same day one of Miles's soldiers noted in a diary that his men believed that he was a traitor at heart and had sold out his command to the Rebels.[23]

The 12,000 Union soldiers collected by Hill spent the night of their surrender in their camps receiving their paroles and watching their captors march by on their way to a rendezvous with Lee and McClellan at Sharpsburg. On the following morning, as Hill marched west, they trudged down to the pontoon bridge to await their turns to cross over to Maryland. Private Louis B. Hull of the 60th Ohio wrote that it made them feel ashamed to parade before the enemy without arms.[24]

The paroled regiments and batteries hiked east to Frederick and then on to Annapolis. They saw the Stars and Stripes flying in Maryland's towns, and the 32d Ohio marched through Frederick behind its band. The exhausted Harpers Ferry garrison reached Annapolis on the 21st and went into camp.[25]

On the 23d the camp began to break up. Some of the regiments and batteries with time to serve traveled by boat to Baltimore and by rail to Chicago's Camp Douglas, where they marked time and raised hell until they were exchanged. The New York batteries and Maryland regiments awaited their paroles in Maryland. Once they were exchanged some short-term units, such as the 60th Ohio, were mustered out and went home. Others, including the 32d Ohio and 126th New York, continued in service until the end of the war.

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23. Ibid., p. 450; Smith Diary, Sept. 16, 1862.

24. Hull Diary, Sept. 16, 1862; Smith Diary, Sept. 16, 1862.

25. Smith Diary, September 1862; O.R., 19:801.

X. THE HARPERS FERRY MILITARY COMMISSION

The War Department regarded the surrender of Harpers Ferry with disfavor and acted quickly to fix the blame. On September 23 Lorenzo Thomas, the Adjutant General, met formally with the commanders of the Harpers Ferry regiments and asked each separately: "Did you advise the surrender at Harpers Ferry to Colonel Miles or any other officer or were you consulted in reference to its surrender; and, if so, what opinions did you give?"

Each officer replied in the negative, and all were offered an opportunity to answer further questions at a later date.[1]

On the same day the Adjutant General notified General Halleck that he had ordered General Wool in Baltimore to arrest General White and send him to Washington. He went on to inform Halleck that Ford, Trimble, and D'Utassy would be arrested too. McClellan wired Halleck that Captain (Colonel) B. F. Davis should be brevetted a major in the Regular Army for "conspicuous conduct . . . in the withdrawal of the cavalry from Harpers Ferry."[2]

There was other action too. Assistant Adjutant General E. D. Townsend issued a special order for a special commission to assemble in Washington at 11 A.M. on September 25. The officers detailed to this commission were Major Generals David Hunter and George Cadwalader, Brigadier General C. C. Augur, and Captains Donn Piatt and F. Bell, Jr. Colonel Joseph Holt was appointed judge advocate. This commission convened on the 25th, 26th, and 29th without being informed officially of its business. It was sworn in on the 30th and informed that it was to investigate "the circumstances attending the late evacuation of Maryland Heights . . . and the subsequent surrender of Harpers Ferry. . . ."[3]

The commission met and, with the arrested officers present, interviewed numerous participants associated with events at Harpers Ferry. Its members quizzed their witnesses for facts and opinions, at times asking persons who seemingly would have had little basis for judgment.

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1. O.R., 19:553, 554.

2. Ibid., p. 802.

3. Ibid., pp. 549-51.

They sought to find out who was responsible for the abandonment of Maryland Heights. They probed for evidence of Miles's incompetency, they sought to learn whether he had been drunk or sober during the siege, and they sought evidence of his suspected disloyalty. They seemed to be looking for a scapegoat, of which there were plenty to be had.

The commission met through the month of October. The testimony published in the Official Records occupied 140 pages. On November 3 the commission adopted a report that reviewed the events associated with the surrender and commented on the principals in the affair. It was clear to the commission that Ford had:

> conducted the defense without ability, and abandoned his position without sufficient cause, and has shown throughout such a lack of military capacity as to disqualify him . . . for a command in the service.[4]

They were easier on most of the other subordinates. They found no fault with Trimble and D'Utassy and believed that White merited approbation. However, they viewed Major Baird's conduct with disfavor and recommended that for his bad conduct he be dismissed from the service. They also found the behavior of the green 126th New York disgraceful, though they believed that Lieutenant Barras and some other officers might have behaved gallantly.[5]

They had much to say about Colonel Miles, whom they believed was entitled to the "tenderest care and the most careful investigation." They observed that "his incapacity, amounting almost to imbecility, led to the surrender of this important post."[6]

As examples of Miles's incapacity they noted that he had disobeyed General Wool in not fortifying Maryland Heights and that, knowing it was the key to his position, he had placed it in full charge of Ford instead of giving it to General White. To complicate matters he had released Confederate prisoners of war who knew the weaknesses in Harpers Ferry's defense and who would take this word straight to the enemy. They went on to observe that it was not necessary to accumulate instances of wrongdoing against Miles because the mass of evidence scarcely brought out one fact in his favor.[7]

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4. Ibid., p. 798.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 799.

7. Ibid., p. 800.

The commission did not confine its remarks to the officers at hand. They observed that Wool was guilty of placing Miles in command at Harpers Ferry and deserved censure. They also implied censure of McClellan, on the basis of Halleck's testimony, for not relieving Harpers Ferry which, they believed, he could have done.[8]

The matter came to an official end with the publication of General Order No. 183, dated November 8, 1862. By this order Colonel Ford and Major Baird were dismissed from the service and the military commission was dissolved.[9]

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8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 803.

XI. EPILOGUE

The siege and capture of Harpers Ferry was hardly more than an incident in the history of the Army of Northern Virginia. It had little impact on the careers of the Confederates who were there and was of but little moment when compared with the battles of Second Manassas and Antietam--the milestones of Lee's Maryland Campaign.

It was otherwise for the defeated Union soldiers. For those who cared it was an experience to overcome, explain way, or try to forget. The men of the short-term regiments--the 60th and 87th Ohio and the 12th New York State Militia--were mustered out and disappeared from view with little satisfaction of a job well done. The other regiments had to continue their service and overcome the stigma of their wholesale surrender.

Of these latter troops, the 3d Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, probably had the most prosaic service. It guarded the Potomac Valley and the B & O Railroad, fought at the battle of Monocacy, and spent the last year of the war in Harpers Ferry. The 1st Regiment had a more memorable time because its service included participation in the Battle of Gettysburg with Lockwood's Brigade on Culps Hill.

Three regiments went on to serve with the western armies. The 65th Illinois marched with Sherman to Atlanta, fought in the battles of Franklin and Nashville, and served with Sherman again in the Carolinas. The 115th New York was also with Sherman in the Carolinas but served previously with Butler's army in Virginia. The 32d Ohio, Colonel Ford's regiment, joined Grant's army at Vicksburg after its exchange, helped in the capture of that city, and then marched with Sherman through Georgia and the Carolinas. Captain Potts, whose battery had done so well on Maryland Heights, became the 32d's colonel and went on to become a brigadier general. Captain Hibbetts, who had performed so well on Maryland Heights, succeeded Potts as colonel.[1]

Five Harpers Ferry regiments, in addition to the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, fought with the Army of the Potomac and did conspicuous work at Gettysburg. Colonel Stannard of the 9th Vermont

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1. The service of the various regiments is summarized in Dyer's Compendium. See also Reid, Ohio in the War, 1:215, 216; 2:898-900.

commanded a Vermont brigade there that included his regiment. This was the brigade that wheeled from its position on Cemetery Ridge against the right of Pickett's column on July 3 and contributed greatly to the repulse of that Confederate charge. Four New York regiments--the 39th, 111th, 125th, and 126th--fought as a brigade in the 2d Corps at Gettysburg under Colonel Willard of the 125th. They fought well on July 2d and again against North Carolina brigades during Pickett's Charge. When Willard was killed at Gettysburg Colonel Sherrill of the 126th replaced him. Sherrill, whose wound in the face contributed so much to the demoralization of his regiment on Maryland Heights, received a ball in the abdomen on Cemetery Ridge and died. This time, however, victory replaced panic and erased the stigma of Harpers Ferry.

Fate dealt in various ways with some of the key Union officers at Harpers Ferry who survived the siege. Colonel Ford's political influence in the Republican party worked to his advantage and President Lincoln reinstated him. Ford did not serve again, however; instead he became the Superintendent of Public Printing and a temperance leader.[2] He died in 1868 and his body was returned to Ohio for burial.

Ford's second-in-command, Major Hewitt, resigned his commission in January 1863 and resumed his career as a physician. In 1864 he returned to service as the surgeon of the 136th Ohio Regiment and served with it until the end of the war, when he again returned to the practice of medicine.[3]

Two officers of the 126th New York who had special prominence at Harpers Ferry had constrasting fates. The adjutant, Lieutenant Samuel Barras, was highly commended for his role by the commission, while Major William Baird was cashiered. Baird secured reinstatement in December 1862, about a month after his dismissal, and went on to demonstrate his worth. He became a lieutenant colonel in November 1863, was cited for gallant conduct in February 1864, and gave final lie to aspersions on his character when he was killed in action on February 1864 near Petersburg. Barras, on the other hand, resigned his commission in December 1862 and returned to the shoemaker's trade. He was not successful and moved from place to place suffering ill health all the while. He requested a pension for disability, but his claim was rejected. He died in 1885 from "dissolute habits," one of

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2. A. A. Graham, History of Richland County, Ohio, pp. 703-4.

3. Pension Records, Sylvester M. Hewitt, 32d O.V.I., NA, RG 79.

which apparently was opium eating. Even his widow was denied a pension as late as 1891.[4]

The careers of two brigade commanders also ended on different notes. Colonel William H. Trimble, age 52, son of a governor, a man of prominence and means, and a successful brigade commander before Harpers Ferry, fell from his horse soon after the march to Annapolis and was injured in the fall. His service ended when the 60th Ohio was mustered out and he returned to his farm near Hillsboro, Ohio. His biographer, undoubtedly with his concurrence, wrote in depth of Harpers Ferry in a brief biographical sketch, a sign that neither Trimble nor his neighbors had become reconciled to what had happened there.[5]

Colonel D'Utassy, exponent of combat and military honor, was court-martialed early in 1863 for many things, all blanketed under the charge of "conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline." Some specific charges of which the court found him guilty were: opening the mail of others in his regiment, falsifying his regiment's accounts, and selling the commission of major in the 39th to Captain Charles Wiegand. For all of this D'Utassy was cashiered and sentenced to a year in prison--Sing-Sing as it turned out--a tragic ending for one so active in the theater of war.[6]

One prominent officer emerged from the shame of Harpers Ferry without apparent stigma. General White, who "with a magnanimity equal to his valor" had waived his rank and right (and responsibility) to command at Harpers Ferry in favor of Colonel Miles, received plaudits from both Miles and the military commission.[7] White went on to command a division of the 23d Corps in Burnside's Army of the Ohio at Knoxville, Tennessee, served as his chief of staff in Virginia, and succeeded to the command of the 1st Division, 9th Corps, after the action at The Crater at Petersburg. After the war White was active in veterans' affairs in Illinois, though he was not especially successful in busines. He achieved immortality of a sort by writing "The Capitulation of Harpers Ferry," later published in volume 2 of Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. In this article he stated that

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4. Pension Records, Samuel M. Barras, 126th N.Y.V.I., and William H. Baird, 126th N.Y.V.I., NA, RG 79; O.R., 19:798, 803.

5. The Biographical Encyclopedia of Ohio of the Nineteenth Century (Cincinnati: Galaxy Publishing Co., 1876), pp. 593-94.

6. Service Records, Frederick G. D'Utassy, NA, RG 79; Frederick Phisterer, New York in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865, 3rd ed., 5 vols. (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1912), 3:2200.

7. O.R., 19:525, 798.

> The force under Jackson could have carried the place by assault within an hour after his arrival before it, or at any time thereafter prior to the surrender, in spite of any resistance which under the circumstances could have been made.[8]

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8. Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Blue, Lives of the Union Commanders (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), pp. 556-57; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:615.

XII. MAP: TROOP POSITIONS, SEPTEMBER 13, 1862

This map (p. 73) depicts troop positions on September 13, the day of heavy fighting on Maryland Heights and the day of the evacuation of Maryland Heights by the Federal forces.

The units on Maryland Heights are those believed there at the time of the climax of the fighting during the early afternoon of September 13. Those units under McLaws's command that were not on the heights were spread across the valley and on the Blue Ridge to the east. The Federal forces not there were in the Harpers Ferry area south of the Potomac.

Walker's Division occupied Loudoun Heights and guarded the approaches to Harpers Ferry in Loudoun County. Jackson's Corps was approaching Harpers Ferry and was closing into the Halltown area immediately to the west. The Confederate ring around the threatened Union garrison was closing.

The troop positions and movements are described grid by grid below.

A8 Reed's and Carlton's Batteries. These batteries, if not other batteries of Cabell's and Saunder's battalions, must have accompanied McLaws's and Anderson's divisions into Pleasant Valley because portions of them were available on the following day. They are reported to have had 3 and 5 guns respectively. Their exact positions at any time on this day are unknown. (O.R., 19:804, 836, 864.)

A9 Featherston's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 2d Mississippi Battalion and the 12th, 16th, and 19th Mississippi regiments. Its exact location is unknown. It must be inferred from McLaws's report that it was in Pleasant Valley with him. (Ibid., pp. 804, 853.)

A9 Wilcox's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th Georgia regiments under the temporary command of Colonel Alfred Cumming. Its exact location was not reported. On the 14th this brigade was sent back to guard the South Mountain gaps with Semmes, Cobb, and Mahone. (Ibid., pp. 853, 854.)

A9 Cabell's Battalion, Longstreet's Corps. This battalion was composed of Manly's, Read's, Carlton's, Macon's, and McCarthy's batteries. Read and Carlton apparently accompanied Barksdale and Kershaw. At least one battery remained with Semmes. The location of the remainder is unknown. (Ibid., p. 864.)

A9 Saunders's Battalion, Longstreet's Corps. This battalion was composed of Maurin's, Huger's, Moorman's, and Thompson's batteries. It supported Anderson's Division. The disposition of its batteries is unknown. (Ibid., p. 804.)

A11 Wright's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 44th Alabama and the 3d, 22d, and 48th Georgia regiments. According to McLaws's report this brigade and two cannons from an unidentified battery advanced south along the Blue Ridge to a point overlooking Weverton. (Ibid., p. 853.)

B7 Kershaw's Brigade, McLaws's Division, Longstreet's Corps.

Composed of the 2d, 3d, 7th, and 8th South Carolina regiments. Deployed in two lines--the 8th and 7th regiments in the first line, the 8th on the right, with the 3d and 2d behind them, the 3d supporting the 8th. It confronted the Union force here, separated from them by the Federal breastwork and felled trees. When the final attack was made the 3d pushed to the left over the 7th. (Ibid., pp. 803, 863, 867.)

B7 Barksdale's Brigade, McLaws's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 13th, 17th, 18th, and 21st regiments. Followed and supported Kershaw's Brigade down Elk Ridge on the 12th. On the morning of the 13th was formed in two lines on the east slope of the ridge as an extension of Kershaw's Brigade. The 17th regiment must have been on the right of Barksdale's first line. It attacked the Federal right. (Ibid., pp. 803, 863.)

B7 Abatis and Breastwork. Erected by the Federal troops on September 13th, the breastwork was said to have been about 1,200 feet north of the observation tower. Its right was on a rocky precipice, its left faded off among the trees on the west slope. It was made of logs and was described as having been only "slight." Trees were felled about 100 yards in front of it. Unfortunately, its actual location is unknown today. (Ibid., pp. 543, 569, 570, 608, 614, 672, 710, 772, 863, 867.)

B7 126th New York Volunteer Infantry. The largest Federal unit behind the work extended entirely along it and beyond it on the left. The regiment numbered about 600 men. It was probably formed in a single line behind the breastwork and could have had a front of 1,000 feet. (Willson, Disaster, p. 59; O.R., 19:608, 672, 727.)

B7 3d Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Four companies numbering about 250 men were posted here. They probably occupied a segment of the Union line on the right side of the works. After being forced back they re-formed behind the observation tower. (O.R., 19:607, 614.)

B7 32d Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Four companies of the regiment, about 250 men, fought from behind the breastwork. One had fallen back from the front and three had come up from the battery with Colonel S. W. Downey. (Ibid., pp. 542, 572.)

B7 39th New York Volunteer Infantry. Three companies numbering about 150 men were probably posted on the right of the line. (Ibid., pp. 601, 602.)

B7 1st Maryland Volunteer Cavalry. Two dismounted companies, H and I, about 130 men under Captain C. H. Russell, fell back to the breastwork from the skirmish line. They were probably posted near the road. (Ibid., pp. 602, 728.)

B7 Observation Tower (observatory.) This tower consisted principally of a crib of logs and was from 15 to 25 feet high. It was located on the highest point near the south end of Elk Ridge or Maryland Heights. It proved to be a natural reference point and gathering place on Maryland Heights and during the fighting served as a command post of sorts for Major Hewitt of the 32d Ohio. (Ibid., p. 772.)

B7 Picket Line. Consisted of Company G, 126th New York; two companies of the 1st Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade; one company of the 32d Ohio; and two companies of the 39th New York. The line extended from the point of the high ground possibly 1,000 feet south of the tower to the breastwork. Company G, 126th New York, was located near the breastwork; the two companies of the Maryland Regiment, 1st Potomac Home Brigade, were between Company G and the tower; Crumbecker's Company of the 32d Ohio was south of the observatory; and two companies of the 39th New York were probably posted in support near the tower. (Ibid., pp. 542, 602, 613; Willson, Disaster, pp. 59-60.)

B8 Cobb's Brigade, McLaws's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 16th and 24th Georgia regiments, Cobb's Legion, and the 15th North Carolina Regiment. Cobb's Brigade paced Kershaw's line at the base of Maryland Heights to support him if needed. Occupied Sandy Hook on the 13th. Sent to the rear to guard gaps on the 14th. (O.R., 19:853-54.)

B9 Armistead's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 9th, 14th, 38th, 53d, and 57th Virginia regiments. Moved down Pleasant Valley under McLaws to the Sandy Hook area. (Ibid., pp. 853, 855.)

B11 Pryor's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 14th Alabama, 2d and 8th Florida, and 3d Virginia regiments. Posted by Anderson to cover the gap at Weverton. Exact position unknown. It probably had some artillery support, but such support is not recorded. (Ibid., p. 853.)

C6 115th New York Infantry. Eight companies of the 115th moved to a "knob" about 500 yards north of the battery about noon on the 13th and remained there until the evacuation. (Ibid., p. 625.)

C6 Camp and Battery Area. Ford's provisional brigade occupied a plateau on the shoulder of Maryland Heights on both sides of the road to the crest and east of the road extending north along the shoulder of the ridge. This campsite had included the position of McGrath's Battery, the camp of Ford's provisional brigade, some hospital tents, a good spring, and a two-story frame house used by Colonel Ford for quarters and a headquarters. All told, the camp area might have encompassed as much as 25 acres of cleared or partially cleared land. (Snell, "Federal Fortifications," pp. 8-9.)

C6 McGrath's Battery. On September 13 this battery was armed with two 9-inch guns, one 15-inch gun, and four bronze fieldpieces, probably Napoleons. It had a field of fire of about 100 yards up the ridge and an unrestricted fire along the Potomac. It had some fortifications. The position of its guns is not a matter of record. (O.R., 19:69.)

C6 7th Squadron, Rhode Island Volunteer Cavalry. This unit of two companies camped here before the battle and was in this area until immediately before the withdrawal. Its exact position is not known. (Pettengill, College Cavaliers, pp. 67-69.)

C6 32d Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Two companies were posted near McGrath's Battery to support it. Probably they were formed as a provost guard with other companies there. (O.R., 19:542, 602.)

C6 39th New York Volunteer Infantry. Two companies under Major Hildebrandt were posted at the battery to support it and to act as a provost guard. (Ibid., pp. 581, 602.)

C6 126th New York Volunteer Infantry. Company A was detached from the regiment and posted somewhere on the slope in this area. Its position, though unknown, was probably near the battery. (Willson, Disaster, p. 59.)

C6 115th New York Volunteer Infantry. Two companies were detached from the regiment and posted near the battery. (O.R., 19:625.)

C6 Colonel Ford's Headquarters. Located in a two-story house, which belonged to a Mrs. Buckle. (Ibid., pp. 719, 741.)

C7 Picket Line. See B7.

C7 Downey's Line. After the retreat from the breastwork Major Grafflin of the 3d Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, formed a line behind the tower about 400 yards from it. The line was composed of a mixture of units. (O.R., 19:615-20.)

D4 Graham's Battery. Posted at the north end of Bolivar Heights behind a slight work. There were two guns in this position, a 20-pounder Parrott and a Napoleon. Both were firing east. (Ibid., pp. 547, 661.)

D5 Potts's Battery. One section of two Napoleons fired on Maryland Heights. The precise position is not described. (Ibid., pp. 547, 556, 653, 655.)

D5 12th New York Infantry Regiment (Militia). This regiment contained about 500 men and was posted on Camp Hill. (Ibid., p. 731.)

D5 Breastwork, Camp Hill. These works composed "of a face and two bastions" fronted west and included the Barbour House behind the left bastion. (Ibid., p. 765; Snell, "Federal Fortifications," p. 5.)

D6 Harpers Ferry. The town of Harpers Ferry included the remains of the arsenal, a hospital, and other facilities supporting the Federal effort. Colonel Ford's headquarters is believed to have been in Building Number 36. (Snell, "Fortifications at Harpers Ferry," p. 97.)

D7 Potts's Battery. Two sections of two 3-inch rifles each were in position to cover the approach to Harpers Ferry from the east. One section was on the Maryland side of the river, one on the Virginia side near the railroad. (O.R., 19:526, 538, 547, 556-58.)

D7 87th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment. This unit of about 1,000 men was posted near the head of the pontoon bridge on the Maryland side of the river. Its exact position is unknown. (Ibid., pp. 526, 557.)

D8 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Five companies of this regiment under Colonel Maulsby guarded the eastern approaches to Harpers Ferry and were pulled back to the bridges on the 12th. Their precise position there is unknown. (Ibid.)

D8 Manning's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. It was composed of the 3d Arkansas, the 27th, 46th, and 48th North Carolina, and the 30th Virginia regiments and was supported by French's Battery. The 27th North Carolina was sent to Loudoun Heights; the remainder of the brigade was posted to block the escape route from Harpers Ferry. French's Battery was armed with three 10-pounder Parrotts and three 12-pounder howitzers. The exact position is unknown. (Ibid., p. 913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:608.)

D9 Ransom's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 24th, 25th, 35th, and 49th North Carolina regiments and Branch's Battery of one 10-pounder Parrott, two 3-inch rifles, and three 12-pounder howitzers. The brigade was placed in position to guard the escape route from Harpers Ferry. Its exact position is unknown. (O.R., 19:913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:608.)

E4 D'Utassy's Brigade. Composed of the 39th New York, 65th Illinois, and 111th and 115th New York regiments. Present on Bolivar Heights were three companies of the 39th New York, the 65th Illinois (750 men), and the 111th New York (950 men). Some, perhaps as many as 10 percent of this force, were probably out as skirmishers near the road to the front (D3, E3). The exact positions of units on this line are unknown. (O.R., 19:526, 533, 601, 631, 683.)

E4 Phillips's Battery. Armed with four 6-pounder guns. Posted on Bolivar Heights south of Graham. Exact position unknown. Probably fired toward Maryland Heights. (Ibid., pp. 547, 684.)

E4 Von Sehlen's Battery. Posted south of Phillips's Battery on Bolivar Heights near the right center of the position. Armed with six 3-inch rifles. Probably fired to the east. (Ibid., pp. 547, 664, 666.)

E5 125th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Composed of 900 men. Posted on the plateau west of Camp Hill in an unidentified position. (Ibid., p. 560.)

E5 Graham's Battery. A section under Lieutenants Leek and Cundell was posted on Camp Hill. Its position was probably near the Barbour House. Its armament was described as both 20-pounder Parrotts and 24-pounder howitzers. (Ibid., pp. 537, 547.)

E5 8th New York Volunteer Cavalry. Posted somewhere within Harpers Ferry. Some cavalry was posted along the river and some on the plateau between Bolivar Heights and the Shenandoah. This specific site was selected arbitrarily. (Goodhart, Loudoun, Virginia Rangers, p. 54.)

E6 12th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry. See 8th New York Cavalry, E5.

F4 Trimble's Brigade. Composed of the 126th New York, 60th Ohio, and 9th Vermont Volunteer Infantry regiments. All but 100 men of the 126th were on Maryland Heights. A portion of the 9th Vermont were deployed as skirmishers in a woods near the Shenandoah. At least one-tenth of the brigade would have been out as skirmishers to the west and south. The camp of the 9th Vermont was reported on the south slope of Bolivar Heights with its right near the fortification at Rigby's Battery. (O.R., 19:533, 741; Benedict, Vermont, pp. 192-93.)

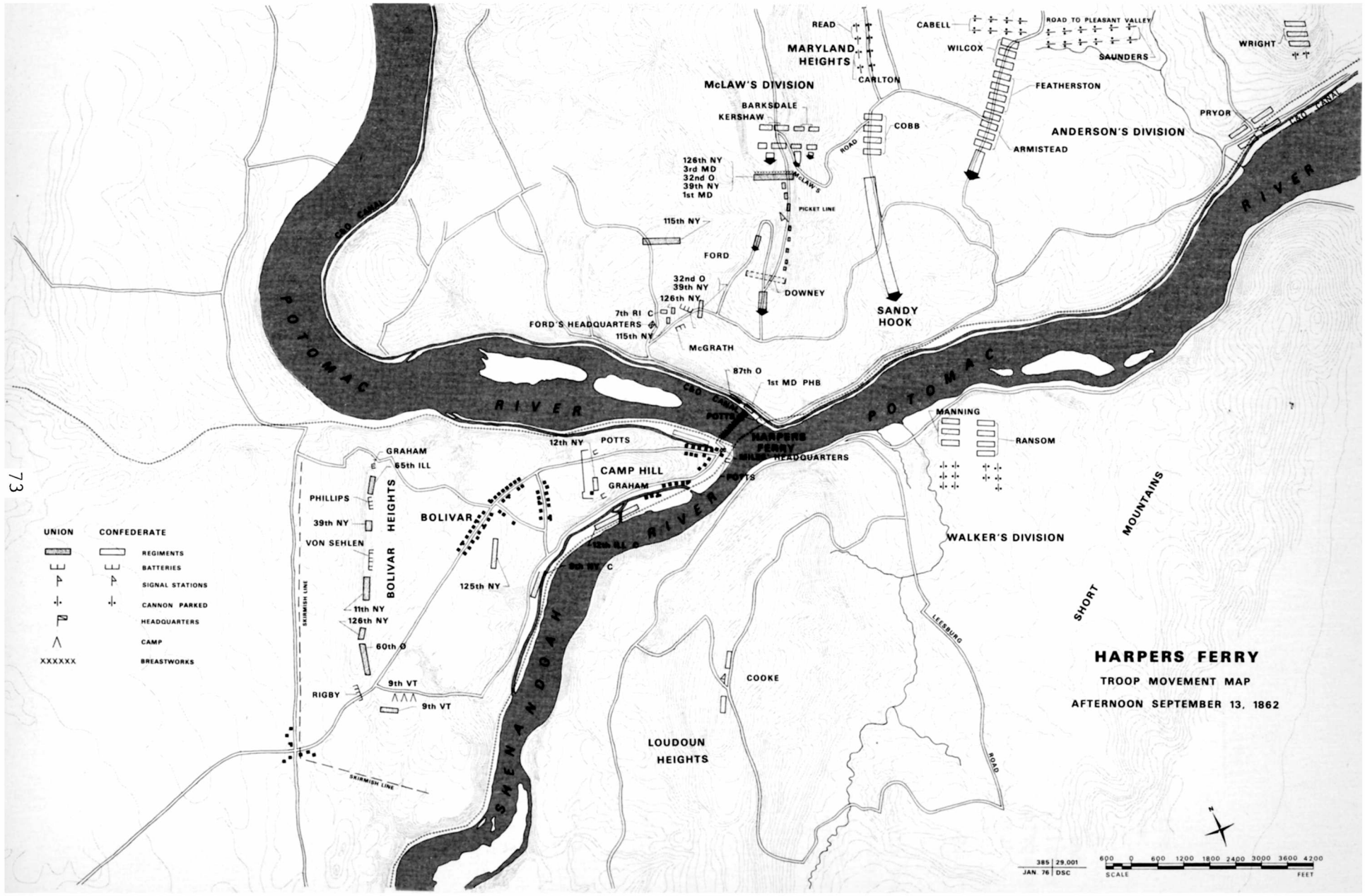
F4 Rigby's Battery. Rigby came to Harpers Ferry with six 24-pounder howitzers. Two were replaced with 20-pounder Parrott guns after they had exhausted their ammunition. Rigby advanced two guns on the Charlestown Pike to engage the enemy near Halltown. Two sections were no doubt placed in the earthworks. (O.R., 19:526, 527, 560, 652, 962.)

F7 Walker's Division, 27th North Carolina and 30th Virginia Regiments. Sent to the crest of Loudoun Heights under the command of Colonel J. R. Cooke. (Ibid., p. 913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:608.)

F7 Signal Station. Walker's Division. Posted on Loudoun Heights on September 13. (Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:608.)

G1 Jackson's Corps. On the 13th Jackson's Corps was assembling in the Halltown area on the Charlestown Pike just west of the border of this map. (O.R., 19:953.)

G4 9th Vermont Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Trimble's Brigade. A portion of the brigade posted in part in a woods above the Shenandoah. Probably deployed as skirmishers. (Benedict, Vermont, p. 193.)


READ
MARYLAND HEIGHTS
CARLTON
McLAW'S DIVISION
BARKSDALE
KERSHAW
126th NY
3rd MD
32nd O
39th NY
1st MD
McLAW'S
PICKET LINE
115th NY
FORD
32nd O
39th NY
126th NY
DOWNEY
7th RI C
FORD'S HEADQUARTERS
115th NY
McGRATH
87th O
1st MD PHB
C&O CANAL
POTTS
HARPERS FERRY
HEADQUARTERS
POTTS
12th NY
POTTS
CAMP HILL
GRAHAM
GRAHAM
65th ILL
PHILLIPS
39th NY
VON SEHLEN
BOLIVAR HEIGHTS
BOLIVAR
125th NY
11th NY
126th NY
60th O
9th VT
RIGBY
9th VT
SKIRMISH LINE
SKIRMISH LINE
POTOMAC RIVER
SHENANDOAH RIVER
CABELL
ROAD TO PLEASANT VALLEY
WILCOX
SAUNDERS
WRIGHT
FEATHERSTON
PRYOR
ANDERSON'S DIVISION
COBB
ROAD
ARMISTEAD
C&O CANAL
POTOMAC RIVER
SANDY HOOK
MANNING
RANSOM
WALKER'S DIVISION
SHORT MOUNTAINS
LEESBURG ROAD
COOKE
LOUDOUN HEIGHTS
UNION
CONFEDERATE
REGIMENTS
BATTERIES
SIGNAL STATIONS
CANNON PARKED
HEADQUARTERS
CAMP
BREASTWORKS
HARPERS FERRY
TROOP MOVEMENT MAP
AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 13, 1862
385 | 29.001
JAN. 76 | DSC
600 0 600 1200 1800 2400 3000 3600 4200
SCALE
FEET

XIII. MAP: TROOP POSITIONS AND MOVEMENTS, SEPTEMBER 15, 1862

This map (p. 83) depicts troop positions and movements on the morning of September 15, 1862, at the time of the surrender of the Federal garrison to Stonewall Jackson's besieging force.

The action was primarily northwest of the Shenandoah River and south of the Potomac, though batteries beyond the rivers, particularly the guns under Crutchfield, contributed significantly to the Confederate effort. The brigades of Hill's Division were most threatening, but Ewell's were poised ready to attack up the Charlestown Road. The two brigades of Jackson's Division near the Potomac, like those to the east, were merely in blocking positions.

The Federal position was a simple one. All but two regiments were either posted on Bolivar Heights facing west or along a line extending east to the Shenandoah from the point where the Charlestown Road crossed Bolivar Heights. The position was precarious but not necessarily impossible. Unfortunately, Federal artillery ammunition had been exhausted in fruitless counter battery fire on September 13 and 14, and the Federal guns were unable to reply to Crutchfield's guns, which dominated them from across the Shenandoah.

There were virtually no troop movements on September 15. The infantry regiments of both armies held their positions until the fire of the Confederate batteries intimidated the Federal commanders and forced their surrender.

The positions of the various units of both armies at Harpers Ferry are indicated below.

A4 Sharpsburg Road. The Federal cavalry passed over this route in its escape from Harpers Ferry on the evening of September 14. (O.R., 19:526, 629.)

A11 Wright's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 44th Alabama and the 3d, 22d, and 48th Georgia regiments, Wright's Brigade and an unidentified section of artillery were posted on the Blue Ridge above Weverton on September 12th and remained there until the afternoon of the 15th. (Ibid., pp. 853-55.)

B5 Sharpsburg Road. See A4 above.

B7 McLaws's Road. This road was opened up the east slope of Maryland Heights on the morning of September 14 to allow the Confederates to take guns of Read's and Carlton's batteries to Maryland Heights from Pleasant Valley. (O.R., 19:854.)

B11 Pryor's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 14th Alabama, 2d and 8th Florida, and the 3d Virginia regiments. Posted at Weverton on the evening of September 12 to block the pass. Remained there until the afternoon of the 15th. It probably had some artillery support, but this is not on record. The position shown is only approximate. (Ibid., pp. 853, 855.)

C5 Sharpsburg Road. See A4 above.

C7 Read's Battery, Cabell's Battalion, Longstreet's Corps. Two guns, a 10-pounder Parrott and a 3-inch rifle, were left behind in this vicinity on the night of the 14th when the two 10-pounder Parrotts of Carlton's Battery were removed. (O.R., 19:836, 854, 855, 866.)

C7 13th Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Barksdale's Brigade, Longstreet's Corps. This regiment arrived with the brigade on the 13th, supported the artillery on Maryland Heights on the 14th, and was left behind to support Read's section of artillery when the remainder of the brigade departed on the night of the 14th. (Ibid., pp. 854, 855, 864.)

C8 Armistead's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 9th, 14th, 38th, 53d, and 57th Virginia regiments. Posted to guard the road from Harpers Ferry. No exact position or formation was identified. (Ibid., pp. 853, 855.)

C8 Featherston's Brigade, Anderson's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 2d Battalion and 12th, 16th, and 19th Mississippi regiments. Posted with Armistead's Brigade near Sandy Hook to guard the road to Harpers Ferry. No exact position described, no supporting artillery indicated. (Ibid.)

D2 Winder's Brigade, Jackson's (Jones's) Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 4th, 5th, 27th, and 33d Virginia regiments (the 2d Regiment was detached in Martinsburg). Posted behind a hill near the Potomac in support of Poague's and Carpenter's batteries. Its precise position is not known. (Ibid., pp. 954, 1011.)

D2 Carpenter's Battery, Shumaker's Battalion, Jackson's Corps. Armed with two 3-inch rifles and two Napoleons. Posted with Poague's Battery on a hill near the Potomac. The exact position is unknown. (Ibid.)

D2 Starke's Brigade, Jackson's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 1st, 2d, 9th, 10th, and 15th Louisiana regiments and Coppens's Battalion. Moved in mid-afternoon to the left to a position near the Potomac not precisely described to support Brockenbrough's Battery. Moved closer to the Potomac at dusk and back again at daylight. (Ibid., p. 1016.)

D3 Brockenbrough's Battery, Shumaker's Battalion, Jackson's Corps. Armed with one 3-inch rifle, two Blakely rifles, and one 12-pounder howitzer. Moved to this area with Starke's Brigade on the afternoon of September 14th and fired until after the surrender. An exact description of the position was not given. (Ibid.)

D3 Poague's Battery, Shumaker's Battalion, Longstreet's Corps. Two 20-pounder Parrotts and two 10-pounder Parrotts. Posted on a hill near the Potomac River. The position was not described either in regard to its location or its relationship with Carpenter's Battery. (Ibid., pp. 954, 1011; Moore, Cannoneer, pp. 138-39.)

D4 Von Sehlen's Battery. Armed with six 3-inch rifles. Posted at the right center of the line on Bolivar Heights until Monday morning, when it moved down to the Shepherdstown Road. Its position there was not described and can only be assumed. (O.R., 19:664.)

D4 Graham's Battery. One section armed with a 20-pounder Parrott and Napoleon. Fired on September 15 until it ran out of 20-pounder shells. (Ibid., pp. 547, 661.)

D6 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Posted in Harpers Ferry guarding the bridges. Some of the regiment possibly was on the Maryland side. (Ibid., pp. 526, 547, 560, 705.)

D6 Colonel Miles's Headquarters. The headquarters of the defending force at Harpers Ferry is believed to have been in Building No. 36. Snell, "Fortifications at Harpers Ferry," p. 97.)

D8 Manning's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 3d Arkansas, 30th Virginia, and the 27th, 46th, and 48th North Carolina regiments. The 27th and 30th regiments, which had been placed on Loudoun Heights, were replaced by the 48th North Carolina and a regiment of Ransom's Brigade. This brigade was posted with Ransom's to block this exit from Harpers Ferry. (O.R., 19:912; Johnson and Buel. Battles and Leaders, 2:607.)

D8 French's Battery, Manning's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Armed with three 10-pounder Parrotts and three 12-pounder howitzers. The three Parrotts were posted on Loudoun Heights. See E7. (O.R., 19:836, 912.)

D9 Ransom's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Composed of the 24th, 25th, 35th, and 49th North Carolina regiments. One regiment was detached to Loudoun Heights, the remainder were posted in this area to support the regiments on Loudoun Heights and block this escape route from Harpers Ferry. See F7. (Ibid., p. 912; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:609.)

D9 Branch's Battery, Ransom's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Armed with one 10-pounder Parrott, two 3-inch rifles, and three 12-pounder howitzers. Two rifled pieces, probably the 3-inch rifles, were sent to Loudoun Heights. See F7. (O.R., 19:836, 912.)

E4 D'Utassy's Brigade. Composed of the 39th, 111th, and 115th New York and the 65th Illinois regiments. The strength of these units was about 500, 950, 950, and 800 men respectively. The regiments were formed with the 65th on the right, the 111th on the left, and the 39th and 115th in the center, the respective positions of the latter not reported. Phillips's Battery's exact position in this line is not known. Presumably one tenth of the brigade were posted as skirmishers. (Ibid., pp. 527, 533, 601, 625, 631, 683.)

E4 Phillips's Battery. Armed with four 6-pounder guns. Posted on Bolivar Heights on the left of Graham near the right of the line. The exact position occupied is unknown. (Ibid., pp. 547, 684.)

E5 12th New York Infantry (State Militia). Strength about 500 men. Posted on Camp Hill in the "ditch" of the entrenchment--presumably, therefore, on the front side of the Camp Hill works away from Loudoun Heights. (Ibid., p. 732.)

E4 Graham's Battery. An unknown number of guns, possibly only one, under Lieutenant Leek and possibly McGrath fired from Camp Hill. The exact position is not known. (Ibid., p. 539.)

E7 French's Battery, Manning's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Three 10-pounder Parrotts were posted in this area, their exact position unknown. Since this battery sustained casualties, it is assumed that it was closer to the Union batteries than Branch's Battery was. (Ibid., pp. 836, 912.)

F3 Rigby's Battery. Armed with four 24-pounder howitzers and two 20-pounder Parrott guns. Posted at the intersection of Bolivar Heights and the Charlestown Road with at least four guns covered in part by an embrasure. Although some guns were faced to the left a short time before, it is assumed that all were sighted generally down the Charlestown Road at this time in the direction of the batteries supporting Ewell's Division. (Ibid., pp. 527, 548, 650, 652; Benedict, Vermont, p. 196.)

F3 Trimble's Brigade. See F4.

F4 Trimble's Brigade. Composed of the 125th New York, 60th Ohio, and the 9th Vermont regiments. The 60th Ohio, strength 900, was to its right. The 9th Vermont, strength about 700, was to Rigby's left beyond the Charlestown Road and facing southwest. (O.R., 19:527, 541, 561, 562, 741, 749.)

F4 3d Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. Strength about 500 men. Posted on the left of the 9th Vermont Infantry facing southwest. (Ibid., pp. 541, 561, 562.)

125th New York Infantry Regiment. Strength about 900. Posted on the road. Its four left companies extended as far to the left as possible and were protected by a fringe of woods. Those on the right were on open ground. The 3d Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, was on its right. (Ibid., pp. 541, 561.)

F4 32d Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Strength about 600 men. The precise location of this regiment is not recorded. The regiment was to the left of Rigby but near him, was in the road, and apparently was not in the first line. (Ibid., p. 572; Smith Diary, Sept. 14 and 15, 1862.)

F5 Potts's Battery. Armed with four 3-inch rifles and two Napoleons. Two guns were posted on Rigby's left firing to his left (southwest), and the other four apparently were posted near the right of the 125th New York. (O.R., 19:527, 541, 560, 652, 654, 688.)

F5 87th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Strength about 1,000 men. It was posted near the railroad to prevent the left there from being turned. Its skirmishers extended right to connect with the skirmishers on the right. (Ibid., pp. 538, 548, 560, 586.)

F5 Howitzer. A howitzer was placed by Lieutenant Binney on "Rifle Island" along with the 87th Ohio. The ownership of this weapon is unknown. Possibly it was one of the four excess howitzers at Harpers Ferry and was manned by the 5th New York Heavy Artillery. (Ibid., pp. 538, 548.)

F6 Crutchfield's Artillery. This collection of ten guns came from Brown's, Garber's (Balthis's), Latimer's, and Dement's batteries, all from Courtney's Battalion of Jackson's Corps. The types of guns present cannot be known precisely, but they must have included Garber's two 6-pounders and a selection of Napoleons, 10-pounder Parrotts, and 3-inch rifles from the other batteries. The position was not reported precisely and cannot be located with certainty. That shown is approximate. (Ibid., pp. 527, 541, 962, 966.)

F7 48th North Carolina Infantry Regiment, Manning's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Accounts indicate that the two regiments of the brigade formerly posted on Loudoun Heights were replaced by two North Carolina regiments. They were not identified beyond an association with Ransom's Brigade, except that Major F. L. Wiatt of the 48th North Carolina was wounded on Loudoun Heights, indicating that regiment's presence. Since that regiment was under fire it can be presumed that it was posted closest to Harpers Ferry. (Ibid., p. 913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:609.)

F7 North Carolina Regiment, Ransom's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Posted in support of the batteries. It must have guarded the west approach. Its identity is not known. (O.R., 19:913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:608.)

F7 Branch's Battery, Ransom's Brigade, Walker's Division, Longstreet's Corps. Armed probably with a 10-pounder Parrott and a 3-inch rifle. (O.R., 19:913; Johnson and Buel, Battles and Leaders, 2:609.)

G2 Ewell's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of Hays's Brigade (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 14th Louisiana regiments), Trimble's Brigade (15th Alabama, 12th and 21st Georgia, 21st North Carolina regiments), Lawton's Brigade (13th, 26th, 31st, 38th, 60th, 61st Georgia regiments), and Early's Brigade (13th, 25th, 31st, 44th, 49th, 52d, 58th Virginia regiments). Hays deployed on the left of the road, Trimble and Lawton on the right. Early first deployed behind Lawton and then shifted to the rear of Hays. (O.R., 19:966.)

G2 Courtney's Battalion, Jackson's Corps. Composed here of Johnson's Battery (weapons not known) and D'Aquin's Battery (one 10-pounder Parrott, two 3-inch rifles). Went into position on both sides of the road. (Ibid.)

G3 Pender's Brigade, Hill's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 16th, 22d, 34th, 38th North Carolina regiments. Deployed near the river to the south, advanced along a road on the left of the division until it reached the Charlestown Road. Archer's Brigade was on its right. Reached the "breastworks" on the evening of September 14. Moved to within 150 yards of the works in the morning. Probably works cited were not those at Rigby's Battery. (Ibid., pp. 980, 1004.)

G3 Archer's Brigade, Hill's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 5th Alabama Battalion, the 19th Georgia, and the 1st, 7th, and 14th Tennessee regiments. Formed near railroad about 1.2 miles to the south. Advanced on September 14 with its left on the road until it approached the Union line and Rigby's cannons. Moved to the right to take the battery in the flank and encountered an abatis. Halted for the night. Advanced slightly in the morning into the abatis. (Ibid., pp. 980, 1000.)

G3 Walker's Battalion. Composed of Crenshaw's Battery (one 12-pounder howitzer, one Napoleon, and two 6-pounders), Braxton's (two 3-inch rifles, four 6-pounders), Davidson's (one 3-inch rifle, two Napoleons, one 6-pounder), McIntosh's (one 10-pounder Parrott, one 3-inch rifle, one 12-pounder howitzer, and one Napoleon), and Pegram's batteries (two either Napoleons or 10-pounder Parrotts). Latham's, Fleet's, and a section of

Pegram's batteries were absent. The battalion went into position 2 miles from Bolivar Heights on the 14th. About sunset McIntosh's rifled section went into position 800 yards from the enemy's earthworks as shown. It was joined in the morning by sections from Braxton's, Davidson's, and Pegram's batteries and by Crenshaw's Battery which was held in reserve. Crenshaw replaced Braxton, whose ammunition was exhausted. Crenshaw's and Pegram's guns advanced 400 yards just before the firing ceased. (Ibid., pp. 980, 981.)

G3 Thomas's Brigade, Hill's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 14th, 35th, 45th, 49th Georgia regiments. Followed the advance line in support. Exact route unknown. (Ibid., pp. 980, 1006.)

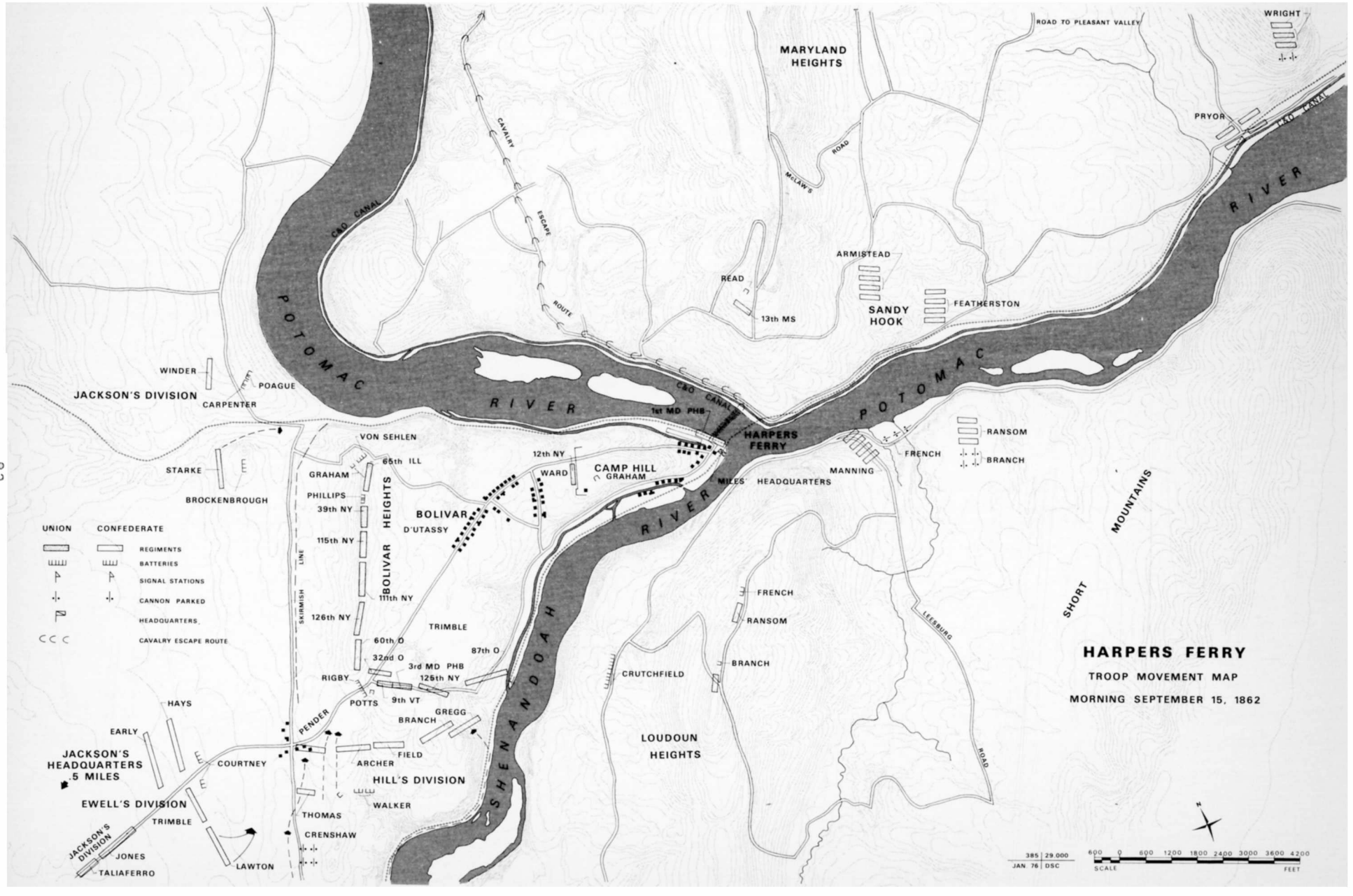
G4 Field's Brigade, Hill's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 40th, 47th, 55th Virginia regiments and the 22d Battalion. Formed on the right of Archer and advanced with the brigade toward the Union position. (Ibid., pp. 980, 1000, 1004.)

G4 Branch's Brigade, Hill's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 1st South Carolina rifles and the 1st, 12th, 13th, and 14th South Carolina regiments. Moved down the railroad in the rear of Branch's Brigade on the 14th and took position on the plateau to the right and rear of Branch's Brigade. (Ibid., pp. 980, 985, 987, 993, 997, 998.)

H1 Jones's Brigade, Jackson's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 1st Virginia Battalion and the 21st, 42d, and 48th Virginia regiments. Held in reserve along the turnpike. Exact position not reported. (Ibid., p. 984.)

H1 Taliaferro's Brigade, Jackson's Division, Jackson's Corps. Composed of the 47th and 48th Alabama and the 10th, 23d, and 37th Virginia regiments. In reserve along the turnpike. Exact position not reported. (Ibid., p. 954.)

-- Jackson's Corps Headquarters. In Halltown area. Off map.


HARPERS FERRY
TROOP MOVEMENT MAP
MORNING SEPTEMBER 15, 1862
MARYLAND HEIGHTS
ROAD TO PLEASANT VALLEY
WRIGHT
PRYOR
C&O CANAL
POTOMAC RIVER
CAVALRY ESCAPE ROUTE
McLAW'S ROAD
ARMISTEAD
READ
13th MS
SANDY HOOK
FEATHERSTON
RANSOM
BRANCH
FRENCH
MANNING
HEADQUARTERS
1st MD PHB
HARPERS FERRY
CAMP HILL
GRAHAM
12th NY
WARD
WINDER
POAGUE
CARPENTER
JACKSON'S DIVISION
VON SEHLEN
65th ILL
STARKE
GRAHAM
PHILLIPS
BROCKENBROUGH
39th NY
115th NY
BOLIVAR HEIGHTS
BOLIVAR
D'UTASSY
SKIRMISH LINE
111th NY
126th NY
TRIMBLE
60th O
32nd O
87th O
3rd MD PHB
125th NY
RIGBY
POTTS
9th VT
GREGG
BRANCH
PENDER
HAYS
EARLY
JACKSON'S HEADQUARTERS 5 MILES
COURTNEY
ARCHER
FIELD
HILL'S DIVISION
WALKER
EWELL'S DIVISION
TRIMBLE
THOMAS
CRENSHAW
JACKSON'S DIVISION
JONES
TALIAFERRO
LAWTON
SHENANDOAH RIVER
CRUTCHFIELD
LOUDOUN HEIGHTS
LEESBURG ROAD
SHORT MOUNTAINS
UNION
CONFEDERATE
REGIMENTS
BATTERIES
SIGNAL STATIONS
CANNON PARKED
HEADQUARTERS
CAVALRY ESCAPE ROUTE
385 | 29.000
JAN. 76 | DSC
SCALE
FEET

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Colonel Miles and Confederate Prisoners of War

One of the intriguing aspects of the Harpers Ferry story concerned Colonel Miles's treatment of Confederate prisoners. Apparently the provost-marshal had custody of over 300 at the time more than could be conveniently handled. More were not welcomed. Most of these were civilians from the surrounding area who were temporary guests of the Federal Government.[1]

There were prisoners of war too, men who were picked up in recent operations in the area. In keeping with the practice of the day such men were questioned and paroled. Sixteen, for instance, were paroled and passed through the picket post on the Charlestown Road on the 13th and others were passed out as late as the night of the 14th.[2]

One of these prisoners was Lieutenant Milton J. Rouse of Company B, 12th Virginia Cavalry. The 8th New York Cavalry picked up Rouse when he was on his way home to Jefferson County to recuperate from a wound in the thigh. Colonel Davis escorted Rouse into Harpers Ferry and then turned him over to a surgeon for treatment. Somehow Rouse hoodwinked the surgeon and got away only to be picked up again on the following day. This time he was taken to Colonel Miles for an interview.

Rouse assumed the role of a chivalrous officer and gentleman whose honor somehow had been insulted by Colonel Davis and begged Miles for parole. Apparently too he coupled his begging with promises of correct behavior. Miles talked with Rouse for some time and during part of the conversation they were alone. As a result Miles ordered Rouse paroled and Lieutenant Binney escorted him through the lines. Miles's action caused some criticism, but when informed of it Miles passed it off, remarking that 300 union soldiers had just come through Harpers Ferry after being paroled by the Confederates and that if the Confederates paroled prisoners they should be able to do it also.

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1. O.R., 19:738-40.

2. Ibid., pp. 633, 738, 739.

Harpers Ferry was then besieged and captured. One of the Confederate officers seen by Lieutenant Binney was Lieutenant Rouse, who, in violation of his parole, was in command of troops! Binney protested to General Hill but Hill denied any knowledge of Rouse's status as a paroled prisoner. When questioned about it himself, Rouse was reported to have only laughed.[3]

Rouse apparently served through the war and was paroled in May 1865 at Charlestown.[4] Whether or not he broke his parole as was commonly believed by Union officers cannot be known. His reported presence in Harpers Ferry after the surrender, however, was taken by many as evidence that Miles had made a treasonable bargain and that the surrender itself was an act of disloyalty.

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3. Ibid., pp. 640, 642, 643, 737-39.

4. Service Records, Milton J. Rouse, Co. B, 12th Virginia Cavalry, NA, RG 79.

APPENDIX B

Mrs. Charles J. Brown

There was at least one civilian on Maryland Heights. She was Elizabeth Brown, the wife of Captain Charles J. Brown of the 1st Maryland Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade. The captain had been on Maryland Heights for 2 months and Mrs. Brown had come there to be with him. They had a room on the second floor of a house, which apparently belonged to a Mrs. Buckle, in the Federal camp at McGrath's Battery. Colonel Ford had lodgings, if not his headquarters, on the lower floor.

On the 13th, as her husband's company was fighting on the crest, she saw Colonel Miles and his staff ride up to see Colonel Ford. Curious about what was happening she hurried upstairs to the Brown's rooms, took off her shoes, and tiptoed quietly to a stovepipe hole in the floor. She removed its tin cover and eavesdropped on the private meeting below which she could see as well as hear.

Miles told Ford that his men would have to fall back to Harpers Ferry. Ford stood, swore, and said that he could hold on if Miles would send him reinforcements. Miles replied that he had sent all that he could spare, and Ford continued to swear, calling it a shame.

At this point Mrs. Brown left the stovepipe hole, slipped on her gaiters, and went downstairs. Soon thereafter she collected her things and left the hill.

Mrs. Brown appeared in the story next on October 15 in Washington as a witness before the Harpers Ferry Commission. There she related her story, presumably as a witness for Colonel Ford. How the secret of her eavesdropping became known and what experiences she had after leaving Mrs. Buckle's house were not indicated.[1]

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1. O.R., 19:719.

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