

THE CONFEDERATE MILITARY CAREER OF MAJOR  
GENERAL WILLIAM DORSEY PENDER

By

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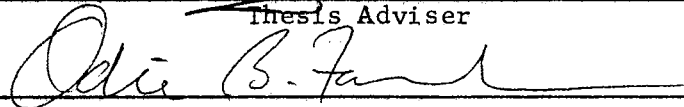
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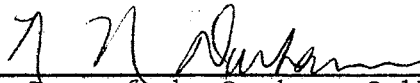
THE CONFEDERATE MILITARY CAREER OF MAJOR  
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## PREFACE

Major General William Dorsey Pender has not enjoyed the historical acclaim received by many of his associates in the Civil War. Perhaps this is because he passed from the scene before his full potential could be demonstrated. While he lived, he was one of the most aggressive and competent leaders in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia.

The record of Pender's Confederate military career is scattered through various sources, such as the War Department's The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, war memoirs, biographies of Pender's commanders, and unit histories, especially those of North Carolina regiments. The only book on Pender is William W. Hassler's edited compilation of the Confederate leader's wartime letters to his wife. Using these materials, this study attempts to evaluate Pender as a combat leader.

In order to help the reader comprehend the numerous Civil War engagements discussed in the thesis, battle maps have been included. In each case, where possible, Pender's unit has been identified on the maps, as well as other units and features mentioned in the text. The maps are greatly simplified, so that many geographical features such as wooded areas and swamps are not shown. Some are enlargements of a portion of a battlefield, and do not show related battle areas or units. Generally, a military unit is designated by a small rectangle--light for Confederate, dark for Federal. A rectangle does not neces-

sarily represent a unit of a particular size, except those that are named in the text. In a few cases, cavalry units are shown, and differ from infantry in that the ends of the rectangle are pointed to one side. All distances are measured in miles.

The author extends appreciation to the Library staff of Oklahoma State University for their helpful assistance in locating materials, and to the personnel of the Graphic Arts Center for their reproduction of the battle maps. Dr. Norbert R. Mahnken and Dr. Edward M. Walters made penetrating and useful comments when they critically read this work. Their encouragement and advice made the completion of this study possible. The author is especially grateful to Dr. LeRoy H. Fischer because he established the need for the topic and then gave continuous and valuable advice and encouragement without which this study could not have been completed. Lastly, the author would like to express his appreciation to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy V. Bevers, whose constant encouragement made possible his efforts in higher education.

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## CHAPTER I

### YOUTH AND EARLY CONFEDERATE SERVICE

During the American Civil War, North Carolina, the home state of Major General William Dorsey Pender, provided about one hundred and twenty-five thousand men for the Confederate and state military services, or about one-fifth of the total manpower of the Southern military effort. North Carolina also provided several men who served with great distinction as generals in the Confederate Army, such as Daniel H. Hill, James J. Pettigrew, and Robert F. Hoke. None, however, achieved a more lasting reputation and universal respect than Pender. Although his service to the South on the field of battle spanned only fourteen months, from May, 1862, to July, 1863, Pender became one of the finest young combat leaders in the Confederate Army. His untimely death following the Battle of Gettysburg perhaps prevented his rise to the Confederate high command, but he set an example, especially at the brigade level, that remained unsurpassed throughout the war.

The Pender family originated in England, and during the reign of King Charles II, Edwin Pender became the first member to settle in America, near Norfolk, Virginia. Later, a descendant of the same name moved to Edgecombe County, North Carolina. There, on February 6, 1834, William Dorsey Pender was born the fourth child of James and Sarah Pender. Dorsey, as he preferred to be called, grew up on his father's farm and received his early education in the common schools of Edge-

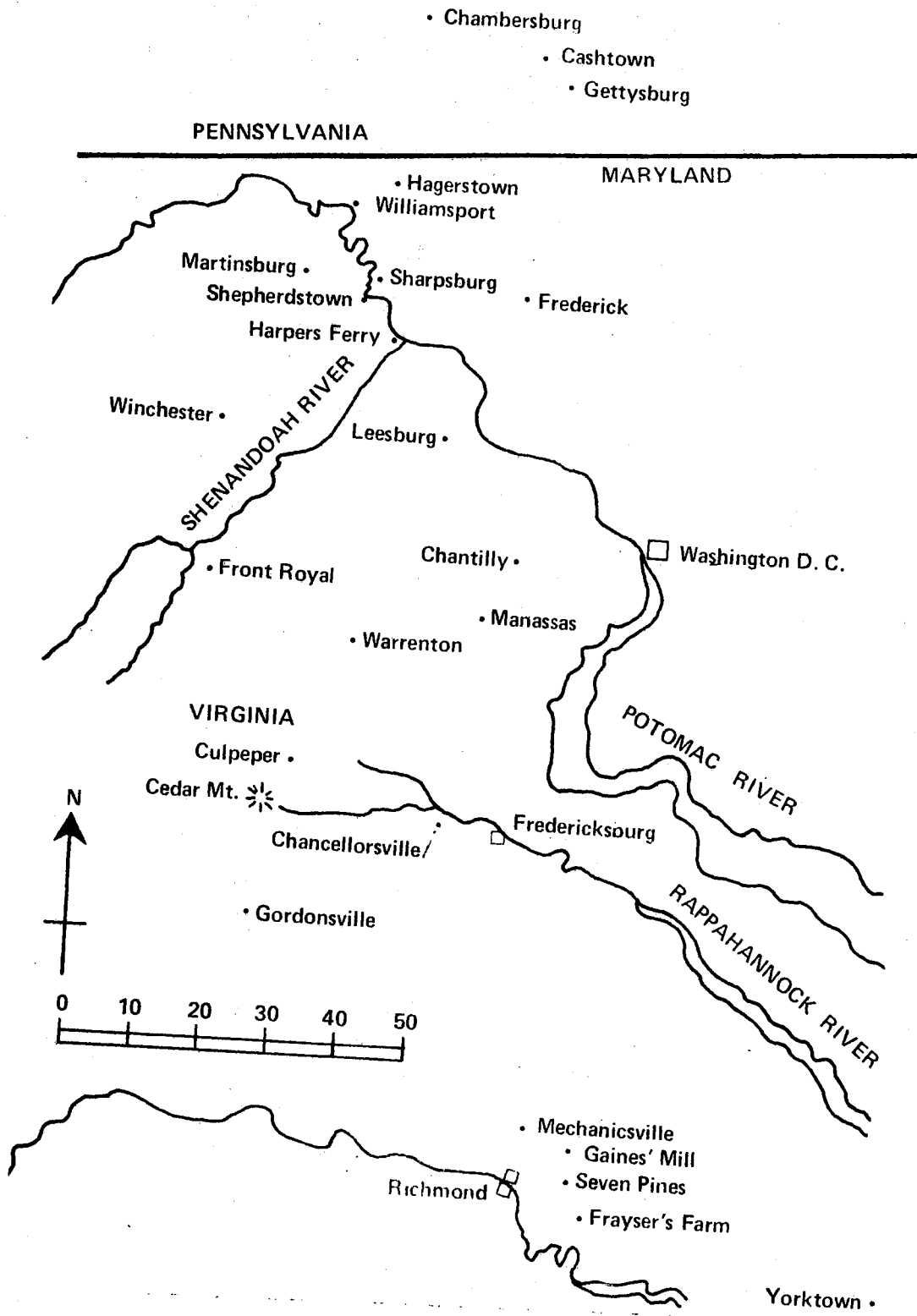


Figure 1. Area of Pender's Civil War Operations.



combe County until he reached the age of fifteen, when he became a store clerk for his older brother Robert. The work, however, was not to his liking, and he dreamed of adventure and the life of a soldier. With the help of his cousin, R. R. Bridges, and the influence of Congressman Thomas Ruffin of the Sixth Congressional District of North Carolina, young Dorsey Pender was appointed to the United States Military Academy on June 24, 1850, at the age of sixteen.<sup>1</sup>

As a cadet, Pender seems to have been above average, excelling in mathematics and in cavalry tactics. He received several promotions-- lance corporal, corporal, sergeant, and lieutenant of the battalion of cadets--the last of which was rescinded because of his failure to write out a guard report to the commandant while serving as officer of the day. On July 1, 1854, Pender graduated nineteenth in a class of forty-six, which included James E. B. Stuart, Stephen D. Lee, George Washington Custis Lee, John Pegram, and Oliver O. Howard, all of whom were to soon become well-known military commanders in the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

With a commission as brevet second lieutenant, Pender was assigned

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<sup>1</sup>Allen Johnson, Dumas Malone, Harris E. Starr, Robert L. Schuyler, Edward T. James, eds., Dictionary of American Biography (23 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928-1958), Vol. XIV, p. 416; Walter A. Montgomery, "William D. Pender," W. J. Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians (Raleigh: The North Carolina Publishing Society, 1898), p. 436; Clement A. Evans, ed., Confederate Military History (13 vols., Atlanta: Confederate Publishing Company, 1899), Vol. IV, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Johnson, Malone, Starr, Schuyler, and James, eds., Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XIV, p. 416; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, pp. 436-437; William W. Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1962), pp. 3-4.

to the First Artillery Regiment. Before reporting, however, he obtained a furlough and visited the home of a West Point classmate and friend, Samuel Turner Sheppard, in Good Spring, North Carolina. There Pender met and fell in love with Mary Frances Sheppard, Samuel's sister and the daughter of Congressman Augustine H. Sheppard.<sup>3</sup>

When his leave expired, Pender reported to his command. He was soon promoted to second lieutenant and transferred to the Second Artillery Regiment at Fort Meyer, Florida, on August 16, 1854. Then at his request, he was transferred to the frontier for service with the First Regiment of Dragoons on March 3, 1855. For the next five years Pender served on active duty in New Mexico, California, Oregon, and Washington, and was involved in numerous scouting expeditions and skirmishes against hostile Indians. On May 17, 1858, he was promoted to first lieutenant.<sup>4</sup>

While Pender was a conscientious soldier, he had not forgotten Mary Frances Sheppard, or Fanny, as he affectionately called her, and on March 3, 1859, they were married at her home in Good Spring, North Carolina. From that day forward, Fanny had a profound influence on the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 4; Johnson, Malone, Starr, Schuyler, and James, eds., Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XIV, p. 416; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 437; George W. Cullum, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy (8 vols., New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), Vol. II, p. 586.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.; Johnson, Malone, Starr, Schuyler, and James, eds., Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XIV, p. 416; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 437; Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, Vol. IV, p. 334; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 4.

life of Pender.<sup>5</sup>

After the marriage, Pender returned to duty in Washington Territory, accompanied by his bride. In February, 1861, however, he was transferred to Carlisle, Pennsylvania for recruiting service. Before taking up his new post, he went on furlough and quickly became caught up in the sectional crisis between the North and the South. After talking to friends, and after sensing the mood of the people, Pender began to feel that war was imminent. Although he was loyal to the Union, he also felt a strong attachment toward his home state and toward the people of the South. Realizing that he could not serve against his own people, Pender resigned his commission in the United States Army and offered his services to the newly-formed Confederacy, even though North Carolina had not yet seceded from the Union.<sup>6</sup>

On March 13, 1861, Pender arrived in Montgomery, Alabama--then the seat of the Confederate government--to seek a commission in the Provisional Confederate Army. Three days later, he received a commission as a captain in the artillery, and immediately informed his wife of his assignment to Pensacola, Florida. The same day, however, the Confederate Secretary of War, Leroy P. Walker, canceled these orders, and Pender was assigned to Baltimore, Maryland, as a recruiter. His duties were to see that men recruited in the Baltimore area were

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5; Johnson, Malone, Starr, Schuyler, and James, eds., Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XIV, p. 416; Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, Vol. IV, p. 335; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 437.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 437-438; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 5-6.

properly examined by a medical officer and then sent to Charleston, South Carolina, where they would be enlisted in the Confederate Army. This assignment was of short duration, however, and on the day before the Southern batteries opened fire upon Fort Sumter, Pender left Baltimore to report to Montgomery.<sup>7</sup>

Following the outbreak of hostilities at Fort Sumter on April 12-13, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln of the United States called upon those states still in the Union to furnish 75,000 militia troops to suppress the rebellion. This action by the President was a factor in causing the four states of the upper South to join the Confederacy. North Carolina, one of the four, began preparing for war prior to its actual decision to secede. It was in this situation that Governor John W. Ellis obtained the services of Captain Pender to train the state's raw recruits.<sup>8</sup>

Pender was appointed a lieutenant colonel in the state's military service, and was assigned to train the First North Carolina Volunteer Regiment at Camp Mangum near Raleigh. This unit was soon sent to Virginia, where his short but sound instruction payed off at the Battle of Big Bethel, the first land engagement of the war. After the regiment left for Virginia, Pender was sent to Garysburg, North Carolina,

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-12, 14-15; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 438; Samuel Cooper to P. G. T. Beauregard, March 21, 1861, United States Department of War, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (70 vols., 128 books, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 279, hereafter cited as Official Records.

<sup>8</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 15.

as commandant of the Camp of Instruction, where the Third North Carolina Infantry Regiment was being formed. On May 16, 1861, Pender was elected colonel of the regiment, and toward the end of the month, moved his command to Suffolk, Virginia, for additional training. While the Union and Confederate forces faced each other in northern Virginia, Colonel Pender slowly molded the Third North Carolina Infantry Regiment into a respectable force. He spent long hours on the drill field preparing the raw recruits for the coming campaigns. Although the condition of the men improved, the regiment had not received all of its equipment, which had been promised by Governor Ellis. Pender became angry and sent Captains Alfred M. Scales and Thomas Ruffin (who had recommended Pender for West Point in 1850) to Raleigh. Their mission was successful, and the governor complied with their requests.<sup>9</sup>

Colonel Pender remained in the area around Suffolk until the middle of August. On the fifteenth, he was appointed colonel of the Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment by Henry T. Clark, who had succeeded Ellis as governor of North Carolina. The former commander of the regiment, Colonel Charles F. Fisher, had been killed in the fighting at Manassas the previous month. This appointment was at the time considered a high honor, since the regiment had performed with distinction during the battle. When Pender reported to his new command at Camp Jones, near Manassas, the regiment's condition had deteriorated greatly from the time of Colonel Fisher's death. Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Lightfoot, who had been second in command to Fisher, was extremely unpopular with the men. His severe discipline and his

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 15, 19, 25, 32, 35, 37; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 439.

complete lack of concern for the sick, which numbered in the hundreds at this time, had brought the command almost to the point of mutiny. By the end of September, however, Pender had done much to restore the health and morale of the regiment. Six hundred and forty men were fit for duty as compared to about 240 when he took command. Two months later Pender's camp was a model for the army to emulate.<sup>10</sup>

In the space of about seven months, Pender had turned three regiments--two made up of raw recruits and a third suffering from the harsh measures and neglect of its temporary commander--into tough and efficient military units. But some significant changes had also come over Pender during the summer and autumn of 1861. At the beginning of his Confederate career, he seemed at times reluctant to accept responsibility for the command of a regiment. This was partly because he felt strongly disposed to his Confederate commission as a captain in the artillery as opposed to his state rank. There was perhaps some doubt also in Pender's mind concerning his ability to handle a regiment. He was, however, proud of the fact that he was asked to accept a colonelcy, while older officers were actively seeking promotion. A combination of friends' advice, the endorsement of the soldiers, and ambition finally persuaded him to accept the command.<sup>11</sup>

During the summer of 1861 he was also quite popular with the ladies, and had a curious habit of writing about them in his letters to his wife. Although Pender undoubtedly felt that these attentions by

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 440; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 50, 60, 69.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-24.

the ladies were harmless, he finally brought on a bitter response from Fanny, when in June he wrote: "I was at a little gathering two nights ago, and had a very nice time dancing and flirting with a very nice girl. I am trying to get her to knit you a sac for the hair, but she said that she is not going to work for my wife, but will do anything for me . . . ." <sup>12</sup> Fanny's return letter sent her husband into the depths of despair. At first he thought that he had destroyed her love for him and that he had lost her. A remorseful and much wiser man, Pender never again encouraged the young ladies living in the vicinity of his camp. <sup>13</sup>

After this crisis, Pender became increasingly interested in religious matters. Whether or not this was caused by the near disaster to his marriage is not clear. It must have been due in part to the knowledge that he would soon be going into battle. Prior to the war, he had been rather indifferent toward religion. Fanny had always been very religious, and her husband began to encourage her regarding his faith by the suggestion that he might join a church. At first he became interested in Christianity to please her, but he soon became serious in his effort to please God and become a good Christian. On October 7, 1861, he was baptized in the presence of his entire regiment. <sup>14</sup>

With the onset of winter, Pender's Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment stood picket duty along the Potomac and Occoquan rivers and

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-44.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 58, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 76.

guarded the Confederate artillery batteries which commanded the Potomac at Quantico and Evansport. The general monotony was at times broken by alarms and by occasional long-range duels between the batteries and Union artillery.<sup>15</sup>

After spending the winter in northern Virginia, Pender's regiment burned its quarters on March 8, 1862, and withdrew, along with the rest of General Joseph E. Johnston's army, to the south bank of the Rappahannock River. There, a short distance from the town of Fredericksburg, the Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment established its new quarters at Camp Barton. The condition of the regiment was evident, when, on April 3, at a military review, General Johnston declared it to be the best drilled and the best disciplined infantry regiment in the army. Twelve regiments of infantry and three batteries of artillery participated in the review. By the middle of the month, Johnston's army, including Pender's regiment, was on the march toward Yorktown, on the Virginia Peninsula. There the main Union forces were gathering for an attempt to capture Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the Confederate States.<sup>16</sup>

From the boy who dreamed of military adventure to the man who now commanded an infantry regiment, Pender had gained experience as he displayed his growing abilities. His extended frontier service in the United States Army had given him combat experience in numerous small

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<sup>15</sup> Walter Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861- '65 (5 vols., Goldsboro: Nash Brothers, 1901), Vol. I, p. 300.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 349; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 120-121, 131, 134; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 440.



unit actions as well as in reconnaissance. By joining the Confederate Army in March, 1861, before North Carolina seceded, he was able to develop some valuable contacts with high-ranking Confederate and state leaders. While serving in the Confederate and North Carolina forces, Pender had shown remarkable talents for organization and unit control. As a disciplinarian, he was strict, but not harsh. He was careful to look after his men and to supply their needs. Toughened by Pender's training and drills, the men of his regiment were confident as they marched to meet the Union forces on the Virginia Peninsula.

## CHAPTER II

### PENDER'S FIRST TEST: THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN

By April 19, 1862, Pender's Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment had reached its destination on the Virginia Peninsula. With its camp set up a mile from Yorktown, the regiment formed a part of the Confederate reserve which faced Major General George B. McClellan's Union Army of the Potomac along the Yorktown-Warwick River defense line. Although the combined forces of General Joseph E. Johnston and Major General John B. Magruder were outnumbered by the Federals, Colonel Pender was confident of success in the upcoming campaign. "We have a magnificent army here," Pender wrote his wife, "the largest and finest we have ever had at [one] place . . . . We all believe and hope we shall whip them [the Federals]. In all the skirmishes that have taken place--and they occur nightly and daily--we have had the best of it. We hear firing in the distance all the time, but not near enough to do us any damage."<sup>1</sup> His regiment was alerted and called into the line several times, but the Federals did not advance.<sup>2</sup>

As McClellan slowly strengthened his position, and brought up heavy siege artillery to pound the Confederate defenses, General

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<sup>1</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 134-135.

<sup>2</sup>Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65. Vol. I, p. 300.

Johnston made preparations to withdraw toward Richmond. On the morning of May 4, Pender's Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment was ordered to form a line across the road which led from Yorktown to Williamsburg. It was to act as a shield--a part of the rear guard--against possible Union attacks upon the retreating Confederate Army. As the troops marched up the Peninsula toward the west, their progress was made difficult by heavy rains which turned the roads into rivers of mud. Pender, as well as the men of his command, suffered from exposure, hunger, and lack of sleep. Engagements with the Federals took place at Williamsburg and Eltham's Landing, with the Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment playing a small part in the latter. Pender's command held a position in advance of the extreme Confederate right flank and supported a battery of artillery which had attempted to shell Union transports and troop concentrations at the head of the York River.<sup>3</sup>

The retreat continued, and by the end of May, Johnston's army occupied the outer defensive positions east of Richmond. At this point, the heavy rains presented the Confederates with an opportunity to strike the Army of the Potomac with some hope of success. As the Federals approached the Confederate capital, Major General McClellan placed three-fifths of his army on the north bank of the Chickahominy River to establish contact with expected reinforcements from northern Virginia. The other two-fifths, consisting of the Third and Fourth

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 301-302; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 140; Douglas S. Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants (3 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942-1944), Vol. I, pp. 194, 199.

corps, commanded by Major General Samuel P. Heintzelman and Major General Erasmus D. Keyes respectively, remained on the south side of the river. General Johnston saw an opportunity to perhaps destroy Keyes' Fourth Corps which was separated from the Third Corps and isolated from the main portion of McClellan's army by the flood waters of the Chickahominy.<sup>4</sup>

The Confederates attacked on May 31, but failed to destroy Keyes' command. Colonel Pender's Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment, as part of Brigadier General William H. C. Whiting's division, advanced along the Nine Mile Road toward Keyes' position, while other Confederate forces assailed the Union Fourth Corps from the south and west. Pender led the advance on the Confederate left, having been assured by his superiors that he would be supported. His regiment advanced through the dense woods near Fair Oaks Station, until the head of the column reached a road. Suddenly, Pender discovered several Union regiments to his left and rear. His command was in danger of being cut off. Immediately grasping the situation, Pender shouted to his command, "By the left flank, file left, double quick!"<sup>5</sup> All the disciplined training the regiment had received payed off, as the Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment wheeled into battle formation and charged

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<sup>4</sup> Warren W. Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), p. 46; Mark M. Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959), p. 272; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 150.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, pp. 350-352; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, pp. 441-442.

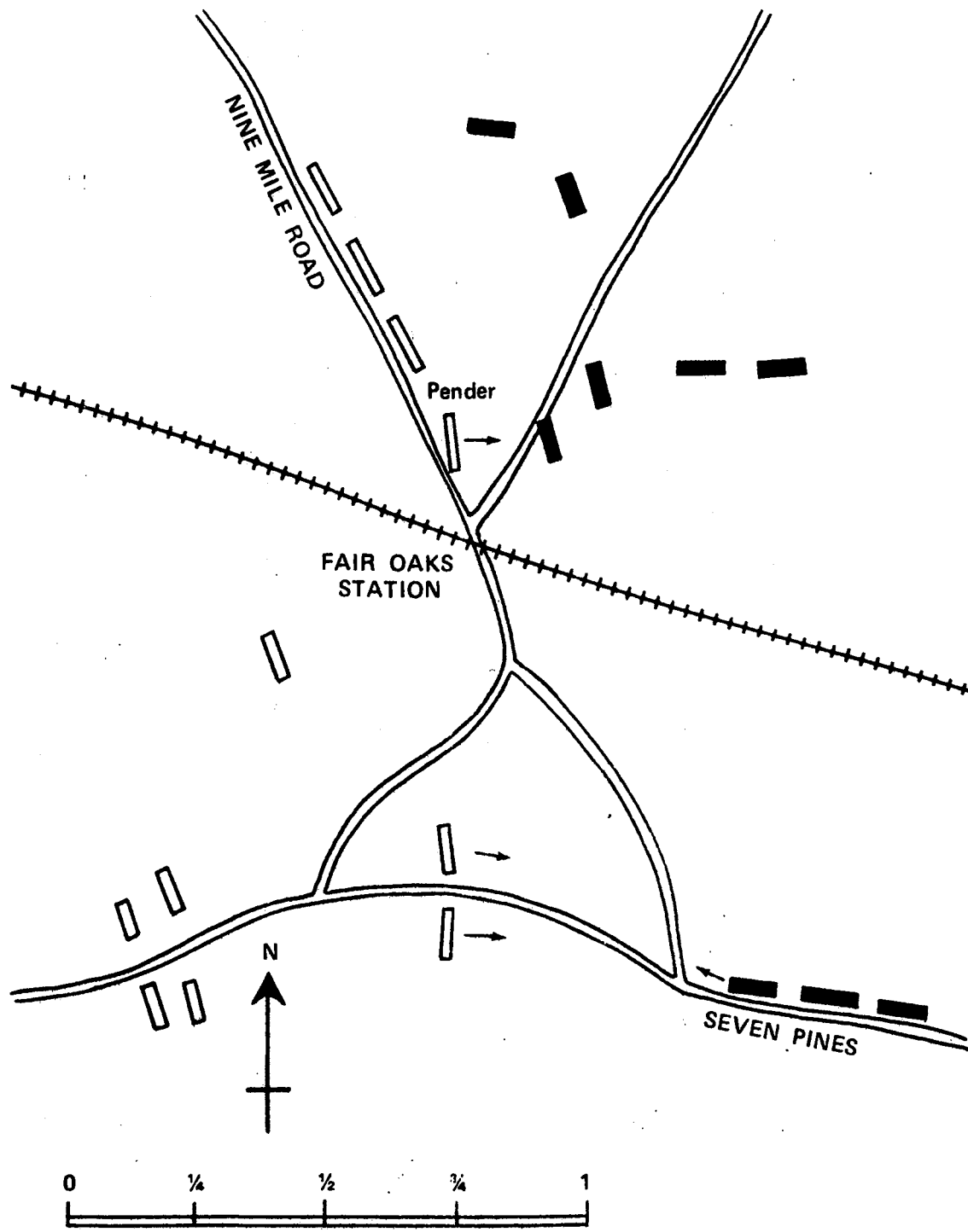


Figure 2. Battle of Seven Pines, May 31, 1862.

the enemy with such suddenness and fury that it threw the Federals into confusion long enough for the Confederates to escape and rejoin their division, part of which was just arriving on the field. Several other attempts were made by various units of Whiting's division to drive off the Federals, but they ended in failure.<sup>6</sup>

President Jefferson Davis of the Confederate States was present during part of the battle and witnessed the courage and calm manner of Colonel Pender as he led his command and as he reformed several broken regiments which had been repulsed. The Sixth North Carolina Infantry Regiment was the first to engage the Federals on the Confederate left and was the last to leave the field. After the fighting stopped, Davis complimented Pender and addressed him as "General" Pender. The young officer later told a friend, "I could have coveted no greater honor than to be promoted by the President on the field of battle."<sup>7</sup>

The Battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks), was indecisive in a tactical sense, but it changed the course of the war in the East. One of the casualties on May 31 was the Confederate commander, General Joseph E. Johnston, who was severely wounded by a shell fragment. President Davis chose as his successor General Robert E. Lee, who took command on June 1 of all the Confederate forces around Richmond, which then

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 442; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 150.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 442; Evans, ed., Confederate Military History, Vol. IV, p. 69.

became known as the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>8</sup>

Pender's outstanding performance at Seven Pines was not forgotten, and on June 2, 1862, President Davis assigned him the temporary rank of brigadier general and gave him the brigade of Brigadier General James J. Pettigrew, who had been wounded and captured. His commission was dated June 3. The brigade consisted of the Sixteenth, Twenty-second, Thirty-fourth, and Thirty-eighth North Carolina infantry regiments. The Second Arkansas and Twenty-second Virginia battalions were also attached, but were soon transferred.<sup>9</sup>

First Lieutenant Benjamin H. Cathey of the Sixteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment later recalled Pender as "a medium size man, round of body, closely knit and muscular; his movements were agile and strong; his complexion was tan, his eye gray and kindly, and his whole exterior indicated courage, nerve and power of endurance. His words were not many, but [were] exceedingly comprehensive and to the point. Like all great soldiers, he was not a man of words but of action."<sup>10</sup>

On June 11, General Lee ordered the transfer of Pender's brigade from Whiting's division to that of Major General Ambrose P. Hill. At this time, Whiting's division was a part of Major General Magruder's command, which faced eastward on a line from the Price farm on the

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<sup>8</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. I, pp. 262-263, 266.

<sup>9</sup>Jefferson Davis to Robert E. Lee, June 2, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 3, p. 569; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. I, pp. 266-267; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. IV, p. 155; Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 487; Robert E. Lee to John B. Magruder, June 11, 1862, *ibid.*, pt. 3, p. 589.

<sup>10</sup>Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, pp. 764-765.

Nine Mile Road and ran southward to the Richmond and York River Railroad. Hill was ordered to occupy Magruder's left flank position. The Light Division, as Hill called his command, was composed of six brigades and occupied the defensive positions northeast of Richmond from the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad to the Price farm. Pender's brigade, as well as that of Brigadier General James J. Archer, was stationed between Brigadier General Maxcy Gregg's brigade (all three of which belonged to Hill's division) on the left and Magruder's command on the right.<sup>11</sup>

"Our Generals who have access to General Lee," Pender wrote to Fanny in late June, "are beginning to gain a great deal of confidence in him. Everything, darling, around Richmond looks bright. McClellan has undoubtedly lost a great many men since he left Yorktown, and he is crying very lustily for more. We are getting reinforcements from all directions . . . ."<sup>12</sup>

By the second half of June, General Lee had developed a plan to raise the siege of Richmond and drive the Federals down the Peninsula away from the capital. The Union Fifth Corps, under Brigadier General Fitz-John Porter, still lay north of the Chickahominy River, and Lee was determined to crush it if possible. Leaving two divisions to face

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<sup>11</sup>Robert E. Lee to Ambrose P. Hill, June 11, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 3, p. 589; John B. Magruder to Ambrose P. Hill, June 11, 1862, ibid., pp. 591-592; Clifford Dowdey and Louis H. Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), pp. 190-191; Martin Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders (Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1958), pp. 20-21.

<sup>12</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 158.



the main Union force in the area around Seven Pines, Lee shifted the bulk of his troops across the Chickahominy at Meadow Bridge in order to attack Porter at Mechanicsville. Hill's Light Division, including Pender's brigade, crossed the river on the night of June 25, and advanced toward Mechanicsville the next day. With battle flags flying to the tune of music played by field bands, Hill's gray-clad infantry moved forward. Union artillery opened fire north of the town, but was soon withdrawn when confronted by Confederate infantry and artillery in line of battle. Pender's brigade, minus one regiment, moved on into and through Mechanicsville behind the brigades of Archer and Charles W. Field, also of the Light Division. Pender's absent regiment, the Sixteenth North Carolina Infantry, had taken the wrong road, and thus did not rejoin the brigade until after dark.<sup>13</sup>

Both Archer and Field became heavily engaged with the enemy, and Pender received orders to go to their support. He moved his command forward to the right of Field's brigade and at once came under heavy fire from Union artillery across Beaver Dam Creek, behind which stood Porter's Fifth Corps. In an effort to capture and silence these batteries, Pender sent forward his Thirty-eighth North Carolina Infantry Regiment. This unit, unsupported, advanced toward the Federal position through a storm of artillery and rifle fire until it was held up by obstacles near Ellerson's Mill. After advancing to less than 100 yards of the enemy, the regiment was forced to retire, sustaining

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<sup>13</sup> Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 540-541; Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, p. 56; report of William D. Pender, July 16, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, pp. 898-899.

heavy casualties.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, Major General Daniel H. Hill, whose division was arriving from the south, met with Pender and agreed to reinforce him with Brigadier General Roswell S. Ripley's brigade. An attack was made about dark upon the Federals near the mill, in which the brigades of Pender and Ripley cooperated. Pender's brigade and two regiments of Ripley's advanced on the right while the remainder of Ripley's brigade attacked toward the front. The Federals were driven back from their advanced position, but the overall attack was a failure for the Confederates. Rough ground, intersected by ditches and hedges, plus the murderous fire from Federal artillery halted the attack and produced very heavy casualties. After dark the fighting died down and the Confederates maintained their position.<sup>15</sup>

At daylight the next morning, June 27, the Federals conducted a cannonade which lasted for over an hour, with most of the shells falling in the town of Mechanicsville. This, however, was only a delaying action, Porter's Fifth Corps having retreated toward Gaines' Mill. The Light Division, including Pender's brigade, pushed forward, crossed

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 899; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 28, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 834-835; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, pp. 680-681.

<sup>15</sup>Report of Daniel H. Hill, no month or day, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 623; report of Roswell S. Ripley, July 11, 1862, *ibid.*, pp. 647-648; report of Robert E. Lee, March 6, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 491; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 213; Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (4 vols., New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1956), Vol. II, p. 352.

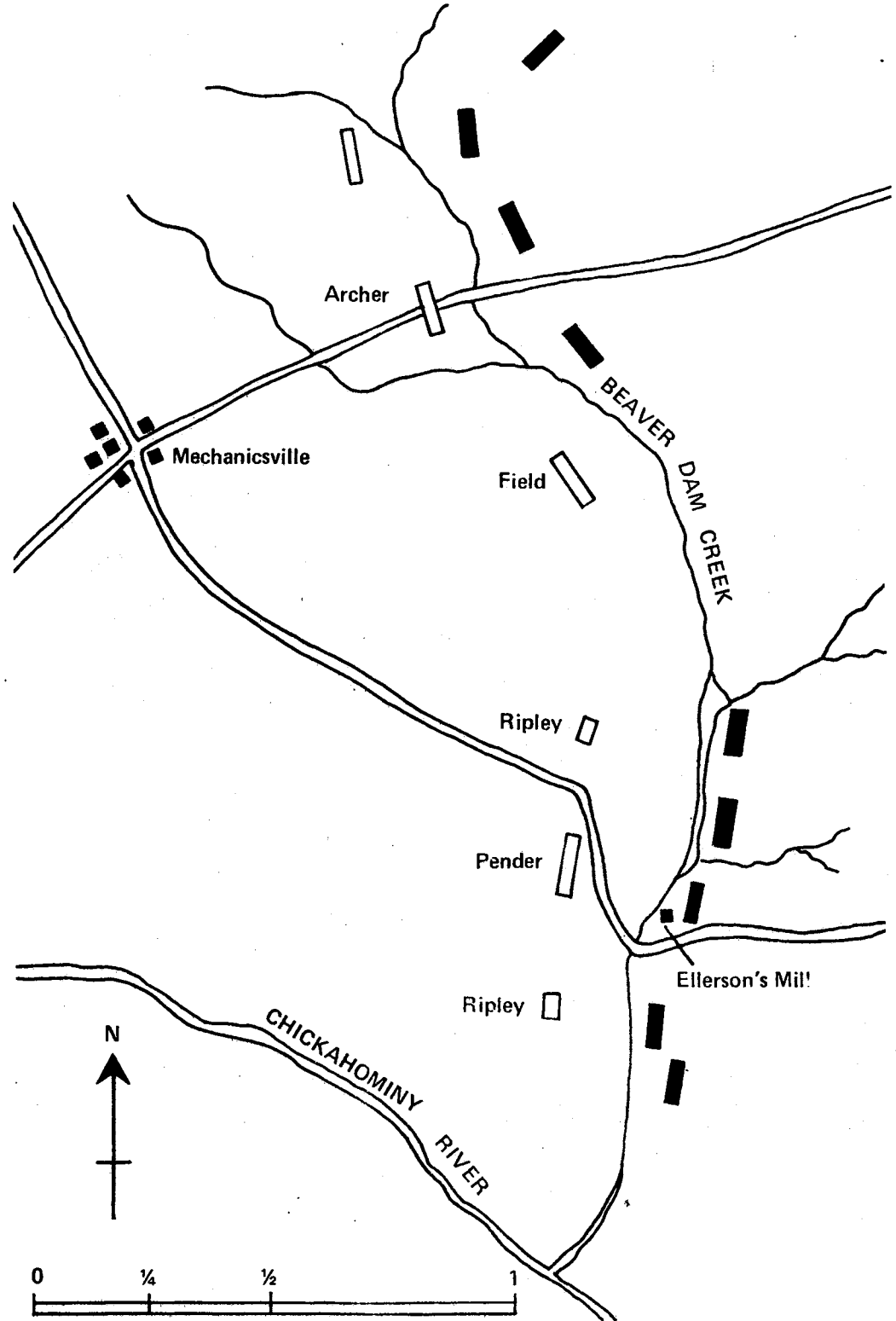


Figure 3. Battle of Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862.

the creek, and drove off the Union skirmishers and artillery.<sup>16</sup>

Pender, in his battle report, told of his actions:

I had changed my position in obedience to your orders [A. P. Hill's], bringing my brigade directly in front of the mill on Beaver Dam Creek. About this time the enemy seemed to make a faint attack upon the troops on my right, when those brigades moved forward, and I moved mine forward also until they had gained the creek, getting in the bed of it. Here our line was halted until a general concert of action could be had . . . . At this time I brought up a section from each of the three batteries I found in the plain in the rear [which then shelled the Federal positions] . . . . We moved forward soon after, crossing the run and mill-race with great difficulty. The Thirty-fourth North Carolina, [under] Col. Richard H. Riddick, was the first to gain the enemy's works . . . .<sup>17</sup>

General Lee ordered his troops to advance, and soon Pender's brigade was marching eastward from Ellerson's Mill toward Gaines' Mill. Porter's corps, which had been reinforced, was found to be dug in behind Boatswain Swamp. This position was first attacked by the brigades of Maxcy Gregg and Lawrence O. Branch. A. P. Hill then extended his right flank by ordering Pender forward. Skirmishers were thrown out, which drove a small group of Federals back to their main position. Pender then used an accompanying battery of artillery in an attempt to entice the Federals to return fire, thereby revealing their position, but this failed. Colonel Riddick's regiment had not yet arrived on the field, and Pender's weakened brigade was withdrawn from Hill's right and replaced by that of Brigadier General Archer. Pender's troops were then placed in reserve behind Branch's brigade on Hill's left center. Uniting with Riddick's regiment near New Cold

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 352-353; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 28, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 836.

<sup>17</sup> Report of William D. Pender, July 16, 1862, ibid., pp. 899-900.

Harbor, Pender formed his men into line of battle and moved against the Federals.<sup>18</sup> In his battle report, Pender explained the advance of his brigade:

We were soon hotly engaged, and drove the enemy slowly before us for about 250 yards. My brigade had started in weak, and suffered heavily here, and seeing fresh regiments of the enemy coming up constantly, I sent my aide . . . to ask for support. Two of my regiments, Sixteenth and Twenty-second North Carolina, had gained the crest of open ground, getting into the enemy's camp, but, finding themselves flanked, fell back, which caused those on the left, who were not so far advanced, to fall back also.<sup>19</sup>

At this time, the Thirty-seventh North Carolina Infantry Regiment of Branch's brigade under Colonel Charles C. Lee came up to reinforce Pender. Another advance was made, but again superior numbers forced the Confederates to fall back. The Battle of Gaines' Mill, which had begun about 2:00 p.m. and lasted until about dark, had brought heavy casualties to Pender's brigade. Among the severely wounded was Colonel Riddick, and Pender himself was slightly wounded in the right arm.<sup>20</sup>

Two days later on June 29, while another battle raged nearby at Savage's Station, Pender's brigade crossed the Chickahominy River and marched southward. The next day Lee's and McClellan's forces met once again in the area of White Oak Swamp near Frayser's Farm. The Light Division, including Pender's command, approached from the west on

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 900; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 28, 1863, ibid., pp. 836-837; Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, pp. 71-72.

<sup>19</sup> Report of William D. Pender, July 16, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 900.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 900-901; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 321; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 160.

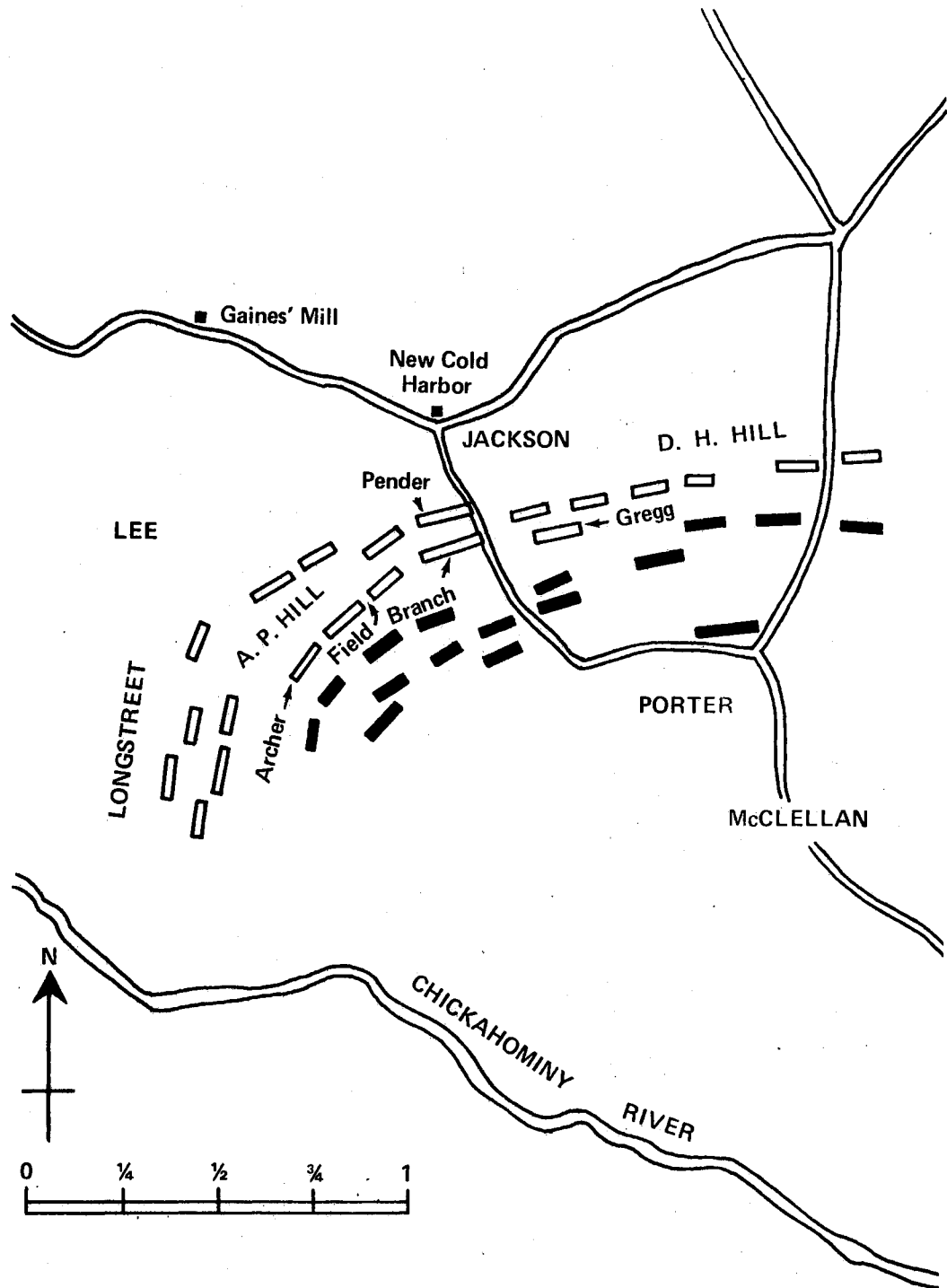


Figure 4. Battle of Gaines' Mill, June 27, 1862.

the Darbytown Road in support of the division commanded by Major General James Longstreet. After the battle had been in progress for a time, Hill sent Field's brigade forward to attack the Federal position. Pender's brigade was then sent to support Field, who had advanced with such ardor that he had become separated and was in danger of being cut off and surrounded by the Federals. As Pender's brigade reached the junction of the Long Bridge and Darbytown roads, it came under fire. At that moment, a Union regiment, which apparently did not see Pender's men, passed their front from right to left in an effort to regain an abandoned battery of rifled artillery. When the Federals were at a distance of seventy-five yards, Pender's infantry opened fire and scattered them. This reopened an escape route for Field's men. Several efforts were then made by the Federals to outflank Pender's brigade on the right. Pender left part of his brigade to face this threat and pushed forward with the remainder. After forcing an artillery battery to limber up and withdraw, Pender's ammunition became exhausted, and he was forced to retire. As darkness settled over the field, Pender posted two of Field's regiments whose brigade had also fallen back, to hold the front while his troops guarded the right flank. He then sent one of Field's regiments forward in an effort to outflank a Union force which was engaged with Confederates close by. It was soon discovered that Archer's brigade was on Pender's right. This ended the fighting for Pender's brigade in the Seven Days' Battles

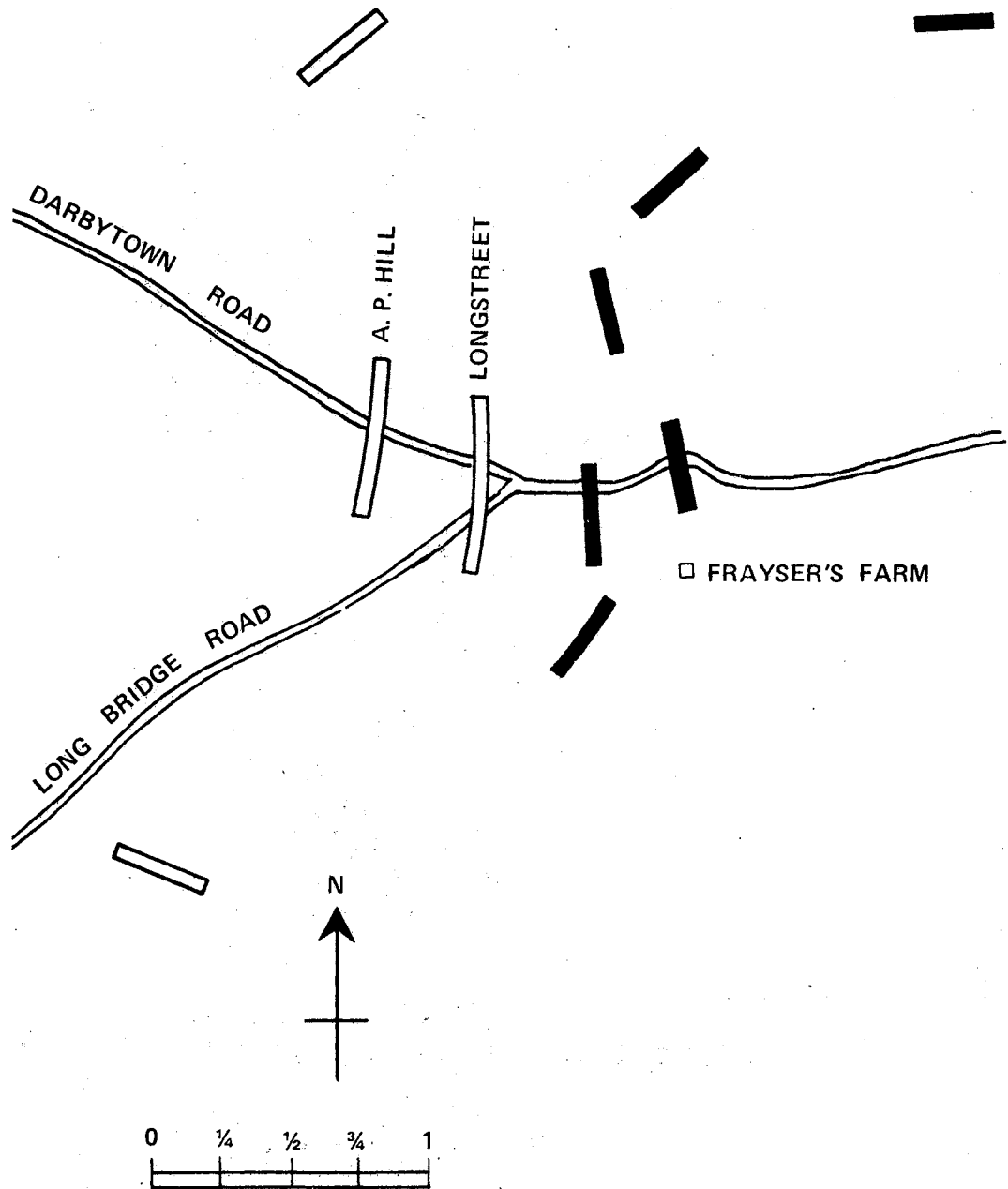


Figure 5. Battle of Frayser's Farm, June 30, 1862.



around Richmond.<sup>21</sup>

The next day, July 1, 1862, Pender wrote his wife, "God has spared me through another day's fight. We drove them again from their position [at Frayser's Farm], taking one General, [George A.] McCall, and two batteries of fine rifled guns. My Brigade took one of them and drove the enemy until after dark, holding the field until 3 a.m. this morning when we were relieved. We . . . are after them on their flank as they retreat."<sup>22</sup>

Casualties during the Seven Days' Battles, which ended at Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862, were very heavy in the Army of Northern Virginia compared to those of the Army of the Potomac. Lee lost about 20,000 killed and wounded while McClellan's casualties numbered about 10,000. Offensive tactics in the difficult terrain of the Peninsula had proved to be extremely costly when attacking an enemy protected by breastworks as well as natural obstacles. Pender's brigade, which had numbered between 2,300 and 2,400 on June 25, had lost around 800 men, or approximately one-third of its total strength. Three of Pender's regimental commanders had been wounded--Colonels James Conner, Richard H. Riddick, and William J. Hoke of the Twenty-second, Thirty-fourth, and Thirty-eighth North Carolina infantry regiments respectively. For

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<sup>21</sup>Report of William D. Pender, July 16, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 901; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 28, 1863, ibid., pp. 837-838; Douglas S. Freeman, R. E. Lee (4 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934-1935), Vol. II, p. 191; William W. Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1957), pp. 61-62; Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, pp. 86-88.

<sup>22</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 161.

the remainder of July, Pender spent much time rebuilding his brigade.<sup>23</sup>

The battles around Richmond had firmly established Pender as a combat leader. His cool courage and calm behavior was evident throughout the campaign. At Seven Pines, he had thrown the Federals into confusion long enough to escape what amounted to a trap. Mechanicsville, Gaines' Mill, and Frayser's Farm demonstrated his aggressive spirit against superior numbers. His control over his units had remained firm. His battlefield promotion by President Davis at Seven Pines was confirmed in the confidence of his superiors, especially A. P. Hill,

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.; Thomas L. Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1900), p. 86; report of William D. Pender, July 16, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XI, pt. 2, p. 902; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 28, 1863, ibid., p. 839.

## CHAPTER III

### THE DEVELOPING COMMANDER: THE SECOND MANASSAS CAMPAIGN

Even as McClellan's Army of the Potomac was being pushed back from the gates of the Confederate capital, another threat appeared in northern Virginia. On June 26, 1862, the day that the Battle of Mechanicsville was being fought, another Union army was formed from the forces in the area. This unit, commanded by Major General John Pope, was named the Army of Virginia. Its task was to guard Washington, protect the Shenandoah Valley, and operate against Confederate communication lines at Gordonsville and Charlottesville.<sup>1</sup>

With McClellan inactive at Harrison's Landing below Richmond, General Lee sent Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's command northward to meet the new threat. Jackson, who had performed brilliantly in the Shenandoah Valley campaign in May and June, but had mysteriously failed after joining Lee for the offensive against the Army of the Potomac, arrived with his command at Gordonsville on July 19. Pope's army at this time numbered around 50,000 strong, while Jackson's semi-independent force, which was subordinate to Lee's overall planning, contained only 12,000 men in his own division and that of Major General Richard S. Ewell. To augment Jackson's command

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<sup>1</sup>Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 61; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. I, p. 659, Vol. II, p. 1.

and to enable him to deal with Pope, Lee transferred A. P. Hill's Light Division to Gordonsville. This brought the strength of Jackson's command up to 24,000.<sup>2</sup>

Pender's brigade left Richmond for Gordonsville on the night of July 28, preceding the departure of its commander by about forty-eight hours. The young brigadier was happy for the change, although he knew that he would be farther away from his beloved wife and that her letters were likely to be delayed. The occupation of the Richmond defenses had made him restless, and he was anxious to get away.<sup>3</sup>

Having received information that a portion of the Army of Virginia was at Culpeper Court House, Jackson saw his chance to strike before Union reinforcements could arrive.<sup>4</sup> As the Confederates prepared for the march, Pender revealed to his wife his innermost thoughts: "I pray sincerely as I can--night and morning--for a speedy close to this war. I am tired of glory and all its shadows for it has no substance. We work, struggle, make enemies, climb up in rank and what is the result--nothing. It is very much like gambling, money is won but soon spent and nothing left behind." Despite this, however, Pender remained confident. He even contemplated a possible Confederate invasion of

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 662, 671; report of Robert E. Lee, April 18, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 176; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, ibid., p. 181; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 239, 271; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 161-163.

<sup>4</sup>Report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 182.

Maryland or Pennsylvania.<sup>5</sup>

On August 7, 1862, Jackson's three divisions left Gordonsville and marched northward toward Culpeper. Ewell's division went by way of Liberty Mills, while Jackson's, under Brigadier General Charles S. Winder, and Hill's, took the more direct route. On August 9, the Light Division, headed by the brigade of Edward L. Thomas, which was followed by those of Branch, Archer, Pender, Field, and Leroy A. Stafford, approached Culpeper. The day was extremely hot and many of Pender's dust-covered infantrymen became stragglers, some with sunstroke. As the column drew nearer to its objective, the troops could hear the growing rumble of artillery a few miles to the north.<sup>6</sup>

Ahead, just to the north of Cedar Mountain, Jackson was involved in a desperate struggle with the Union Second Corps under Major General Nathaniel P. Banks. What had begun in midmorning as an artillery duel had developed into a hotly contested infantry battle by late afternoon. The Confederate infantry was astride the Orange-Culpeper Road with Ewell's division on the right and Winder's (Jackson's) on the left. Major General Banks, despite orders from Pope not to bring on a general engagement before the Army of Virginia could be concentrated, decided to attack. His movements were partially covered by the rolling terrain and by patches of dense woods, which only added to the confusion on the Confederate side. At 5:45 p.m. the Federals advanced all along the line. Brigadier General Jubal A. Early's brigade of Ewell's division

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<sup>5</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 164-165.

<sup>6</sup>Report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 182; report of Ambrose P. Hill, March 8, 1863, ibid., pp. 214-215.

stood its ground, but, on the left, Jackson's division, now under Brigadier General William B. Taliaferro (Winder having been mortally wounded), began to fall back. Federal infantry, which had previously been hidden in the woods, poured musket fire into the left and rear of the wavering Confederate regiments. The left flank of Jackson's command appeared to be close to rout. Many of the soldiers panicked as the Confederate left fell back, exposing the left flank of Early's brigade.<sup>7</sup>

Then, just as disaster seemed imminent, the leading brigades of the Light Division rushed onto the battlefield. Thomas' brigade was sent to the right to support Early, while those of Branch, Archer, and Pender were thrown in on the left to halt the Federal tide. As these latter brigades moved forward, their ranks were opened to allow scattered groups of disorganized regiments to pass to the rear to reform. Branch advanced on the right of the road and Archer and Pender extended the Confederate line to the left. Banks, the Union commander, had by now thrown in all his men. He had no reserves, and his troops were exhausted by their efforts to crush Jackson's forces. Pender advanced his brigade on the extreme flank and fell in alongside Archer's. This extended the Confederate line so that it overlapped the Union forces. Pender moved to the front, but found his brigade to be flanked on the right. He then moved obliquely to the

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<sup>7</sup> Report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 182-183; report of Robert E. Lee, April 18, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 178; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 273-274; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 29-30, 36-37; George F. R. Henderson, Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1961), pp. 409-410.

right to join the left of Archer's command. Their brigades soon became partially mixed, so Pender and Archer worked out an agreement to take charge of the left and right respectively of their combined position, regardless of regimental possession. The weight of A. P. Hill's fresh brigades was too much for the Federals, and they gave way and retreated to the north. Pender's brigade was involved in some skirmishing during the evening, and he had to detach the Twenty-second North Carolina Infantry Regiment to protect his left when a body of Federal cavalry appeared. This mounted force soon rode off, however, after its commander saw the danger of being cut off by the Confederate pursuit.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, the Battle of Cedar Mountain ended with the retreat of Banks' Second Corps, but Confederate victory came only after hard fighting and near disaster. This is even more unique considering the fact that, while Banks had some 8,030 men on the field, Jackson had at his disposal 16,868. Union casualties totaled 2,353; Confederate losses numbered 1,338. Hill's Light Division sustained 394 casualties, of which only fifteen--two killed, eleven wounded, and two missing--were from Pender's brigade. Pender's light loss was due in part because his brigade extended beyond the Federal right flank and thereby did not receive the heavy fire sustained by the Confederate brigades

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<sup>8</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 39-40; report of Robert E. Lee, April 18, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, pp. 178-179; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 273-274; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, pp. 183-184; report of William D. Pender, August 21, 1862, ibid., p. 225; report of James J. Archer, August 14, 1862, ibid., p. 219; Henderson, Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War, pp. 411-412.

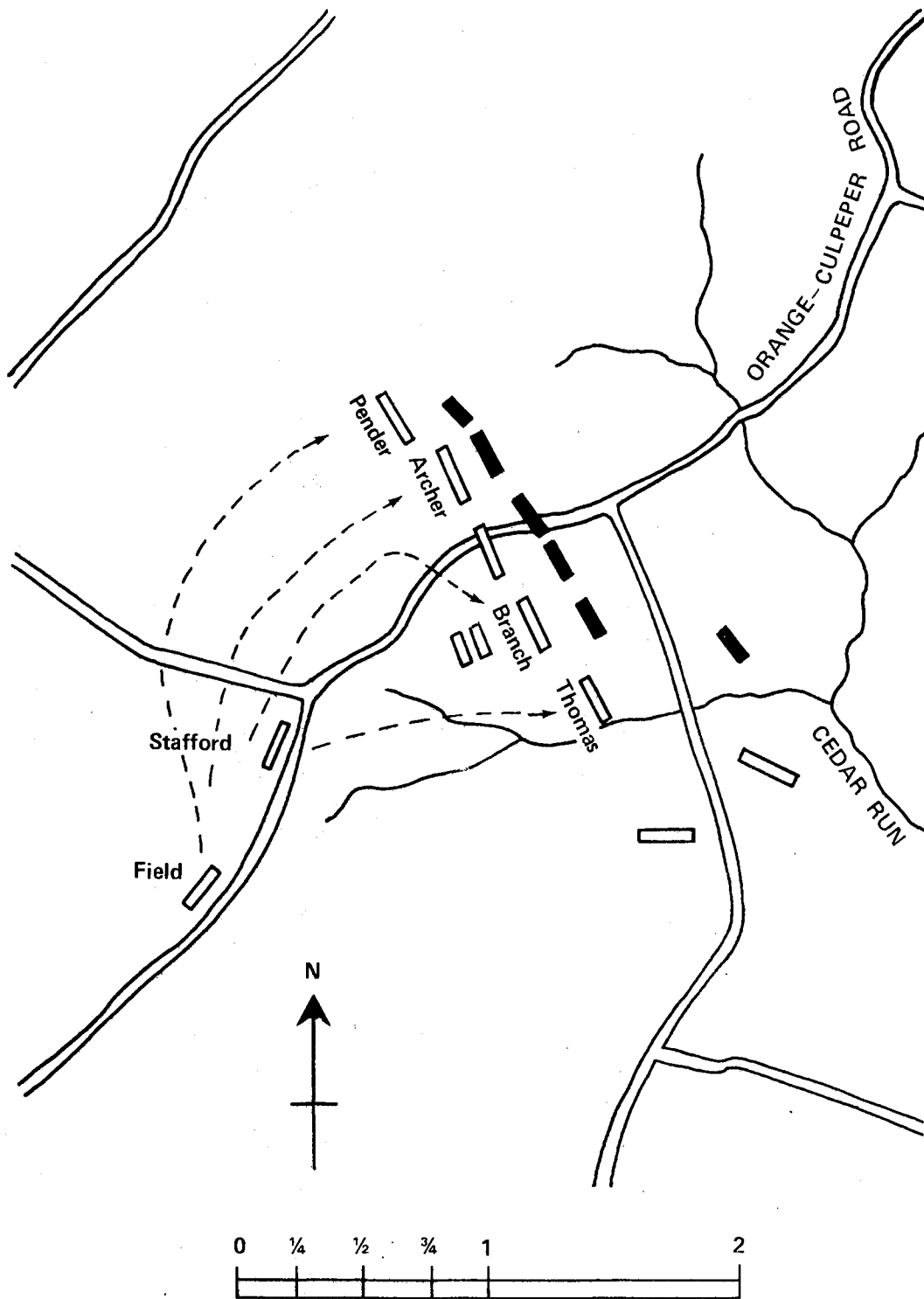


Figure 6: Battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862.



on his right.<sup>9</sup>

On the night of August 11, Jackson returned his troops to the vicinity of Gordonsville to avoid being attacked by the Federal force in his front, which had been greatly reinforced by Major General Pope. Meanwhile, Confederate leaders at Richmond, after receiving reports that Pope was being largely reinforced by elements from McClellan's Army of the Potomac and by the Union troops from the North Carolina coast, decided to concentrate their major effort against the Union Army of Virginia. Sensing that the Confederate capital was no longer in immediate danger, General Lee on August 13 sent Major General James Longstreet's command to join Jackson at Gordonsville. The Confederate cavalry, under Major General James E. B. Stuart, was also sent. Two days later, on August 15, Lee left Richmond to join the now combined Army of Northern Virginia, consisting of Jackson's command or "left wing," Longstreet's command or "right wing," and Stuart's cavalry.<sup>10</sup>

The Confederate advance began the next day, and on August 20, the army crossed the Rapidan River. Longstreet's command was ordered to occupy a position near Beverly Ford and the Orange and Alexandria Railroad bridge facing Pope's army, which had concentrated behind the Rappahannock River. While Longstreet provided a screen for Jackson's movements, the latter marched his command northward to turn Pope's

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<sup>9</sup> Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65, pp. 87-88; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 102; report of Ambrose P. Hill, March 8, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 216; report of William D. Pender, August 21, 1862, ibid., p. 225.

<sup>10</sup> Report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 4, 1863, ibid., p. 185; report of Robert E. Lee, June 8, 1863, ibid., pp. 551-552; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 249, 253-254, 275-276; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 63.

right flank and come in on his rear. Brigadier General Pender, riding a horse captured from the Federals at Cedar Mountain, reached the vicinity of Warrenton Springs with his brigade on August 23.<sup>11</sup> "We had today," he reported to his wife the next day, "the most terrible artillery duel, but we did not have fifteen casualties. It lasted from 11 a.m. till night with slight intermissions. I can form no idea of what we are to do but suppose to advance."<sup>12</sup>

For the next two days, the Light Division covered fifty-four miles, arriving at Manassas Junction on August 27. This placed Jackson's command between the main portion of Pope's army and the Federal capital of Washington. As the Confederates approached Manassas, they were met by a New Jersey brigade under Brigadier General George W. Taylor, which had just arrived by train from Alexandria.<sup>13</sup> Pender later related in his official report his part in the engagement:

. . . My brigade being in rear and a little to the right of Generals Branch and Archer, I advanced, so as to form an extension of their line of battle, but as they advanced upon the enemy my brigade continued to move forward, passing by the hospital near our advanced redoubts, and from thence bearing a little to the right in the direction where the railroad crosses Bull Run going east, but when getting a little lower down than the railroad bridge I changed direction, so as to get possession of it. My skirmishers met the enemy at the river, and soon my whole brigade was engaged

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<sup>11</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, June 8, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 552; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 276-277; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 670.

<sup>12</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 169.

<sup>13</sup>Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 670.

with the enemy across the river. I held this position for a while, and then threw two regiments across preparatory to advancing farther, but at the instigation of General Field withdrew, going lower down and crossing, in order to cut the enemy off, but they had left before I could form on the east side of the river . . . .<sup>14</sup>

In this minor affair, Pender lost one man killed and three wounded. Two hundred Federal prisoners were taken, and Brigadier General Taylor was mortally wounded. Manassas Junction, which was Pope's supply base, was captured. Most of these supplies, which included various kinds of meat, flour, coffee, sugar, liquor, uniforms, and even canned goods, fruit, cakes, and candy, had to be destroyed because of the lack of wagons and to deny them to Pope's army.<sup>15</sup>

Pender's brigade, along with the rest of Hill's division, spent the night at Centreville, and joined Jackson the next day, August 28, at Groveton, but was not engaged in the battle between the Confederate divisions of Taliaferro and Ewell and the Federal division of Brigadier General Rufus King.<sup>16</sup>

Believing that he could destroy Jackson before Longstreet arrived with reinforcements, Pope ordered the Army of Virginia to concentrate on the field of Manassas. The morning of August 29 saw the opening of the Second Battle of Manassas. Jackson's command was positioned behind the embankment of an unfinished railroad north of the Warrenton Turn-

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<sup>14</sup> Report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, *ibid.*, p. 697.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 699; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 670; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. IV, p. 162; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 99-100.

<sup>16</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 670.

pike near Groveton, with Hill's Light Division on the left, Ewell's division (now under Brigadier General Alexander R. Lawton) in the center, and Jackson's old division (under Brigadier General William E. Starke) on the right. Both Ewell and Taliaferro had been wounded the previous day. The Light Division was drawn up into two lines with the brigades of Gregg, Field, and Thomas in the front ranks, and those of Branch, Pender, and Archer in support. Dense woods gave cover to the infantry, but severely limited the use of artillery.<sup>17</sup>

The hardest fighting of the day took place along Hill's front. Six separate Federal assaults were conducted against the Confederate left, but all were repulsed. Gregg's brigade, on the extreme left, held its position with the bayonet after exhausting its ammunition.<sup>18</sup> As the battle continued to increase in its intensity during the afternoon, Pender's brigade moved forward to support the brigade of Colonel Thomas. "My men moved forward very gallantly," recounted Pender, "driving the enemy back across the railroad cut, through the woods on the opposite side, and beyond their batteries in the adjoining field. A battery of the enemy which was on the right of this wood as we advanced was flanked by my command and the cannoneers deserted their pieces."<sup>19</sup> Pender then halted his men at the edge of a field in front of several units of Federal infantry and artillery. After

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<sup>17</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 111; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 27, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 645.

<sup>18</sup>Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 670-671.

<sup>19</sup>Report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, *ibid.*, pp. 697-698.

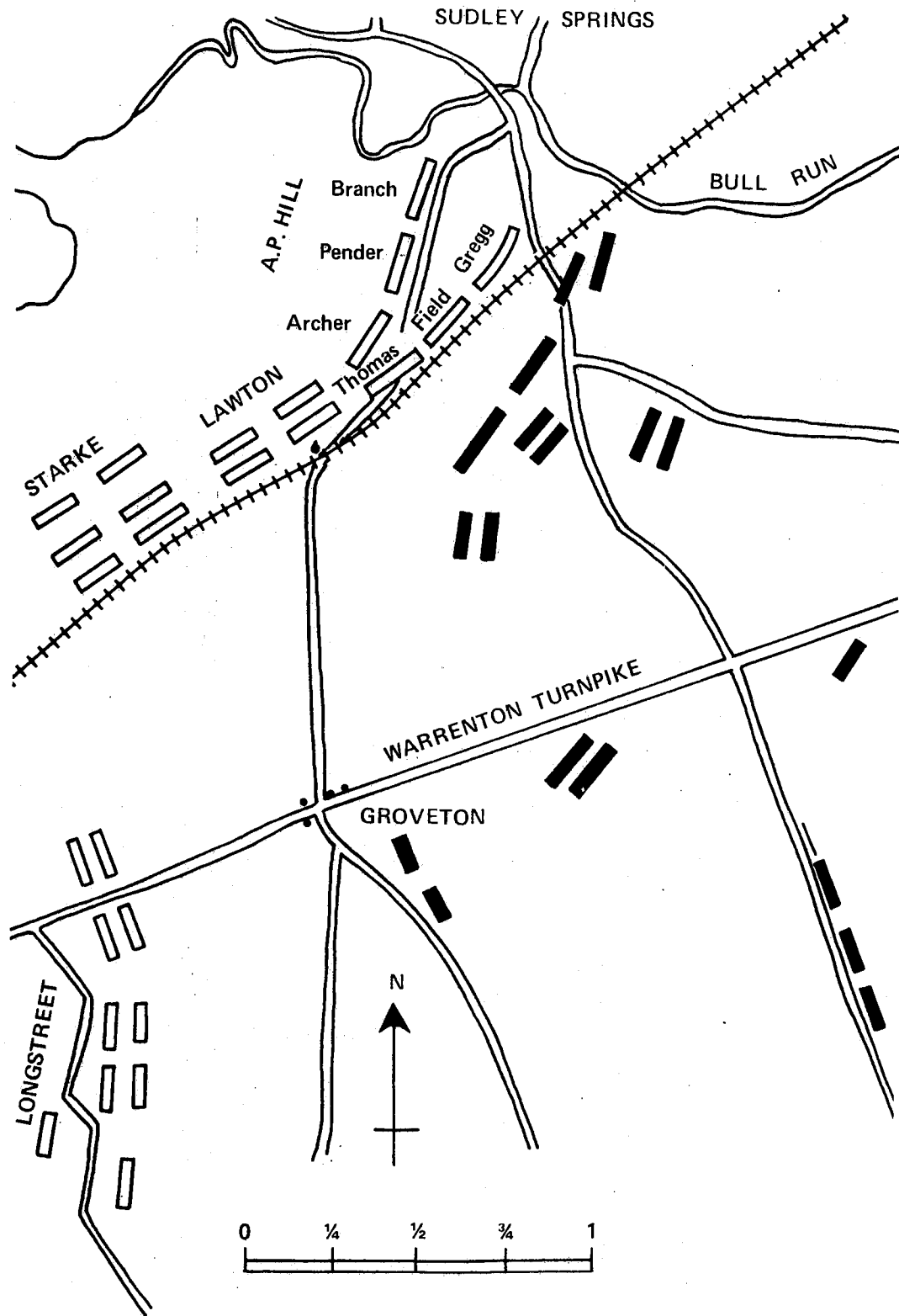


Figure 7. Second Battle of Manassas, August 29, 1862 (Afternoon).

being promised support by an officer in one of the brigades of Jackson's old division, Pender crossed the field to attack the Federal batteries.<sup>20</sup> "My men advanced well," he stated, "receiving grape from their batteries; but support being waited for in vain, and seeing columns on my left and right maneuvering to flank me, I withdrew, and marched back to the railroad cut . . . ."<sup>21</sup> Archer's brigade then relieved Pender's, which was again placed in reserve.<sup>22</sup>

During Pender's attack, he was knocked down by a bullet or shell fragment, but refused to leave the field. He was evidently saved from a serious wound by the wool hat which he was wearing. Characteristically, he told his wife: "My head is well but [a] little more bald than of yore, a small quantity having been shaved off . . . ."<sup>23</sup>

The battle was renewed the next day, August 30, with the Federals once again attacking Jackson's position. Longstreet's command, which had arrived on the field the day before, but which had not been actively engaged, formed the right flank of the united Army of Northern Virginia. Major General Pope, the Federal commander, apparently ignored the dangerous existence of Longstreet's powerful divisions on his left flank as he assailed Jackson.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 698.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.; report of James J. Archer, March 1, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 700.

<sup>23</sup>Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 671; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 171.

<sup>24</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, June 8, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 557; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 283; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 73.

At about 2:00 p.m. a heavy Federal attack against Archer and Thomas made some gains, but was soon repulsed by the brigades of Pender and Field (now under Colonel John M. Brockenbrough). Later in the afternoon the Confederates began a general advance against Pope. While Longstreet attacked the exposed left flank of the Army of Virginia, Jackson began to press forward. Hill ordered the brigades of Archer, Thomas, Branch, and Pender to attack the Federal right flank. As they advanced, they drove everything before them.<sup>25</sup> "During the fight," Pender told his wife, "I commanded three brigades and parts of two others. I presumed to direct and the officers seemed very willing to have someone who would take the responsibility. My command took several pieces of Art[illery], my brigade taking two."<sup>26</sup> Pender continued to advance until dark, resting his brigade along Bull Run Creek that night.<sup>27</sup>

The general Confederate advance had thrown the Union Army of Virginia into confusion. By nightfall, Pope had been badly defeated, and was retreating toward Centreville and Washington. Heavy rains during the night prevented a vigorous pursuit, but the next morning saw Jackson's command again on the move. Crossing Bull Run Creek at Sudley Ford, the rain-soaked Confederate infantry marched northward several miles, intercepted the Little River Turnpike, and turned right in the

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<sup>25</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 671; report of Robert E. Lee, June 8, 1863, ibid., p. 557; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 283.

<sup>26</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 170.

<sup>27</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, p. 671; report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, ibid., p. 698.

direction of Fairfax Court House. The Light Division, including Pender's command, camped for the night at Pleasant Valley.<sup>28</sup>

On the morning of September 1, the pursuit was continued. Soon the Confederates made contact with portions of the Third and Ninth Federal corps at Chantilly. Pender received orders from Jackson to support Brockenbrough, whose brigade was hard pressed. As Pender approached the front his brigade became slightly disorganized. Before he knew what had happened, two of his regiments, the Sixteenth and Thirty-fourth North Carolina infantry, became separated from the main portion of the brigade and veered off to the right through the dense woods. Pender continued to the front and placed his command between those of Thomas and Branch. Pender's two regiments on the right suffered severely from Federal fire on their front and flank. The commander of the Thirty-fourth North Carolina Infantry, Colonel Richard H. Riddick was killed, as well as Lieutenant Colonel Eli H. Miller. Captain L. W. Stowe, commanding the Sixteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment, was wounded. Pender's casualties, from the opening of the Second Battle of Manassas until the engagement at Chantilly was broken off in the driving rain, amounted to 24 killed and 191 wounded. Lee's total losses during this period numbered 9,197, while Pope lost 16,054.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Report of Robert E. Lee, June 8, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 557; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 283-284; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 129-130.

<sup>29</sup> Report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 2, pp. 698-699; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 672; Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65, pp. 88-89; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 105.



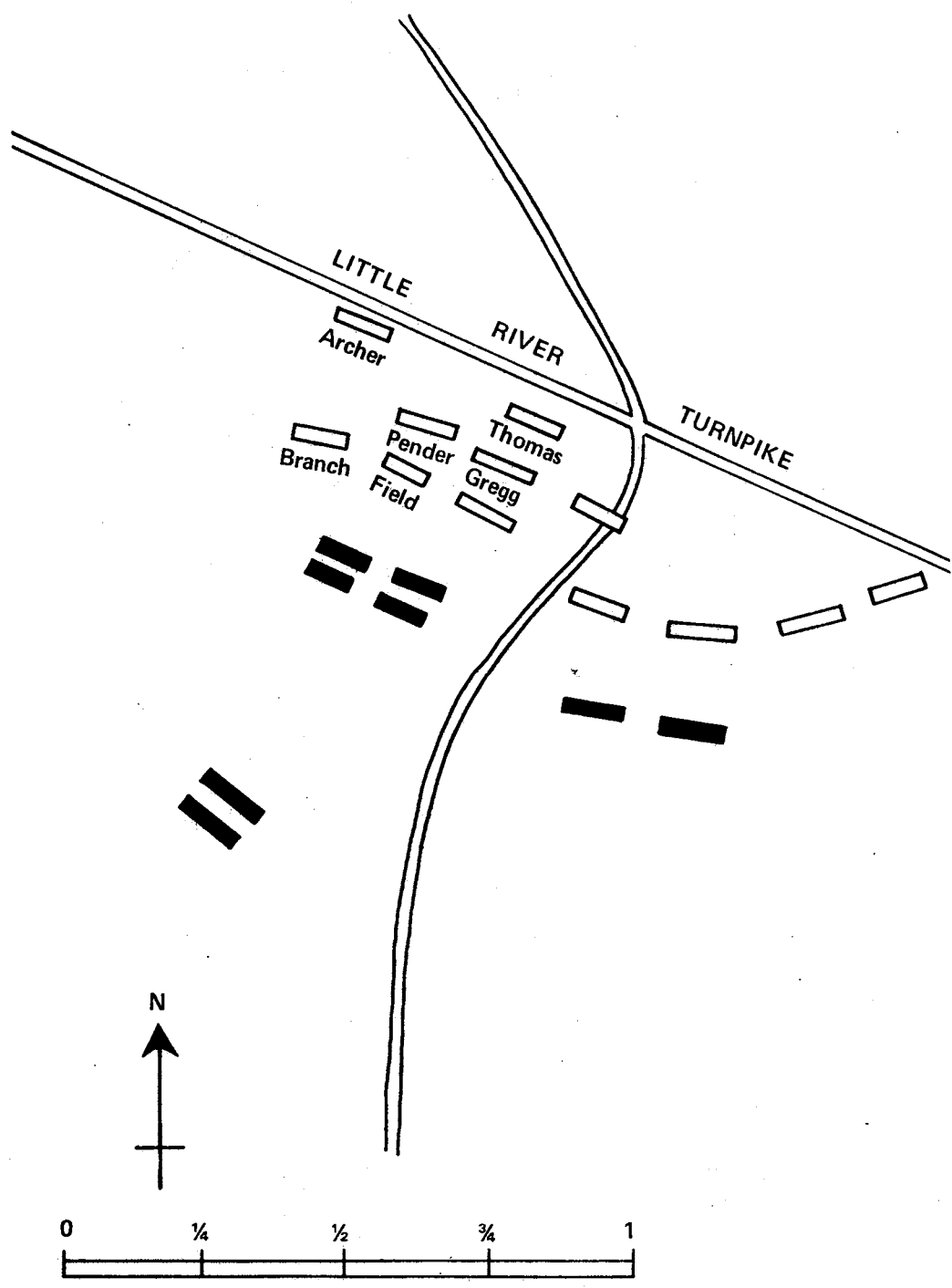


Figure 8. Battle of Chantilly, September 1, 1862.

In the space of exactly three months, from June 1, 1862, when General Lee took command of the Army of Northern Virginia, to September 1, the war had been carried from the gates of Richmond to the doorstep of the Federal capital. McClellan's Army of the Potomac had evacuated the Peninsula and Pope's Army of Virginia had been badly defeated and pushed back to Washington.

Pender had been conspicuous throughout the campaign. His actions at Cedar Mountain, when he rushed his brigade to the Confederate left, outflanked, and helped to throw back the strong Federal attack, were instrumental in saving Jackson's command from defeat and possible annihilation. On the march, Pender was swift and diligent, equaling the record set by Jackson's brigades in the Valley campaign. His performance at Manassas was especially praiseworthy. Oblivious to danger, Pender helped repulse several attacks and spearheaded the advance on August 30 which drove Pope's right flank from the field. Although he had no opportunity to demonstrate his abilities at Chantilly, his commanding officers observed him as a developing combat leader upon whom they would depend at critical moments in the future.

## CHAPTER IV

### ACROSS THE POTOMAC: THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN, 1862

Following the Second Manassas campaign, little time was lost by General Lee in deciding upon the next course of action. Although the Army of Northern Virginia was ill-equipped for such a move--with provisions lacking, uniforms in rags, and many soldiers without shoes-- Lee decided to cross the Potomac River into Maryland. His main adversary would once again be George B. McClellan. Pope had been relieved of his Army of Virginia command on September 2, 1862, and the troops were absorbed into the Army of the Potomac.<sup>1</sup>

Moving northward from the vicinity of Chantilly, the Army of Northern Virginia crossed the Potomac at White's Ford near Leesburg. Pender's brigade, as part of Jackson's command, crossed the river on September 5. Before marching his troops into Maryland, however, Pender called his regimental officers to his headquarters. There, he informed them of their destination, and told them to conduct themselves as officers and gentlemen. He cautioned them to keep a firm hand on their commands, and said that he would hold them responsible for the conduct

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<sup>1</sup>Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, pp. 351-353; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 659, 879; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 312-313; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 144.

of their men.<sup>2</sup>

Two days later, on September 7, Pender's brigade was encamped near Frederick, Maryland. With confidence, Pender informed his wife: "Are you not surprised to find us in Md. We crossed day before yesterday and now have possession of this part of the state . . . . Gen. Lee is in good earnest and the Yankees are terribly frightened. May the Lord have mercy upon us and give us success, not for glory or conquest, but as the only way to peace."<sup>3</sup> Pender then emphasized his admiration for Lee, and for the first time, gave a hint of dissatisfaction with Jackson:

Md. is rising, we have a victorious army, and no troops in our front. Gen. Lee has shown great Generalship and the greatest boldness. There never was such a campaign, not even by Napoleon. Our men march and fight without provisions, living on green corn when nothing better can be had. But all this kills up our men. Jackson would kill up any army the way he marches and the bad management in the subsistence Dept.--Gen. Lee is my man.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps Pender's dislike for Jackson, which continued from this point on, was a product of the growing feud between Jackson and his division commander, A. P. Hill. The quarrel began on the day before the Battle of Cedar Mountain, when Jackson failed to inform Hill of a change in marching orders, which resulted in Hill's delayed start. Now, as the

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 144-145; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 313; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 980; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, p. 685, Vol. IV, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 172.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

Confederate tide swept into Maryland, Hill was "under arrest for neglect of duty" at the insistence of Jackson.<sup>5</sup>

After spending several days in the vicinity just south of Frederick, during which the Confederate troops were not allowed to enter the town without special permission, the Army of Northern Virginia was once more on the move. On September 10, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad bridge across the Monocacy River was destroyed, and the major portions of the army marched through Frederick toward Hagerstown to the west. Jackson's command passed through Middletown, over Turner's Gap, and halted for the night at Boonsboro. The next day, while a portion of Longstreet's command continued on to Hagerstown, Jackson marched westward to Williamsport, where he recrossed the Potomac River into Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

This maneuver was designed to surround and force the surrender of the Union garrison stationed at Harpers Ferry. While the divisions of Ewell (still under Brigadier General Alexander R. Lawton) and Jackson (now under Brigadier General John R. Jones) moved from Williamsport through the North Mountain Depot to Martinsburg, the Light Division, again under Hill, who had been released from arrest, took the direct route to Martinsburg. A Union brigade, under Brigadier General Julius White, was driven from Martinsburg on September 12, and forced

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<sup>5</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 12-15, 147-148.

<sup>6</sup>Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. IV, pp. 164-165; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 145; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 313-314; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 953; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 163.

back upon Harpers Ferry. The following morning, the Confederate force, with Hill's division in the lead, came within sight of the Union garrison at Harpers Ferry.<sup>7</sup>

By the afternoon of September 14, the garrison was surrounded by Jackson's three divisions on the northwest, west, and southwest, while the divisions of Major General Lafayette McLaws and Brigadier General John G. Walker (both of Longstreet's command) occupied respectively Maryland Heights to the northeast and Loudoun Heights to the southeast. Jackson's command was separated from Walker's division by the Shenandoah River, and both of these forces were separated from McLaws by the Potomac. The Federals were drawn up in strength along the northern end of Bolivar Heights, just west of Harpers Ferry.<sup>8</sup>

While Jones, commanding Jackson's old division, was sent to demonstrate against the Federal right, Hill was directed to march along the left bank of the Shenandoah in order to turn the Federal left and enter Harpers Ferry. Lawton was to advance along the Charles Town Turnpike in support of Hill's left.<sup>9</sup>

As Hill moved his division into position, he noticed that the

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<sup>7</sup> Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, p. 685, Vol. IV, pp. 164-165; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 145; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 313-314; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 980; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, ibid., p. 953; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 164-165.

<sup>8</sup> Report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 953.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 954; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, ibid., p. 980.

Federal infantry, which occupied the hill on the Union left flank, was not supported by artillery. Hill then ordered the brigades of Pender, Archer, and Brockenbrough, supported by Thomas, to gain the crest and drive the blue-clad infantry back upon their breastworks. Pender was entrusted with the responsibility for this assault.<sup>10</sup>

While the brigades of Branch and Gregg advanced along the left bank of the Shenandoah on Hill's right, Pender swept forward with the three brigades under his command along a byroad toward the Federal position. Pender's brigade, temporarily under Colonel R. H. Brewer, led the assault. The Federals were driven from the crest of the hill with but slight resistance as the Confederates advanced to within sixty yards of the main breastworks. With the task successfully completed, Pender withdrew his own brigade, which had advanced ahead of the others, a short distance. The attack, which Pender had handled with much skill, sealed the fate of the Harpers Ferry garrison. During the night, Hill's chief of artillery, Lieutenant Colonel R. Lindsay Walker, placed several batteries of artillery on the captured ground.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 954; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 147; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 317.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 147; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 954; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 980; report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, *ibid.*, p. 1004; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, p. 685, Vol. IV, p. 165; Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General, p. 101; J. F. J. Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade" (Philadelphia: King and Baird, Printers, 1866), p. 43.

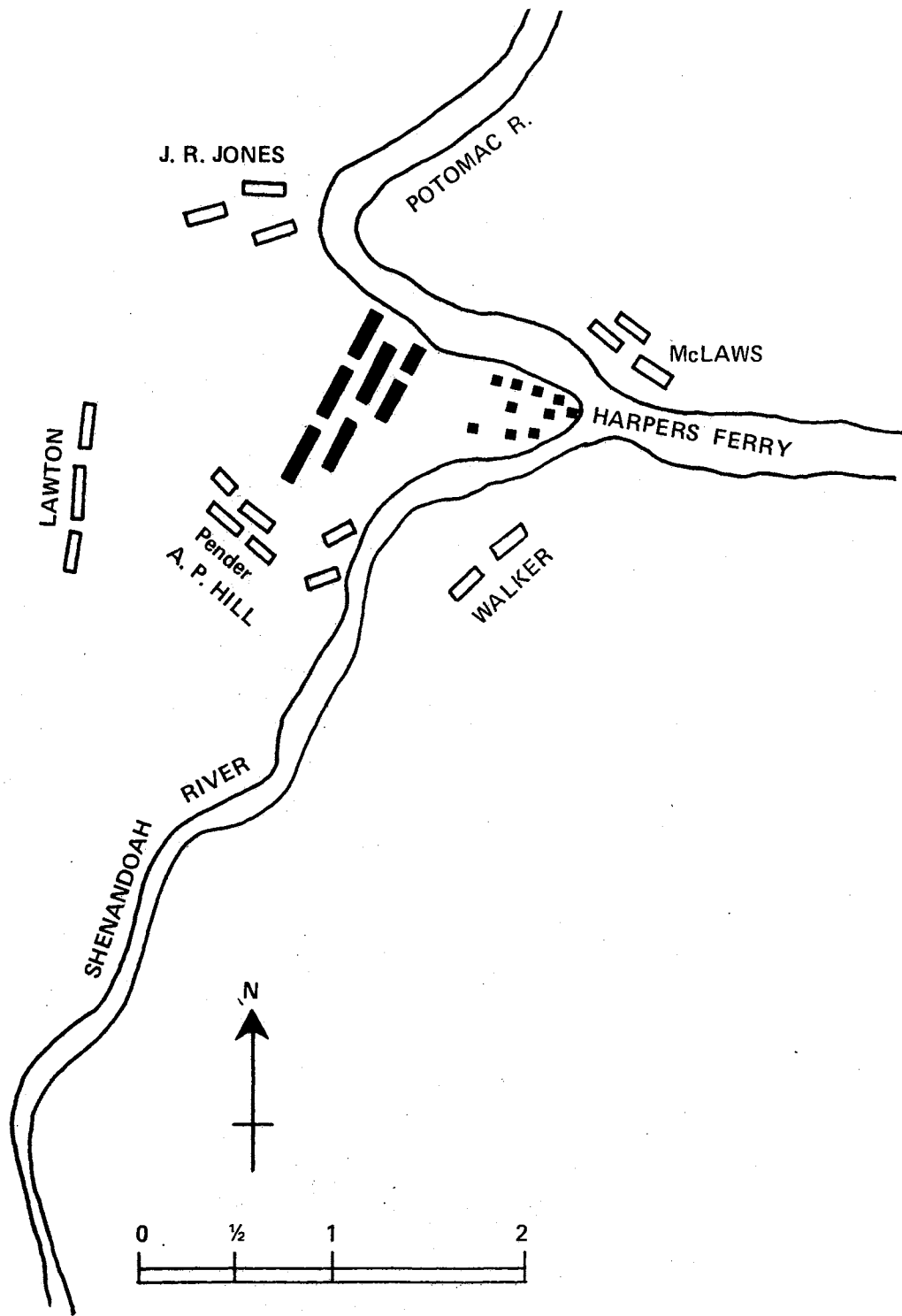


Figure 9. Capture of Harpers Ferry, September 14-15, 1862.



At dawn on September 15, Walker opened fire with his artillery, to which the Federals replied. An hour later the Federal fire had all but ceased. Walker's guns fell silent, and once again Pender, supported by Thomas, advanced toward the Union position. Almost immediately the Federal artillery opened fire again and halted the attack. Two Confederate artillery batteries were then rushed forward, and a rapid fire was opened upon the Union lines. Surrounded on all sides and pounded by artillery, the Federal garrison of 11,000 men soon surrendered. The casualties sustained by the Light Division in the two-day struggle numbered 69, of which Pender lost 2 killed, and 20 wounded.<sup>12</sup>

As the fate of Harpers Ferry was being decided, the remainder of Lee's army was taking up positions at Sharpsburg, Maryland, just west of Antietam Creek. With only about 18,000 men, Lee stood in a dangerous position, with his back to the Potomac River, and facing the whole of McClellan's Army of the Potomac. McClellan's men, after forcing their way through the South Mountain passes, were marching toward Sharpsburg. Then, at noon on the day Harpers Ferry fell, a courier rode into Lee's quarters with a message from Jackson announcing the surrender.<sup>13</sup>

After leaving Hill's division at Harpers Ferry to receive the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, pp. 954-956; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, ibid., pp. 980-981; report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, ibid., pp. 1004-1005; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, p. 685, Vol. IV, p. 165; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 197.

<sup>13</sup> Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, pp. 378-379.

surrender of the Federal garrison and to secure the captured stores, Jackson, with his other two divisions, marched to join Lee at Sharpsburg. The divisions of McLaws and Walker were ordered to follow. The divisions of Jackson and Walker reached Lee on September 16.<sup>14</sup>

Very liberal terms were granted to the 11,000 officers and men of the Harpers Ferry garrison. All were paroled, the officers retaining their side arms and private baggage. The contrast between the victors and the vanquished presented a strange and startling picture. The Federals were spotlessly dressed in brand-new uniforms; their buttons and gold and silver trappings glittered in the sun. The Confederates, however, were dressed in rags, and many had no shoes. Also captured were 13,000 small arms, 73 cannons, and around 200 wagons, along with numerous other quartermaster stores and provisions.<sup>15</sup>

The men of Pender's brigade who had been denied their part of the spoils at Manassas the month before when they had been sent to drive off Taylor's New Jersey brigade, now took advantage of the captured stores. The men feasted on canned lobster, meat, crackers, coffee, and cake. Their modest apparel was supplemented by captured shoes, blankets, and underclothing. Many Confederate pockets were stuffed with candy.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 148; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 318.

<sup>15</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 198-199; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 760.

<sup>16</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 200; Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 43.

On the morning of September 17, as Hill made preparations to rejoin the Army of Northern Virginia, the Battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam) began. At dawn, Federal artillery opened a heavy fire against the Confederate left, which was commanded by Jackson. Infantry soon followed, and a desperate struggle began which lasted throughout the day. As the hours slowly passed, McClellan sent forward division after division, severely punishing the Confederate defenders, but never quite breaking their line. The attack rolled first against the Confederate left, and gradually shifted toward the right as the sun rose in the sky and began to descend.<sup>17</sup>

Mid-afternoon brought a crisis that might have ruined the Army of Northern Virginia. Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, commanding McClellan's left, sent his own Ninth Corps dashing across Antietam Creek against the thin Confederate right flank. By 4:00 p.m., the Federals had gained most of the high ground east and south of Sharpsburg, and had pushed the Confederates back to within 1,200 yards of Lee's line of retreat. The battered Confederate infantry, which might have been on the point of stampede, held on, for General Lee had passed along the word that help was on the way--A. P. Hill was on the road from Harpers Ferry.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, pp. 149-150; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 319-321; report of Thomas J. Jackson, April 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 956.

<sup>18</sup> Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, ibid., p. 150; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 321; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 220-221; Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General, p. 105; Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, p. 197.

The troops of the Light Division had begun their dusty seventeen-mile forced march to Sharpsburg at 7:30 a.m. Hill continually rode up and down the column, urging his tired veterans onward, to the sound of distant artillery. The fast pace caused much straggling as exhausted men fell by the side of the road. As the division neared the battlefield, Hill rode forward to inform Lee of his approach.<sup>19</sup>

Just as the Confederate right flank, under Brigadier General David R. Jones of Longstreet's command, seemed about to be overwhelmed, the leading brigades of Hill's division rushed onto the field and crashed into the left flank of Burnside's Ninth Corps. Gregg's brigade was the first to make contact and was closely followed by those of Archer and Branch. Pender's and Field's brigades (the latter under Brockenbrough) moved to extend the Confederate line to the right and to guard against an attack from the lower Antietam. The shock of Hill's unexpected appearance and furious attack immediately brought the Federal lines to a halt, and soon they began to waver and fall back in confusion toward the Antietam as the approach of darkness signaled the end of the battle.<sup>20</sup>

The Army of Northern Virginia had been close to being destroyed,

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<sup>19</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 981; Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General, pp. 104-105; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 222.

<sup>20</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 981; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, ibid., p. 150; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 321; Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General, p. 106; Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, pp. 199-200; Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 45.

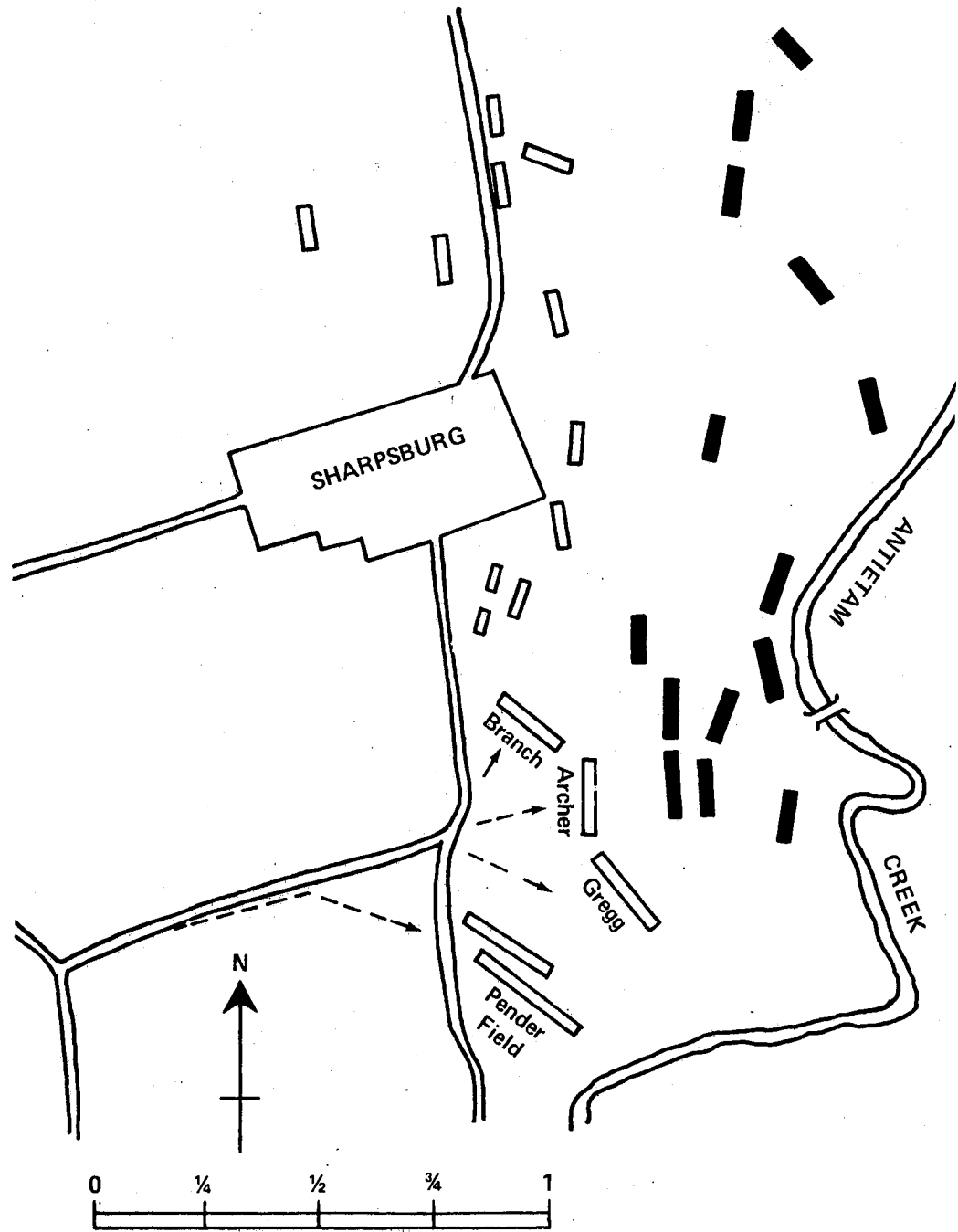


Figure 10. Battle of Sharpsburg, September 17, 1862.

and would not again witness a threat so great until the last week of the war. It has been estimated that while McClellan had 87,164 men on the field, Lee had 51,844 (Lee stated that he had less than 40,000). Union casualties numbered 12,410; Confederate casualties were 13,724. Hill's Light Division lost 346 men killed or wounded, while Pender's brigade, although it had not been seriously engaged, had 2 killed and 28 wounded, mostly from long range musket fire on September 18.<sup>21</sup>

Both armies remained on the field during the eighteenth, but no serious fighting took place. That night the Confederates withdrew back across the Potomac River near Shepherdstown into Virginia. Lee's first invasion of the North was over.<sup>22</sup>

Back in Virginia, Pender displayed an air of dismay concerning his troops when he confided to his wife:

. . . I envy you all the fruit you have. I cannot get what I ought for fear of starting the men. They will clean out a big orchard in half an hour . . . . My dear such a filthy unprincipled set of villains I have never seen. They have lost all honor or decency, all sense of right or respect for property. I have had to strike many a one with my sabre. The officers are nearly as bad as the men. In one of my Regts. the other day when they thought they were going to get into a fight, six out [of] ten officers skulked out and did not come up until they thought all danger was over. More than half my Brigade went off the same day . . . . Our army is coming to a pretty pass.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65, pp. 92-93; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 151; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 322; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 981; report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, *ibid.*, pp. 1004-1005.

<sup>22</sup> Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 151; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 322.

<sup>23</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 175.

If this reflected the true situation, it was not mentioned in the official reports. Later, Pender, in a different frame of mind, said: "You have no idea what a reputation our Division has. It surpasses Jackson's old Division both for fighting and discipline. Hill told me that I had the best discipline of any Brigade he had,"<sup>24</sup>

After the Army of Northern Virginia had recrossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown, Major General Fitz-John Porter's Union Fifth Corps appeared on the north bank on September 19. General Lee had left Brigadier General William N. Pendleton with the reserve artillery and 600 infantry troops to guard the ford. That night, part of Porter's force crossed the river and captured four pieces of artillery.<sup>25</sup>

The next morning, Hill's division was ordered to return and drive the Federals back across the river. Hill's battle formation consisted of the brigades of Pender, Gregg, and Thomas in the first line, and those of James H. Lane (Branch had been killed at Sharpsburg), Archer, and Brockenbrough in the second. Both lines advanced together, and were soon met by the Federal infantry and by a very heavy fire from Porter's artillery stationed on the opposite bank. The Federal resistance in front of Gregg and Thomas soon gave way, but a strong force massed in front of Pender, and then moved to flank his brigade on the left. Alert to the danger, Pender called on Archer for support, and together they conducted a daring simultaneous assault which drove the Federals into the river. Many were drowned as they fled in wild

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>25</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 151; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 323.

confusion and plunged into the river in an effort to escape. Throughout this engagement, Federal artillery continued to fire from the Maryland side. About 200 prisoners were captured. Pender had 8 killed and 55 wounded.<sup>26</sup>

Thus ended the Maryland campaign, which Pender summed up in the following manner:

We have so little of change or variety that it is difficult to write even so far between as I do. The whole of our time is taken up by two things, marching and fighting. Some of the Army have a fight nearly every day, and the more we fight the less we like it . . . . I have heard but one feeling expressed about [Maryland] and that is regret at our having gone there. Our Army has shown itself incapable of invasion and we had better stick to the defensive.<sup>27</sup>

An offensive, and especially an invasion, has the best chance of success if the attacking force is larger than its opponent. In the Maryland campaign, however, the Army of Northern Virginia was not only greatly outnumbered by the Army of the Potomac, but its ranks were thinner than at any time since Lee assumed command on June 1, 1862. Lee's army would rebuild its strength and resume the offensive, but never again would the Confederacy be so close to realizing its dream of independence.

In justifying the confidence of his superiors, Pender played a

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.; report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 152; report of Ambrose P. Hill, February 25, 1863, ibid., p. 982; report of William D. Pender, October 14, 1862, ibid., pp. 1004-1005; report of James J. Archer, March 1, 1863, ibid., pp. 1001-1002; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 761.

<sup>27</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 176.



leading role in the campaign. At Harpers Ferry he commanded over half of the Light Division in an attack which gained a prominent position for Confederate artillery, thereby forcing the surrender of the Federal garrison at a time when Lee was desperately in need of those units surrounding the ferry. As part of the Light Division, Pender's brigade justified the term "Light" in the forced march to reinforce Lee at Sharpsburg. Although he was not actively engaged there, Pender helped to save the Army of Northern Virginia from almost certain destruction by his show of force while Hill's other brigades struck Burnside's corps. The rout of a portion of Porter's corps was due mostly to Pender and to Archer in the rear guard action at Shepherdstown. Pender's confidence, which appeared so high at the beginning of the campaign, seems to have been considerably shaken. Although he had grown tired of the war, so long as it lasted he wanted to be at the front in rank and in service.

## CHAPTER V

### ON A FIELD WITHOUT PROTECTION:

#### THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN

A week after the engagement at Shepherdstown, Virginia, the Army of Northern Virginia rested in the vicinity of Bunker Hill and Winchester.<sup>1</sup> Pender, whose brigade was at Bunker Hill, was much depressed by the numerical depletion of his command. It was not battle casualties, however, that primarily concerned him, but stragglers and men absent without leave. "This straggling," he complained, "is becoming . . . the curse of the army and unless Congress pass some law to stop it there is no telling where it will end. Men find it safer to be behind [the] lines than to fight. We will have to shoot them before it stops."<sup>2</sup> Pender even urged Zebulon B. Vance, who was soon to succeed Henry T. Clark as governor of North Carolina, to strongly enforce the conscription law in his home state in order to restore combat units to their proper strengths. He also asked that state authorities arrest all officers and men who were home without leave.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, August 19, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 152; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 323.

<sup>2</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>Glenn Tucker, Zeb Vance: Champion of Personal Freedom (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965), pp. 211-212.

The return of stragglers and those released from the hospital, plus the transfer to Pender's brigade in October, 1862, of the Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment of Colonel Alfred M. Scales, helped restore the losses suffered during the Maryland campaign. Scales' regiment, which had formerly been commanded by Pender in the summer of 1861 when it was known as the Third North Carolina Infantry Regiment, had petitioned General Lee for the transfer. Pender's brigade now comprised the Thirteenth, Sixteenth, Twenty-second, Thirty-fourth, and Thirty-eighth North Carolina infantry regiments.<sup>4</sup>

Pender had for weeks expected the army to withdraw toward the south, but in late October his brigade moved northward with the Light Division to within six miles of Shepherdstown. This was done to reinforce the Confederate cavalry under Major General James E. B. Stuart against a mixed Union force which had crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown.<sup>5</sup> The Federals did not press an attack, however, and on October 24, Pender informed his wife:

We returned to this camp [near Bunker Hill] yesterday after tearing up over 20 miles of the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. Our troops worked to within  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles of Harpers Ferry and were not disturbed. I had supposed we would have left here before this, but strategy or General Lee's great dislike to give up Maryland prolongs our stay beyond what looks to us inferiors as useless . . . . We have various rumors as to the future but know nothing in reality.

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<sup>4</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 179, 184; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 663, Vol. IV, pp. 436, 552.

<sup>5</sup>Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, pp. 423-424; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 183.

If the keeping of our own counsel goes to constitute a General, Lee possesses that to perfection.<sup>6</sup>

Five days later, Pender's brigade encamped along the Winchester and Potomac Railroad near Charles Town.<sup>7</sup>

On November 1, Hill's Light Division took up a position at Castleman's Ferry on the Shenandoah River near Snicker's Gap. Two days later a Federal infantry brigade and a squadron of cavalry advanced toward this position with the apparent intention of crossing the river. They were met and repulsed by the Confederate brigades of Archer and Pender and the artillery batteries of Captains William J. Pegram and A. C. Latham.<sup>8</sup>

While Pender speculated on possible future movements during late October and early November, 1862, changes were being made in both the Confederate and Union armies. One was basically of an administrative nature, while the other was to determine to a large degree the outcome of the next campaign. The unofficial command system which had been set up within the Army of Northern Virginia by General Lee following the Seven Days' Battles was legalized by the promotion of James Longstreet and Thomas J. Jackson to the rank of lieutenant general. Longstreet's command became the First Corps and Jackson's command was designated the Second Corps. Meanwhile, officials in Washington, D. C., had become dissatisfied with George B. McClellan, and on November 9, he was replaced as commander of the Army of the Potomac by Major

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>8</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, November 3, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XIX, pt. 1, p. 983.

General Ambrose E. Burnside.<sup>9</sup>

The temporary lull in active campaigning afforded Pender the opportunity to think more of his wife and family in North Carolina.

While camped near Bunker Hill, he confided to Fanny:

I am so proud to know that your love instead of abating continues to increase. I know I ought to be more affectionate in my letters, but you need not fear that I do not feel, for indeed the longer I know you the more excellence I see in you and the better I love you . . . . Whenever I try to reflect upon the future and to resolve to do better, I think of you first and your image rises up and intrudes in upon my thoughts . . . .<sup>10</sup>

As the future movements of the Union Army of the Potomac were uncertain, very few furloughs were granted to Confederate soldiers.

". . . I have just received an order," Pender told Fanny, "that no furloughs will for the present be granted except on surgeon's certificate." He then continued:

As rheumatism is not dangerous and very good to get a furlough on, you will not be sorry to learn that for three days I have something very much like it. Just about the time I thought I might afford to apply on my other complaint--diarrhea--it is getting well so I shall have to fall back on rheumatism . . . . I am getting to be about the most home sick man you ever saw. Any pretext for a leave would be taken advantage of . . . . If you knew how often I resolve the various ways of getting a leave in my mind and how much I think about it, you would not for one moment suspect me of missing any chance to see you.<sup>11</sup>

Pender's efforts were not in vain, for he soon obtained a furlough and spent some time with his family in North Carolina during the middle

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<sup>9</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 250, 269; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 178-179, 432, 490, 600; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 185.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 187-188.

of November.<sup>12</sup>

When his leave expired, Pender left North Carolina and passed through Petersburg to Richmond, which he reached on the night of November 21. It was only then that he learned that Burnside had replaced McClellan. Either through a rumor or through false supposition induced in the light of Burnside's North Carolina expedition in the spring of 1862, Pender became temporarily convinced that the Federal commander planned to advance on the Confederate capital by way of Suffolk or by the south side of the James River. General Lee also saw this as a possibility. Pender knew that Lee had moved to Fredericksburg with Longstreet's corps, but he could not immediately ascertain the location of Jackson's corps, which contained his own brigade. After some business in Richmond, however, Pender was soon back with his command.<sup>13</sup>

The expectation by some Confederate leaders of an impending Federal expedition against Wilmington, North Carolina, prompted Brigadier General William H. C. Whiting, commander of the Military District of Wilmington, to ask for the transfer to his command area of Pender's North Carolina brigade, the brigade of Brigadier General Evander M. Law, and Captain James Reilly's battery of artillery. A strong Federal move did not materialize, however, and the Confederate transfer did not take place.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 189-190; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 337-338.

<sup>14</sup> W. H. C. Whiting to Gustavus W. Smith, November 21, 1862, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XVIII, p. 782.

By December 1, with the arrival of Jackson's corps from the Shenandoah Valley, the Army of Northern Virginia was concentrated in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, facing Burnside's Army of the Potomac, which lay around Falmouth, across the Rappahannock River north of Fredericksburg. The Light Division, including Pender's brigade, was encamped around the Yerby house between Fredericksburg and Guiney's Station along the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad.<sup>15</sup>

Pender, doubtful that a battle was imminent in the near future, expressed his opinions on December 3 to his wife:

This command after a long and fine march has at last come to anchor for awhile unless the Yankees cross the [Rappahannock] river, which I do not think they will attempt, altho they pretend to be making preparations for it. If they were afraid to advance from Warrenton it would look like nonsense to attempt it here. One cannot imagine the degree of confidence and high spirits displayed by our men . . . .

General Lee is very anxiously waiting for a fight. He told me today that he believed he would be willing to fall back and let them cross for the sake of a fight. All accounts are to the effect that they will not fight, and their numbers are not as terrible as might be supposed.<sup>16</sup>

Pender then discussed the possibility of promotion and revealed again his partisanship in the Hill-Jackson controversy:

As A. P. Hill has been recommended by General Lee for Lt. General, I hope he will be promoted which would be a means of both getting us out of Jackson's command and myself a Division. General rumor and general feeling both have pointed me out to be General Hill's successor. He told me the other night that he hoped I would soon be a Major General. I had no idea that I was a man of

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<sup>15</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 339; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, p. 438; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 313; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 105.

<sup>16</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 190-191.

reputation in the army until I got back. This is not to be repeated . . . for I do not like to have it thought that I might have my head turned, etc.

My people [troops] were glad to see me and they all said that they knew I would be back before the fight came off. The men seem to think that I am fond of fighting. They say I give them "hell" out of the fight and the Yankees the same in it.<sup>17</sup>

Finding the fords across the Rappahannock River south of Fredericksburg guarded by portions of Jackson's corps, as well as part of Stuart's cavalry, Major General Burnside decided to cross the river at Fredericksburg and "surprise" the Confederates by attacking before Lee could concentrate his forces. Unfortunately for the Union commander, this was exactly what Lee wanted him to do. Burnside evidently never seriously considered using the fords above Fredericksburg to turn Lee's position.<sup>18</sup>

Early on the morning of December 11, Federal engineers began laying pontoon bridges across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg and farther down the river near the mouth of Deep Run. Burnside evidently hoped to quickly cross the river and attack Longstreet's corps which was stationed west and south of Fredericksburg, before Jackson could come to his aid. The Federal attempt to build the bridges was delayed, however, by Confederate sharpshooters in the town, despite early morning fog and a heavy Union artillery bombardment from Stafford Heights across the river. But by nightfall the sharpshooters had been driven out of Fredericksburg and the bridges completed. Burnside, however,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>18</sup> Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 108-109; report of Robert E. Lee, April 10, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 551; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 367-368.



had not only lost a day, but failed to move his troops across the Rappahannock until the next morning, after which he lost another day in arranging his units for an attack under orders which seemed vague to his corps commanders.<sup>19</sup>

During the Federal bombardment on December 11, Pender, whose brigade was still at the Yerby house, remained skeptical about a Federal attack, for he informed his wife that ". . . the enemy are shelling the town--commenced about 6 a.m. [and] are still at it 11 a.m. The barbarity of the thing is unheard of, for I do not believe they even want to cross there. To shell an unfortified town is against usage. However, they make laws for nations to suit their own convenience."<sup>20</sup>

While the Union commanders were involved in final preparations on December 12, A. P. Hill's division moved from its encampment at the Yerby house to relieve that of Major General John B. Hood of Longstreet's corps near Hamilton's Crossing. Brigadier General William B. Taliaferro, commanding Jackson's old division, took up a position behind Hill. Pender's brigade, on Hill's extreme left, witnessed only slight skirmishing and occasional artillery fire during the day.<sup>21</sup>

The morning of December 13 dawned cold and damp, with a light snow

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 358, 368-369; report of Robert E. Lee, April 10, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 552; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 110-112.

<sup>20</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 193-194.

<sup>21</sup> Report of Thomas J. Jackson, January 31, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 630; report of Ambrose P. Hill, January 1, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 645; report of William D. Pender, December 20, 1862, *ibid.*, pp. 661-662.

on the ground. A thick blanket of fog covered the plain near the Rappahannock and obscured from view the blue-coated battle formations of the Army of the Potomac. Behind Fredericksburg, on the high ground west and south of the town, stood the Army of Northern Virginia in strong defensive positions. The Confederate First Corps, under Longstreet, stretched from Beck's Island above Fredericksburg on the left, along Marye's Heights southward to Deep Run, where it joined Jackson's Second Corps on the right. A. P. Hill's Light Division formed the front ranks of the Second Corps and stretched from Hood's position on the left at Deep Run toward Hamilton's Crossing on the right, where Stuart's cavalry protected the Confederate right flank from there to the river. The Light Division was supported by the divisions of Taliaferro, Jubal A. Early, and Daniel H. Hill. The units of the Light Division formed generally two lines. The front line consisted of two regiments of Brockenbrough's brigade at Hamilton's Crossing and the brigades of Archer, Lane, and Pender extending from right to left toward Hood's right flank at Deep Run. Because of the nature of the ground, intervals existed between Archer and Lane and between Lane and Pender. Behind these two intervals were stationed the brigades of Gregg and Thomas respectively. Archer's and Lane's brigades rested on the edge of the woods along the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad. Pender's brigade was to the left and rear of Lane. In front of and supported by Pender were two batteries of artillery commanded by Captain Greenlee Davidson of the Light Division and by

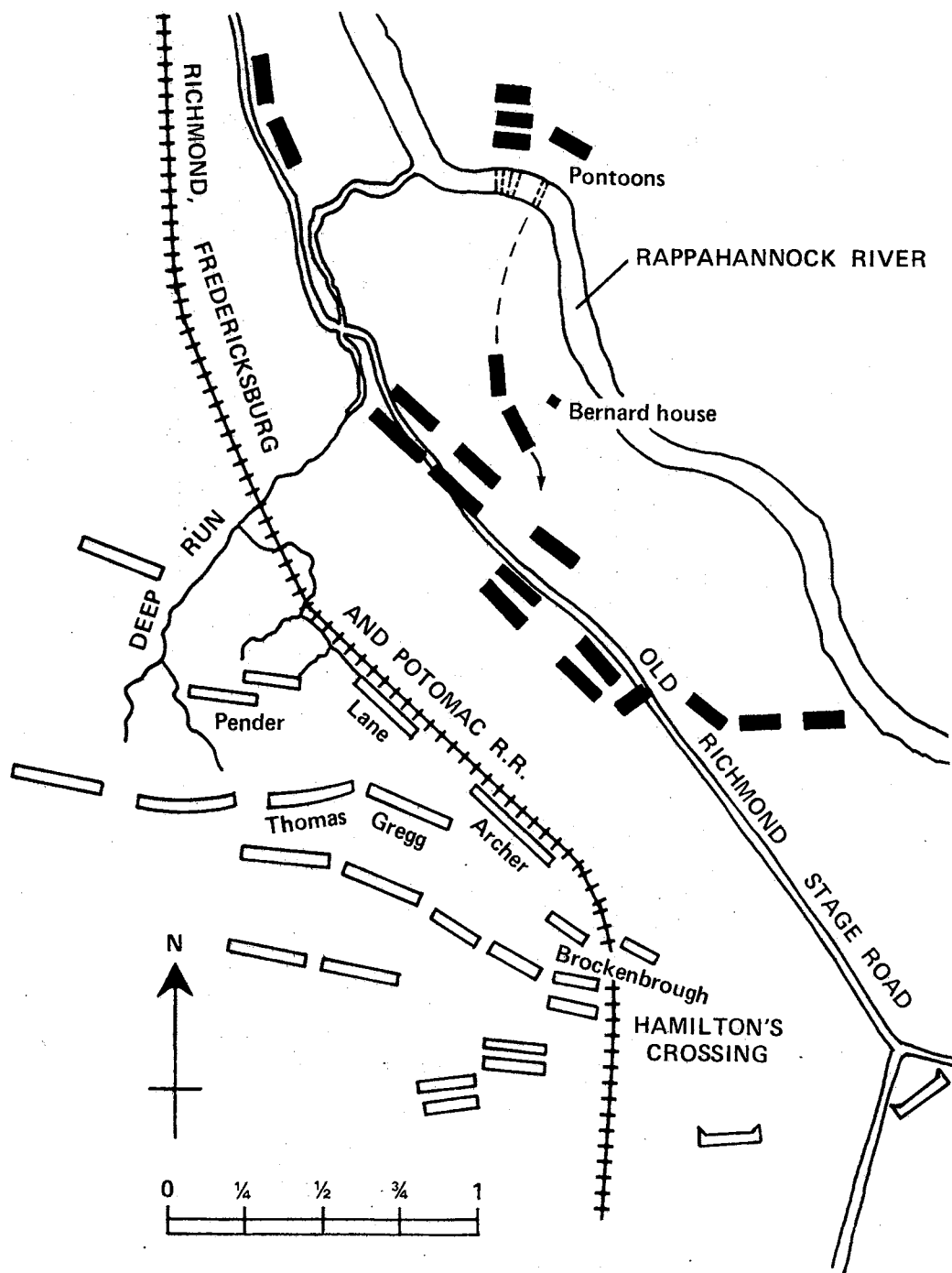


Figure 11. Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862 (Noon).

Captain J. W. Latimer of Early's division.<sup>22</sup>

The fog lifted at around 10:00 a.m. and revealed the battle lines of Federal infantry and ten batteries of artillery, four of which faced Pender's and Lane's positions. About an hour later, the Federal infantry divisions of Major General George G. Meade and Brigadier General John Gibbon advanced toward the position occupied by Lieutenant Colonel R. Lindsay Walker, A. P. Hill's chief of artillery. When the Federals were within 800 yards range, Walker's artillery opened fire, causing them to halt and finally to fall back. At 1:00 p.m. Meade and Gibbon resumed the advance. Although their divisions were able to penetrate the center of the Light Division, Confederate reinforcements forced them back again.<sup>23</sup>

During this attack, Pender's brigade, on Hill's left, was, according to Lieutenant General Jackson, "immediately in rear of the batteries of Captains Davidson and Latimer, and was without any protection from the enemy's artillery; and . . . that brigade received much of the fire that was directed at these guns, and suffered severely."<sup>24</sup> Pender, in his official report, provided the details:

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<sup>22</sup>Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 112; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 341-342, 345; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 369-370; report of Robert E. Lee, April 10, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, pp. 552-553; report of Thomas J. Jackson, January 31, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 630-631; report of Ambrose P. Hill, January 1, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 645.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 645-646; report of Thomas J. Jackson, January 31, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 631-632; report of Robert E. Lee, April 10, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 553-554; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 370-371; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 351-352; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, p. 457; Edward P. Alexander, Military Memoirs of a Confederate (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 294.

<sup>24</sup>Report of Thomas J. Jackson, January 31, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, pp. 663-664.

When the enemy advanced on the right, they opened a most tremendous fire of artillery upon the batteries in my front, playing upon them from the front and right from at least four batteries. This fire was most destructive to my men. At about this time a heavy line of skirmishers advanced within range of Captain Davidson's battery and kept up a hot fire upon him . . . . These skirmishers became so annoying that additional companies had to be thrown out, under the efficient Major [Christopher C.] Cole, to drive them back, which he did, and held them in check long after his ammunition had given out.<sup>25</sup>

Among those killed in the brigade was Lieutenant Jacob Shepperd, Pender's brother-in-law who was serving as his aide. Sheppard was shot while trying to rally a portion of Lane's brigade on the right.<sup>26</sup>

Relating further events of the afternoon, Pender continued:

Colonel [John S.] McElroy, with his regiment (the Sixteenth North Carolina), had been placed early in the morning near the railroad cut, and in front of the left battery, which . . . consisted of some rifle pieces under Captain Latimer--as brave a soldier as I ever saw--to support it. He was here much exposed, being far in advance of the general line, with his left totally unprotected, but with the ravine of Deep Run to cover the movement of the enemy on his left.<sup>27</sup>

After the repulse of Meade and Gibbon on the right, a Federal brigade advanced up Deep Run toward Pender's position. One regiment of the attacking force, which was sheltered by some trees, struck the left flank of the Sixteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment. Sixteen of Colonel McElroy's men including one officer, were taken prisoner by the Federals. Outflanked, McElroy withdrew his regiment a short distance to a ditch, where he held his ground until reinforced by two regiments of Brigadier General Evander M. Law's brigade of Hood's

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<sup>25</sup> Report of William D. Pender, December 20, 1862, *ibid.*, p. 662.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*; report of Ambrose P. Hill, January 1, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 647.

<sup>27</sup> Report of William D. Pender, December 20, 1862, *ibid.*, p. 662.

division. Together, these three regiments charged the Federal brigade and drove it from the railroad cut and back toward the main Union position.<sup>28</sup> "Owing to a great many of Colonel McElroy's men not having cartridge-boxes," Pender reported, "they got out of ammunition, but, getting into the ditch and dividing there, they maintained their ground."<sup>29</sup>

During the fighting of the afternoon, Pender was wounded when a ball passed through his left forearm between the bones. He continued to ride along the battle lines, however, his arm hanging at his side with blood flowing down his fingers. Colonel Scales of the Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment rushed up and shouted, "General, I see you are wounded." Calmly Pender replied, "Oh, that is a trifle, no bone is broken. I want you to send at least two companies down to the railroad and drive those scoundrels out."<sup>30</sup> Pender was soon persuaded to go to the rear long enough to have the wound dressed by the doctors. During his short absence from the front, Scales commanded the brigade.<sup>31</sup>

On December 14, the Light Division, including Pender's brigade, was placed in reserve behind the divisions of Early and Taliaferro. The Federals remained on the left bank of the Rappahannock for two days

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 358; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 194; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 665.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, p. 687; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 392.

after the battle, but did not resume the attack. They recrossed the river on the night of December 15. As the defeated Federals retired back to Falmouth, Pender's brigade set up winter quarters in the woods four miles south of the Rappahannock. This place became known as Camp Gregg, in honor of Brigadier General Maxcy Gregg, who was killed at Fredericksburg.<sup>32</sup>

The Battle of Fredericksburg was perhaps the easiest major Confederate victory won by Lee. The Army of the Potomac numbered before the battle 120,281 men; hopeless attacks against strong Confederate positions produced 12,653 casualties. The Army of Northern Virginia, numbering 78,513, lost but 4,756 men killed, wounded, and missing. The Light Division sustained 2,122 casualties. Pender's brigade lost 2 officers and 14 men killed, and 17 officers (including Pender) and 136 men wounded--a total of 169.<sup>33</sup>

The Battle of Fredericksburg afforded Pender little opportunity for tactical maneuver. His position during the entire day was exposed to Federal artillery fire and to skirmishers. Most of the casualties in his brigade, which was not in the path of a major Union advance, resulted from Federal artillery fire directed against the batteries

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 381; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 313; report of Thomas J. Jackson, January 31, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 634; Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 71; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 195.

<sup>33</sup> Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 117; Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65, p. 96; report of Ambrose P. Hill, January 1, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 648; report of William D. Pender, December 20, 1862, ibid., p. 662.

of Davidson and Latimer, directly in front of the North Carolinians. Restrained from utilizing his particular talent for fierce, dashing assaults, Pender performed his task, which was basically a defensive one, with skill and bravery. The only serious threat to Pender's position--the Federal advance along Deep Run--was met and repulsed in conjunction with Law's troops. Although wounded, Pender remained on the field, except for a very short time to have the wound dressed. Pender had once again shown himself to be a superb combat leader, and many shared his belief that he would one day command a division.



## CHAPTER VI

### VICTORY BRINGS PRIDE AND FAME: THE CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN

After the Battle of Fredericksburg, the troops of the Light Division spent the winter at Camp Gregg. During much of this time, Samuel McGowan's (formerly Maxcy Gregg's), Lane's, and Pender's brigades provided men for picket duty along the Rappahannock River at Moss Neck, near the camp. Only one regiment was needed at a time, for a twenty-four hour period, and since the three brigades contained five regiments each, the turn of each regiment came but once in fifteen days.<sup>1</sup>

There was little to break the monotonous routine of camp life except the uncertainty of a possible troop movement and an occasional diversion. On January 17, 1863, the brigades of Pender and Lane were ordered by General Lee to move to Richmond and report to Major General Arnold Elzey, commander of the defenses of the Confederate capital. The order was suspended within a week, however, much to the satisfaction of the men in the two brigades, who did not wish to leave the

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<sup>1</sup>Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 71; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. IV, p. 171.

Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps when Americans are not actively fighting an enemy, they tend to fight each other. At least the first half of January, 1863, witnessed some of the strangest "battles" in American history. The ground in the vicinity of Fredericksburg was covered with snow, and various Confederate units organized snowball battles with the same tactical skill they had used against the Federals in actual engagements. In some of these snowball battles, the "combatants" numbered in the thousands.<sup>3</sup> Captain R. S. Williams of Company I, Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment, Pender's brigade, left the following description of the part played by Pender's men:

The only battle we had that winter was with General McGowan's Brigade of South Carolina . . . . The South Carolina brigade attacked Pender's Brigade, with colors flying, for a snow-ball battle. The Tar-heel boys [Pender's men] . . . did not see fit to retreat, so they met them at the branch and it was a hard fight, and finally the Tar-heels charged them, ran them into their quarters and on through camp, demolishing a goodly number of shanties, and returned to their own quarters . . . .<sup>4</sup>

It is doubtful that Pender himself took part in the snowball battle, for his wife was with him at Camp Gregg from early January until the latter part of February. With both the Union and Confederate

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<sup>2</sup> Special Orders No. 17, Headquarters, Army of Northern Virginia, January 17, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXI, p. 1095; Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, January 23, 1863, *ibid.*, Ser. I, Vol. XVIII, p. 856.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Lasswell, ed., Rags and Hope: The Recollections of Val C. Giles, Four Years with Hood's Brigade, Fourth Texas Infantry, 1861-1865 (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1961), pp. 167-170.

<sup>4</sup> Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 666.

armies inactive and in winter quarters, Pender spent as much time as possible with Fanny while she was in camp.<sup>5</sup>

During this time, Pender received a visit from Lieutenant Colonel William G. Lewis, a fellow officer from North Carolina. Lewis later recounted the condition of Pender's camp:

I called on him [Pender] at his headquarters and though I was much inferior in rank, he then being Brigadier General, he received me most cordially and courteously, and I had a very pleasant visit, and one of profit to me, as I saw plainly in his camps the results of true military discipline and careful attention from Headquarters. His camp was a model of cleanliness, regularity and good order; his sentinels and guard saluted, in strict military style, all officers wore the badges of their rank. I was particularly impressed with this, as it was not by far, universal in the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

While Lee's army rested and watched from the south side of the Rappahannock River, the Army of the Potomac, in winter quarters at Falmouth, suffered another change in command. Burnside, after his inglorious defeat at Fredericksburg, was replaced by Major General Joseph Hooker on January 26, 1863.<sup>7</sup>

As Hooker reorganized his army, Lee in the middle of February sent the divisions of Major Generals George E. Pickett and John B. Hood to Richmond to counter a possible Union threat in the area. This not only divided the First Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia, but also deprived Lee of the services of Lieutenant General Longstreet, who was sent to command the Department of North Carolina and Southern

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<sup>5</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 197.

<sup>6</sup>From a letter of W. G. Lewis to D. Gilliam, October 21, 1893, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>7</sup>Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 130.

Virginia, which embraced Pickett's and Hood's troops.<sup>8</sup>

During the long period of inactivity along the Rappahannock, Pender once again thought of promotion, but remained very pessimistic. "My promotion," Pender stated to Fanny just after she left Camp Gregg, "hangs as it did and really I do not expect it for months if at all. Gen. Jackson is in my way having recommended another man [Brigadier General Edward Johnson]. I never will vote for his being President."<sup>9</sup> The situation was complicated even more when Brigadier General Henry Heth, who had been commander of the Confederate Department of East Tennessee, was transferred to the Army of Northern Virginia. Heth became the senior brigadier general in the Light Division, outranking all the brigade commanders, including Pender.<sup>10</sup>

Pender was, however, highly recommended for promotion. His division commander, A. P. Hill, wrote to General Lee on the last day of January:

I have the honor to call to your attention the uniform good conduct and gallantry of Brig. Gen. W. D. Pender and to recommend him to you for promotion. Since under my command he has fought his Brigade, and uniformly with success . . . . He has been conspicuous for gallantry, skill, and promptness--Has been wounded three times, and never left the field, save for the time necessary to bandage his wounds, and eminently deserves promotion.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, p. 483; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 405-406; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 490, 599.

<sup>9</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 197; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 508.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 507.

<sup>11</sup>Ambrose P. Hill to Robert E. Lee, January 31, 1863, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.

On February 16, a group of Confederate congressmen from North Carolina, including Senator George Davis, contacted President Jefferson Davis, recommending the promotion of Pender. The transfer of Major General Daniel H. Hill to North Carolina created a vacancy in the Confederate command in Virginia which the congressmen wanted Pender to fill. They were careful to point out that Jackson's corps was comprised of more troops from North Carolina--twenty-two regiments and one battalion--than from any other single state.<sup>12</sup> "Permit us to add," the congressmen concluded, "what you already know, that Gen. Pender is an accomplished officer, a Christian, and a gentleman of the very first order."<sup>13</sup> Pender, however, did not receive the command. D. H. Hill's division eventually went to one of its brigade commanders, Robert E. Rodes.<sup>14</sup>

Despite his poor prospects for promotion, Pender's spirit remained high. In the second week of March, Pender informed his wife: "My Brigade is still increasing. I have now 2,150 and will have one or two hundred more . . . . Our army is large and in fine condition. We have never had such an army before as this."<sup>15</sup> Two and a half weeks later the brigade numbered 2,500 men present for duty.<sup>16</sup> On April 1, 1863, Pender again displayed his confidence:

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<sup>12</sup>Letter from twelve North Carolina congressmen to Jefferson Davis, February 16, 1863, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 180, 706.

<sup>15</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 203-204.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 213.

There is but little doubt but that Hooker will attempt to cross [the Rappahannock] again as soon as he can, and we all think . . . that he will get well whipped for his pains when he does. I have twice as many muskets now as at Fredericksburg. It is a very remarkable fact that all the complaining and disaffection at home does not produce any bad effects upon our soldiers.<sup>17</sup>

Pender was, however, very much concerned with the rate of desertion among some North Carolina units. Toward the end of April, he contacted Major Walter H. Taylor, assistant adjutant-general on Robert E. Lee's staff, concerning this problem. Pender informed Taylor that in some areas of North Carolina, deserters went unpunished. He felt that much of the fault lay with Judge R. M. Pearson, the state's chief justice. Many North Carolina troops, Pender believed, were of the opinion that Pearson had ruled the Confederate conscription law to be unconstitutional, and that the state would not punish deserters. Pender recommended that a good regiment be sent to the state for the purpose of placing the deserters under arrest. Unless something was done, he reasoned, many units might simply disintegrate.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, Pender's hostile attitude toward "Stonewall" Jackson once again surfaced in his letters to Fanny:

I understand Gen. Jackson has been making some inquiries about me and said he was sorry he did not know more of me personally--the old humbug--this was when General Hill sent up his last recommendation. He [Jackson] asked an officer of his staff in whom he has great confidence, the other day who was the best Brigadier in the Corps and I think he told him that I was. All of this, however, gives me but little hope of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>18</sup> William D. Pender to Walter H. Taylor, April 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 2, pp. 746-747.

promotion.<sup>19</sup> Col. Scales is trying to get on foot a general petition from the officers of our N. C. Regts. here that I be promoted, but I have no idea it will succeed. I do not believe Gen. Jackson will have me promoted because I have been recommended by Gen. [A. P.] Hill. He wants someone in the place who will feel under obligation to him.<sup>20</sup>

As the spring campaign approached, Pender's aggressiveness, as well as his bitterness toward the Federals, became apparent in his letters to Fanny:

You say you do not want me to go into Md. Honey, I feel nothing [is] left us but to go. If we do not, our army will be on short rations and discontented, and we accomplish next to nothing. If we go we may do a great deal and I believe we will. This is a very different Army from the one we marched into Md. last year, and they have not as good a one to meet us. I am for going, but I have no idea what Gen. Lee will do, but one thing I feel certain of and that is we will not be idle much longer.<sup>21</sup>

I hope we will pass through it [Md.] into Penn. and I believe a large majority of the Army would like to. Our people have suffered from the depredations of the Yankees, but if we ever get into their country they will find out what it is to have an invading army amongst them . . . . Sometimes when I think of their rascality I get furious . . . . They have gone systematically to work to starve us out and destroy all we have, to make the country a desert.<sup>22</sup>

As the month of April drew to a close, it became obvious that active operations were about to commence. On the morning of the twenty-eighth, large portions of Hooker's Army of the Potomac began to cross to the south bank of the Rappahannock, above Fredericksburg, in an effort to outflank General Lee's army. Aware of what Hooker was attempting, Lee determined to meet the main Union force in the heavily

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<sup>19</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 221.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 226.

wooded area near the crossroads at Chancellorsville.

Having found on May 1 that Hooker's position around Chancellorsville was too strong to assault, Generals Lee and Jackson decided on a bold plan in which Jackson would march his Second Corps around the Union right flank, while Lee, with two divisions, would demonstrate against the Federal center and left. Early the next day, May 2, Jackson's corps, which included Pender's brigade, marched south along the Furnace Road and then turned west on the Brock Road.<sup>23</sup> By late afternoon, most of Jackson's troops were on Hooker's right flank. The Union Eleventh Corps, commanded by Major General Oliver O. Howard, made up the right flank of the Army of the Potomac. It was stationed along the old turnpike which ran east through Chancellorsville to Fredericksburg. As Jackson's men moved through the thick woods, the Federals were unaware of the impending Confederate attack.<sup>24</sup>

Jackson formed three lines of battle perpendicular to the turnpike and to the line formed by Howard's corps. Precious time had been lost, however, during the day's march and in deploying the troops. The attack was held up for half an hour to allow the brigades of Pender and Heth to form on the left of the turnpike in support of the first and second lines. The delay was also due in large measure to the dense character

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<sup>23</sup>Report of Robert E. Lee, September 23, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, pp. 795-798; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 458-462.

<sup>24</sup>Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 142; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 552-557.



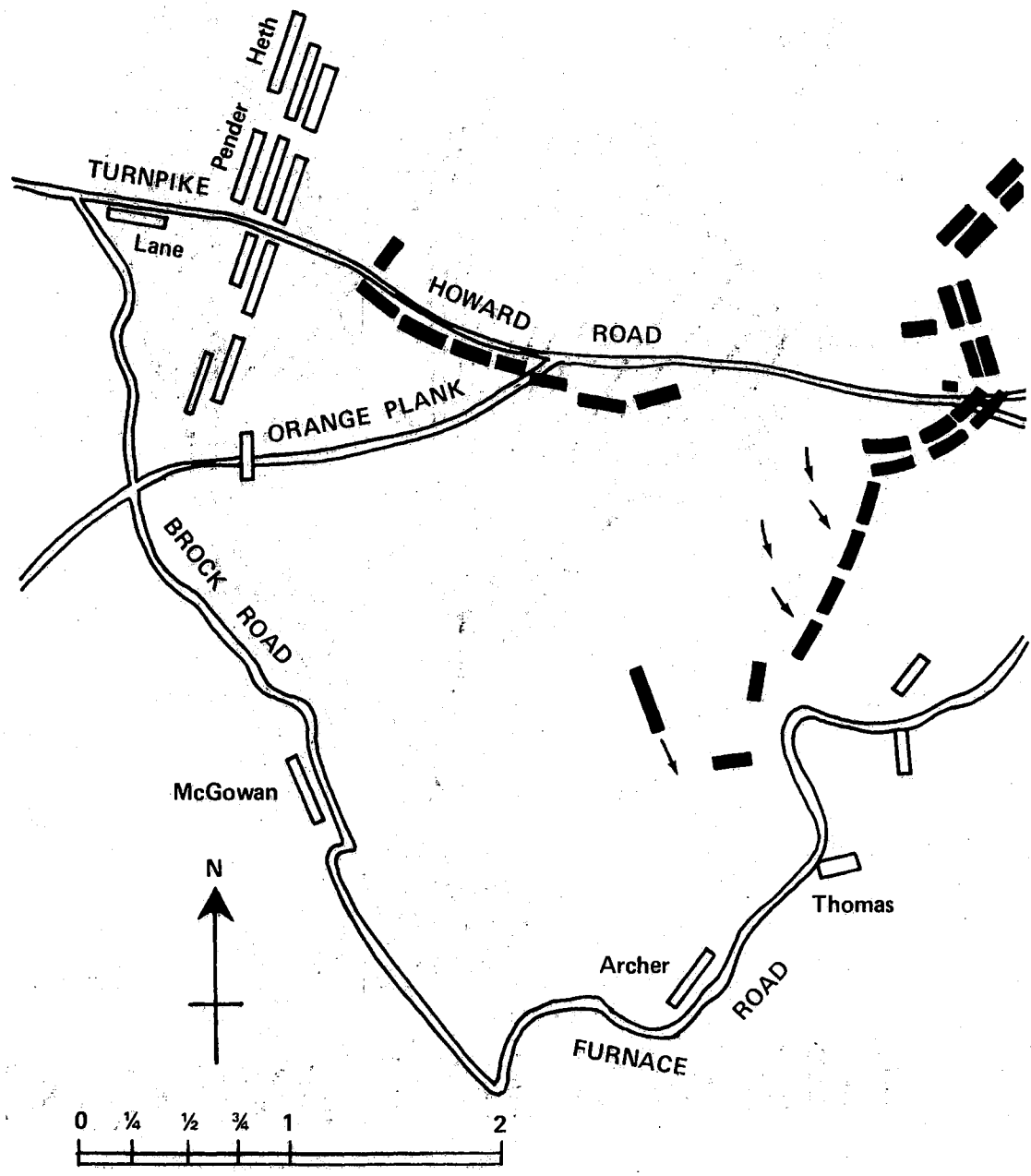


Figure 12. Battle of Chancellorsville, May 2, 1863.

of the woods and to the necessity for silence.<sup>25</sup>

At 5:15 p.m. the signal was given, and the Second Corps swept forward and crashed into the startled Federals, who, with weapons stacked, were preparing supper. Pender's brigade, to the left of the turnpike, moved forward behind part of Brigadier General Raleigh E. Colston's division for some distance. Then, under orders, the brigade entered the turnpike and proceeded to advance once more toward the vicinity of Chancellorsville.<sup>26</sup> "Here," Pender later reported, "after my men were subjected to a most galling and destructive shelling from the batteries near Chancellorsville, I moved my regiments in to the left and formed line of battle, my right resting upon the road. Before I had completed my formation, I found that my troops occupied the most advanced position of our forces."<sup>27</sup> Jackson's surprise attack had pushed the remnants of Howard's Eleventh Corps three miles to the east to the vicinity of Chancellorsville, where the main portion of Hooker's army lay. Anxious to continue the advance, Jackson ordered A. P. Hill to press forward. By this time, however, it was dark. In addition, the Confederates were exhausted; units had become mixed in

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 557; Lenoir Chambers, Stonewall Jackson (2 vols., New York: William Morrow and Company, 1959), Vol. II, pp. 398-399; Alexander, Military Memoirs of a Confederate, pp. 333-334; John Bigelow, Jr., The Campaign of Chancellorsville (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1910), pp. 291-292.

<sup>26</sup> Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 557-559; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-1865, Vol. I, p. 667; report of William D. Pender, May 14, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, p. 935.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

the thick woods, and time was needed to straighten out the lines.<sup>28</sup>

At around 9:00 p.m. Jackson rode forward with a portion of his staff to ascertain the situation in person. While returning to the Confederate lines, the party was fired upon by mistake by Confederate troops of Brigadier General James H. Lane's brigade. Jackson was severely wounded. As the general was being carried to the rear, Pender came up and expressed his fears that the advanced Confederate lines were broken and might have to fall back. Jackson rallied at once and said, "You must hold your ground, General Pender; you must hold your ground, sir!"<sup>29</sup>

Shortly after this, Major General A. P. Hill, on whom the command of the Second Corps had devolved, was wounded by Federal artillery. Major General J. E. B. Stuart, commander of the Confederate cavalry, was sent for to lead the corps. Being unfamiliar with the dispositions of the troops, he decided to wait until morning to renew the attack. Pender advanced his brigade to within about one hundred yards of the Federal lines, where his men lay down to get what rest they could in the thick woods and underbrush. Throughout the night came the sound of the Federals cutting down trees and building breastworks in preparation for the next day's battle.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, May 8, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 885; Chambers, Stonewall Jackson, Vol. II, p. 407.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 418-419; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 564, 567, 574-575; Bigelow, Jr., The Campaign of Chancellorsville, pp. 317-318.

<sup>30</sup> Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 582-583; report of Ambrose P. Hill, May 8, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, pp. 885-886; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, pp. 668, 697.

At 4:30, on the morning of May 3, while waiting for daylight, the officers of Pender's brigade began to awaken the troops. The Light Division, now commanded by Brigadier General Henry Heth, formed the first line of battle. Pender's brigade occupied a position immediately to the left of and touching the turnpike, this portion of which was also called the Orange Plank Road. Brigadier General Edward L. Thomas supported Pender's left, while the commands of Brigadier Generals James H. Lane, Samuel McGowan, and James J. Archer extended to the right. The Light Division was supported in the rear by the divisions commanded by Brigadier Generals Raleigh E. Colston and Robert E. Rodes.<sup>31</sup>

The attack began while the sky to the east was still red. Pender shouted the orders to advance, "Attention, forward, guide center!", and his brigade came under heavy fire almost immediately, as the flashes of the guns penetrated the semi-darkness of the early morning.<sup>32</sup> The North Carolinians rushed forward and carried the first Union position behind the breastwork of logs and brush. Struggling through the thick undergrowth, Pender's troops again met stubborn opposition from a second line of blue-clad infantry, which was finally driven back. By the time the Confederates had advanced 150 yards from the first Union position, Federal resistance had stiffened. Faced with a tremendous fire from artillery upon his right flank regiments,

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 668-669; report of J. E. B. Stuart, May 6, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, p. 887; report of Ambrose P. Hill, May 8, 1863, ibid., p. 886.

<sup>32</sup>Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 669.

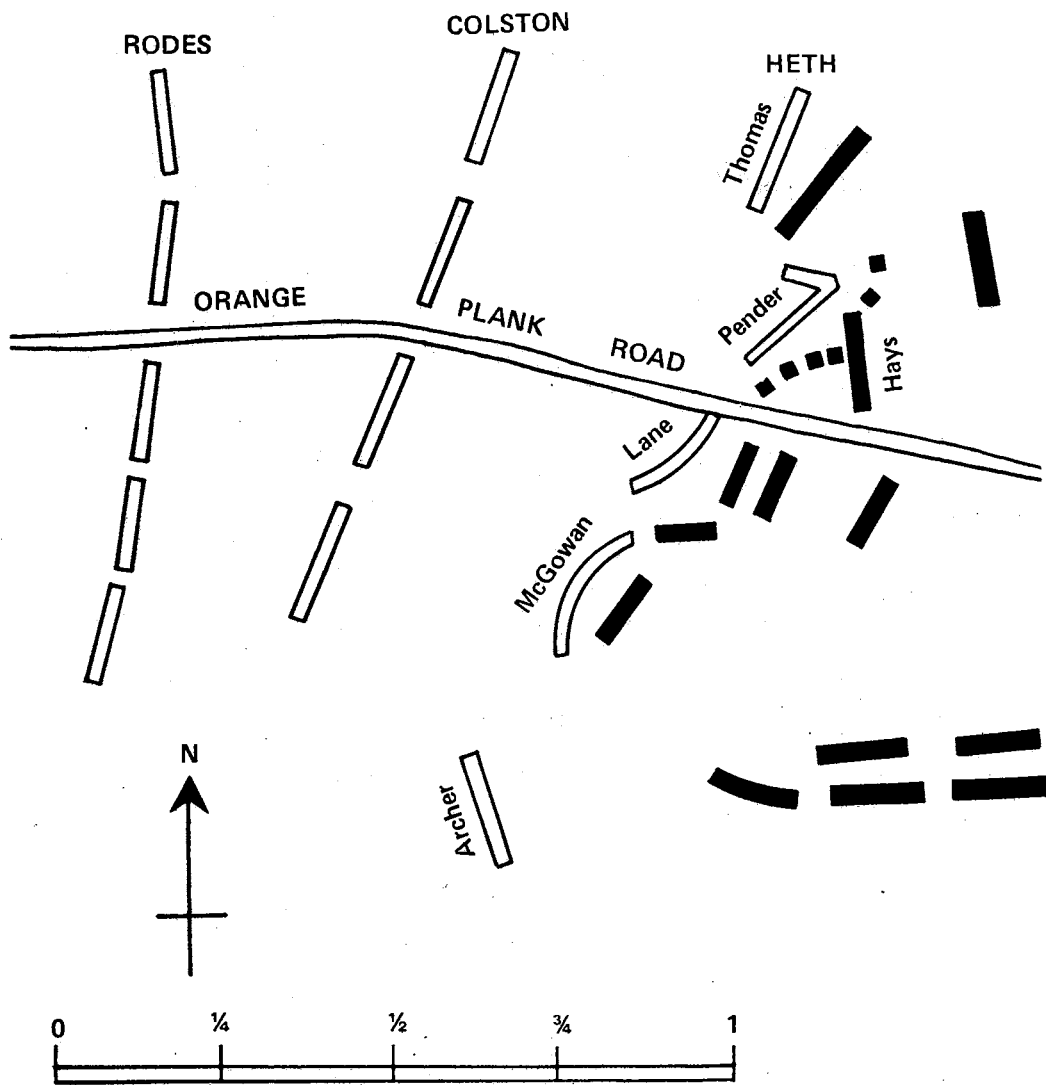


Figure 13. Battle of Chancellorsville, May 3, 1863.

Pender was forced to fall back to the captured breastworks, where he rallied his men. The Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment, which formed Pender's left flank, was not subjected to the Federal artillery fire, and continued to advance with Thomas' brigade on the left. As the regiment struck the right of the line held by Brigadier General William Hays, Lieutenant John R. Ireland of Company E rushed forward and captured Hays and his staff as they were trying to escape.<sup>33</sup>

The desperate fighting which typified the confused Battle of Chancellorsville is revealed in Pender's official report:

After the other four regiments fell back to the breastworks and were reformed, I advanced again, the men going forward with alacrity; but, after penetrating the woods about the same distance as before, had to fall back again. This, to some extent, was unavoidable, as our line on the right of the road had been driven back about this time, and the men thus found that the enemy were at least 100 yards in rear of them, on the opposite side of the road. The Thirteenth North Carolina, on the left, after advancing a long ways to the front, was finally compelled to fall back for want of support and ammunition, which it did in good order. When my line was forced back the second time, supports came up and took the advance. My men were about out of ammunition, broken down, and badly cut up, having lost about 700 officers and men in the short time we had been engaged. What officers were left collected the men after they had fallen behind the front line, and were engaged at different times during the fight. Knowing the ground pretty well by this time, I remained in the fight with whatever troops came up, until about the close of the action, when I very readily got my men into shape again near the spot from where I commenced the advance.<sup>34</sup>

Pender himself displayed great courage throughout the day's battle, and on one one occasion, grabbed a regimental flag and led his men into

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<sup>33</sup> Report of William D. Pender, May 14, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, p. 935; Bigelow, Jr., The Campaign of Chancellorsville, p. 352.

<sup>34</sup> Report of William D. Pender, May 14, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, pp. 935-936.

the Union entrenchments.<sup>35</sup>

During the fighting of May 3, Brigadier General Heth, who had taken command of the Light Division, was lightly wounded. The command then devolved upon Pender. The next day Pender was also slightly wounded in the right arm while standing behind his entrenchments during a skirmish.<sup>36</sup>

After the Battle of Chancellorsville, Pender summoned his officers to his quarters, where he praised those who had performed well and criticized those who had not. When he came to the officers of the Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment, he expressed his highest compliments. Not a single officer of the regiment had raised the ire of Pender. To the brigade as a whole, Pender said:

Upon resuming command of the brigade, it affords me great pleasure to express to you my high appreciation of your conduct and services in the late battle of Chancellorsville. Troops could not have fought better or more gallantly, opposing successfully such fearful odds, strongly posted and offering stubborn resistance, as evidenced by your loss, greater than that of any brigade in the army in proportion to numbers engaged. I may be exacting, but in this instance you may rest assured that I am perfectly satisfied. I am proud to say that your services are known and appreciated by those higher in command than myself  
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<sup>35</sup> Report of Robert E. Lee, September 23, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 803; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 469.

<sup>36</sup> Schenck, Up Came Hill: The Story of the Light Division and its Leaders, pp. 254-255; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 649-650; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 235.

<sup>37</sup> Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. I, p. 697, Vol. II, pp. 690-691.

By the end of May 5, Joseph Hooker had been completely defeated. Still Lee continued to press the Federals. On the morning of the next day, the Confederates found that the Army of the Potomac had withdrawn during the night, and had recrossed to the north bank of the Rappahannock River. Pender rode to inform Lee. The commanding general, in a moment of frustration and dissatisfaction at not discovering and harassing the retreat, exclaimed, "Why, General Pender! That is what you young men always do. You allow these people to get away. I tell you what to do, but you don't do it."<sup>38</sup>

This rebuke to Pender, however, did not epitomize Lee's opinion of the young brigadier. Lee was much impressed by the performance of Pender, especially at Chancellorsville. Both Lee and Hill bestowed much praise upon him.<sup>39</sup>

Losses suffered by the two armies was once again frightful. The Army of the Potomac, with around 133,000 effectives, lost about 17,000, and the approximately 60,000-man Army of Northern Virginia sustained some 12,800 casualties. Pender's brigade lost 706 officers and men in the bloodiest battle in its history to date.<sup>40</sup>

Before and during the Battle of Chancellorsville, Pender again displayed those qualities which made him one of the truly outstanding

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<sup>38</sup> Bigelow, Jr., The Campaign of Chancellorsville, p. 431; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. II, p. 557.

<sup>39</sup> Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, May 20, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 2, p. 811; report of Ambrose P. Hill, May 8, 1863, ibid., pt. 1, p. 886; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 489.

<sup>40</sup> Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 140; report of William D. Pender, May 14, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 1, p. 937.



young generals in the Army of Northern Virginia. While in winter quarters, Pender's camp was a model of efficiency and cleanliness. He had the best-drilled and the best-disciplined brigade in what many considered the best division in Lee's army. In the fighting around Chancellorsville, Pender bravely and skillfully led his men against strong and determined Federal resistance. His competent leadership, especially on May 3, 1863, when he temporarily commanded the Light Division, proved his ability to manage more than one brigade. Pender's superiors did not fail to appreciate this.

## CHAPTER VII

### PENDER'S LAST BATTLE: THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN

Within a week after the accidental wounding of Lieutenant General Jackson, a feeling of tense foreboding gripped the Army of Northern Virginia. Despite his former animosity toward his corps commander, Pender echoed the thoughts of the entire army when, on May 9, 1863, he wrote his wife, "I hear that Gen'l Jackson is thought to be in a very serious condition. He has pneumonia contracted by wrapping himself in wet towels after he was wounded. He will be a great loss to the country and it is devoutly to be hoped that he may be spared to the country."<sup>1</sup> Jackson died the next day, however, canceling out in part the gains of the brilliant Confederate victory at Chancellorsville. It was a loss from which the Army of Northern Virginia and the Southern cause were never to recover.<sup>2</sup>

In the weeks following the death of "Stonewall" Jackson, the Army of Northern Virginia was reorganized. Lieutenant General James Longstreet, who had been on detached duty during the Chancellorsville campaign, retained command of the First Corps. Jackson's old Second Corps went to newly-promoted Lieutenant General Richard S. Ewell, who

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<sup>1</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 236.

<sup>2</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, p. 682.

had been out of action since being severely wounded at Groveton on August 28, 1862. Ambrose P. Hill was also promoted to the rank of lieutenant general and given command of a new Third Corps.<sup>3</sup>

The advancement of Hill to corps commander left the Light Division without a leader, and two men were rival candidates to succeed him-- Henry Heth and William D. Pender.<sup>4</sup> On May 24, 1863, Hill wrote to General Lee:

Of General Heth I have but to say that I consider him a most excellent officer and gallant soldier, and had he been with the Division through all its hardships, and acquired the confidence of the men, there is no man I had rather see promoted than he. On the other hand Gen. Pender has fought with the Division in every battle, has been four times wounded, and never left the field, . . . has the best drilled and disciplined Brigade in the Division, and more than all, possesses the unbounded confidence of the Division . . . .

I am very earnest in this matter, for I know that . . . men led by a Commander whom they know, and have fought with, may turn the tide of battle, and I do not think the Confederacy can afford to have this Army defeated. Hence, as much as I admire and respect Gen. Heth, I am conscientiously of opinion that . . . my Division under him, will not be half as effective as under Gen. Pender.<sup>5</sup>

General Lee also praised Pender in two letters to President Davis:

Pender is an excellent officer, attentive, industrious, and brave; has been conspicuous in every battle, and, I believe, wounded in almost all of them.<sup>6</sup> I think Genl Pender deserves promotion on account of valour and skill displayed on many fields, and particularly at the battle of Chancellorsville . . . . He has worked so

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<sup>3</sup> Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 178, 180-181, 269, 400.

<sup>4</sup> Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, pp. 697-698.

<sup>5</sup> Hassler, A. P. Hill: Lee's Forgotten General, p. 144.

<sup>6</sup> Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, May 20, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 2, p. 811; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 489.

faithfully with the division in which he is, that to pass him over in the selection of a Commander for it, might be injurious to the division and discouraging to other officers. I have therefore recommended him for promotion.<sup>7</sup>

The problem was solved by the promotion of both Heth and Pender. On May 27, 1863, Pender became, at the age of twenty-nine, the youngest major general in the Army of Northern Virginia. Pender's promotion was made even more enjoyable by the fact that his wife and his two small sons, Turner and Dorsey, were visiting him at the time.<sup>8</sup>

On May 30, Hill's Third Corps was officially organized and consisted of the divisions of Major Generals Heth, Pender, and Richard H. Anderson (whose division had been transferred from the First Corps). Two brigades of Hill's old Light Division, Heth's and Archer's (plus two new brigades), made up Heth's division. That left Pender with a reduced Light Division consisting of his own brigade and those of Lane, Thomas, and McGowan (now commanded by Colonel Abner Perrin, McGowan having been wounded at Chancellorsville).<sup>9</sup>

With the completion of the reorganization of the Army of Northern Virginia, active operations commenced once again on June 3, 1863. Longstreet's and Ewell's corps marched westward toward Culpeper Court House, leaving Hill's Third Corps at Fredericksburg to watch Hooker's Army of the Potomac, which occupied the same position as that held

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<sup>7</sup> Douglas S. Freeman, ed., Lee's Dispatches (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1957), pp. 96-97.

<sup>8</sup> Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 398, 631; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 241-242.

<sup>9</sup> Special Orders No. 146, Headquarters, Army of Northern Virginia, May 30, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXV, pt. 2, p. 840.

prior to Chancellorsville.<sup>10</sup>

On the afternoon of June 5, a small body of Federal infantry crossed the Rappahannock River near the mouth of Deep Run. Early the next morning, Pender placed his division in line of battle facing the Federals in front of the Bernard house along the Old Richmond Stage Road (sometimes referred to as the Port Royal Road). Colonel William J. Hoke, who was in temporary command of Pender's old brigade, was ordered to advance his skirmishers and to test the strength of the Federal infantry. About 200 men moved forward under the command of Lieutenant Alsa J. Brown, and, exceeding their orders, attacked and drove the Sixth Vermont Infantry Regiment from the road. Little serious fighting took place, and the Federals later recrossed the Rappahannock.<sup>11</sup> Pender's confidence was evident the next day when he told his wife: "The campaign has commenced at last and now we may expect sharp work. I have no fears but that we shall whip Hooker."<sup>12</sup>

While still camped at Hamilton's Crossing, Pender became aware of the apparent animosity of his former associate of Hill's old Light Division--Brigadier General James J. Archer. Although both Pender and Archer had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general on the same day, Pender alone received command of a division in the reorganization of May, 1863. In a letter to Fanny on June 10, 1863, Pender

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<sup>10</sup>Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, pp. 502-503.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 502; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, p. 691.

<sup>12</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 242.

expressed his thoughts:

I fear my promotion [to major general] has caused Archer to be cool towards me. His manner the last time we met was not as cordial as heretofore, and he seemed very much embittered and rather down on Gen. Hill and I suppose because I will not join him in the latter he will grow cool towards me. I am sorry for it but know I have done nothing to forfeit his good opinion or will.<sup>13</sup>

Two days later, Pender commented on the cavalry battle of June 9 at Brandy Station in which his former West Point classmate, Major General J. E. B. Stuart, was surprised and humiliated by the Federal cavalry corps under Brigadier General Alfred Pleasanton. "I suppose it is all right," Pender told his wife, "that Stuart should get all the blame, for when anything handsome is done he gets all the credit. A bad rule either way. He however retrieved the surprise by whipping them in the end."<sup>14</sup>

By June 15, two-thirds of Hill's corps--Anderson's and Heth's divisions--were on the march in the footsteps of the main portion of Lee's army, leaving only the Light Division at Fredericksburg.<sup>15</sup> On the eve of his departure, Pender wrote his wife:

Tomorrow morning we start as I suppose for Penna., the enemy having left the vicinity of Frederick[sburg] last night apparently in great haste and fright. We march for Culpeper direct, going by our last glorious battle field of Chancellorsville . . . . All have left here but my Division . . . . Thus far Gen. Lee's plans have worked admirably, so says Gen. Hill who I suppose knows them. I do not, but can see far enough to look into Md. May God in his goodness be more gracious than in our last

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 244-245.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>15</sup> Robert E. Lee to James Longstreet, June 15, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 3, p. 890; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 516.

trial. We certainly may be allowed to hope as our mission is one of peace alto' through blood . . . . Gen. Lee has gotten fully one week ahead of Hooker, who has been slumbering here in front of one third of our force. If things turn out well in the west we may expect good results by Fall.<sup>16</sup>

Upon leaving Fredericksburg, Pender's division marched along the Plank Road, passed the Chancellorsville battlefield, and crossed the Rapidan River at Ely's Ford, camping on the north bank for the night. The division reached Stevensburg the next day, June 16.<sup>17</sup> From that location, Pender proudly wrote to Fanny:

This place is about six miles from Culpeper, so we go beyond tomorrow. We have a grand race on hand between Lee and Hooker. We have the inside track, Hooker going by Washington and we by Winchester. Gen. [Jubal A.] Early stormed the latter place the 15th instant and took all [Major General Robert H.] Milroy's cannon. They are evidently much scared about Washington, but I think Gen. Lee is making for the nearest point of Penn. and Ewell's Corps is undoubtedly across the Potomac by this time.<sup>18</sup>

The weather was extremely hot on the first days of the march, and as the Light Division moved through Culpeper Court House and beyond, many of Pender's troops collapsed from the effects of dust, heat, and exhaustion. At night the stragglers rejoined their regiments. On the night of June 17, however, the weather changed abruptly. Heavy rain turned the dusty roads into mud as the Confederates continued on to Gaines' Cross Roads. Chester Gap, in the Blue Ridge Mountains,

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<sup>16</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 247-248.

<sup>17</sup>Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 91.

<sup>18</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 248.

was reached on June 19, and on the next day, Pender's division descended to Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley.<sup>19</sup>

Passing beyond Front Royal, Pender's troops, finding the bridges destroyed, waded both forks of the Shenandoah River. The water was waist deep, but the men plunged into the swift current amid cheers and a tune played by the band of the Fourteenth South Carolina Infantry Regiment of Perrin's (McGowan's) brigade.<sup>20</sup>

While camped a few miles from White Post on June 21, Pender informed his wife: "Since I wrote you I have had some hard marching and some grumbling, but the boys are now in fine plight and spirits. We shall get to Berryville tomorrow where Gen. Lee is."<sup>21</sup> With longing perhaps for his homeland in North Carolina, or for the pleasant atmosphere of his winter quarters along the Rappahannock, Pender continued: "You have no idea how much out of the world this Valley seems, and although one of the finest countrys I ever saw, I do not like it . . . . Keep in good spirits, honey, and hope that this summer's work will tend to shorten the war."<sup>22</sup>

On June 24 Pender's division camped near Shepherdstown. Alfred M. Scales, who had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general on June 13 while convalescing at home from a wound received at Chancellorsville, arrived to take command of Pender's former brigade. Colonel

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<sup>19</sup>Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," pp. 91-92.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>21</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 249.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 250.



W. J. Hoke, who had led the brigade on the march from Fredericksburg, returned to the command of the Thirty-eighth North Carolina Infantry Regiment.<sup>23</sup>

Realizing that his wife did not favor the invasion of the North, but confident of the outcome, Pender wrote to her from Shepherdstown:

Tomorrow I do what I know will cause you grief, and that is to cross the Potomac. The advance of our column is at Chambersburg, Penna. tonight. May the Lord prosper this expedition and bring an early peace out of it. I feel that we are taking a very important step, but see no reason why we should not be successful. We have a large army that is in splendid condition and spirit and the best Generals of the South. Our troops are sending [a] good deal of stock out of Penna. and Gen. Lee has issued [an] order which altho' [it] prevents plundering, at the same [time] makes arrangements for the bountiful supplying of our people.<sup>24</sup>

The next day, on June 25, the Light Division forded the Potomac River and marched on toward Hagerstown, Maryland. Two days later all of the Army of Northern Virginia, except for Stuart's cavalry, was in Pennsylvania. Ewell's Second Corps was at Carlisle and near York; Longstreet's First Corps reached Chambersburg, while Hill's Third Corps, including Pender's division, marched to Fayetteville.<sup>25</sup>

While at Fayetteville, on June 28, Pender wrote what was to be his last letter to his wife:

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<sup>23</sup> Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. IV, p. 177; Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary, p. 724.

<sup>24</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 252.

<sup>25</sup> Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," p. 92; Henry B. McClellan, I Rode with Jeb Stuart: The Life and Campaigns of Major General J. E. B. Stuart (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), p. 323; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. III, p. 57.

We are resting today after marching 157 miles since leaving Fredericksburg twelve days ago yesterday . . . . I am tired of invasions for altho' they have made us suffer all that people can suffer, I cannot get my resentment to that point to make me feel indifferent to what you see here. But for the demoralizing effect plundering would have on our troops, they would feel war in all its horrors . . . .

Everything seems to be going on finely. We might get to Phila[delphia] without a fight, I believe, if we should choose to go. Gen. Lee intimates to no one what he is up to, and we can only surmise. I hope we may be in Harrisburg in three days. What a fine commentary . . . if we should march to the capital of one of their largest states without a blow . . . .<sup>26</sup>

Pender then went on to commend his troops and to express his opinion of the population of Pennsylvania:

If we do not succeed in accomplishing a great deal all of us will be surprised. Our men seem to be in the spirit and feel confident. They laugh at the idea of meeting the militia. This is a most magnificent country to look at, but the most miserable people . . . . They are coarse and dirty, and the number of dirty looking children is perfectly astonishing. A great many of the women go barefooted and but a small fraction wear stockings. I hope we may never have such people . . . .

I never saw troops march as ours do; they will go 15 or 20 miles a day without leaving a straggler and hoop and yell on all occasions. Confidence and good spirits seem to possess everyone. I wish we could meet Hooker and have the matter settled at once . . . . This campaign will do one of two things: vis--to cause a speedy peace or a more tremendous war than we have had, the former may God grant.<sup>27</sup>

Unknown to Pender, on the day of his last letter to Fanny, Major General George G. Meade replaced Hooker as commander of the Army of the Potomac. This fact plus the information that the Federals had crossed the Potomac River and were at Frederick, Maryland, prompted General Lee to immediately change his plans. Instead of proceeding toward Harris-

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<sup>26</sup> Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, pp. 253-254.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 254.

burg, Lee ordered his corps commanders to concentrate east of South Mountain in the vicinity of Cashtown and Gettysburg.<sup>28</sup>

In accordance with these orders, Lieutenant General Hill sent Heth's division along the Chambersburg Pike from Fayetteville to Cashtown on June 29. The following morning Hill rode with Pender's division to join Heth, leaving orders for Anderson's division to move by the same route. While Hill was still en route to Cashtown, Heth sent Brigadier General James J. Pettigrew's brigade to Gettysburg to obtain supplies. Approaching Gettysburg from the west, Pettigrew saw Union cavalry and infantry in the town, and returned to Cashtown. That evening Hill arrived with Pender's division at Cashtown, where he received the reports of Heth and Pettigrew. Hill then decided to advance on Gettysburg the next day to determine the strength of the Federal force.<sup>29</sup>

At 5:00 a.m., on July 1, 1863, Heth's division, accompanied by Major William J. Pegram's battalion of reserve artillery, left Cashtown and marched eastward on the Chambersburg Pike toward Gettysburg and an undetermined number of Federals. Pender's division, with Major David G. McIntosh's reserve artillery battalion, followed three hours later. Major William T. Poague's artillery battalion, which had accompanied Pender's troops from Culpeper Court House to Cashtown, was detached

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<sup>28</sup> Boatner, III, The Civil War Dictionary, pp. 409, 664; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. III, pp. 60-62; report of Robert E. Lee, January 20, 1864, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, pp. 316-317; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 574.

<sup>29</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 607; report of Henry Heth, September 13, 1863, ibid., p. 637; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, pp. 77-78.

and left at the latter place to await further orders.<sup>30</sup>

Approaching Gettysburg from the west, Heth's division soon encountered heavy resistance from the Union First Corps, which was temporarily under the command of Major General Abner Doubleday. The Federal infantry was supported by Brigadier General John Buford's cavalry division, and later by Major General Oliver O. Howard's Eleventh Corps. During Heth's first attack, Brigadier General James J. Archer, Pender's former comrade in Hill's old Light Division, had the unfortunate distinction of being the first general officer of the Army of Northern Virginia to be captured since General Lee took command exactly thirteen months previous.<sup>31</sup>

While the engagement between Heth and Doubleday continued, Pender's division advanced toward the sound of battle. After sending McIntosh's artillery to join Heth, Pender halted his division three miles from Gettysburg and formed a line of battle perpendicular to the turnpike with the brigades of Thomas, Lane, Scales, and Perrin extending from left to right. With a heavy line of skirmishers covering the right flank, Pender ordered the division forward. Upon approaching the battlefield, however, Pender again ordered a halt and realigned his troops. Lane's brigade was transferred from its position between those

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 78; report of Henry Heth, September 13, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 637; report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, ibid., p. 607; report of William T. Poague, July 30, 1863, ibid., p. 673; report of David G. McIntosh, July 30, 1863, ibid., p. 674.

<sup>31</sup> Report of Abner Doubleday, December 14, 1863, ibid., pt. 1, pp. 244-245; report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, ibid., pt. 2, p. 607; report of Henry Heth, September 13, 1863, ibid., pp. 637-638; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 170-171; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, p. 80.

of Thomas and Scales to the right of Perrin's brigade. In this formation the Light Division advanced to some high ground just over a mile west of Gettysburg known as Herr Ridge, upon which Heth had placed the artillery of Pegram and McIntosh.<sup>32</sup>

With Pender now in support, Hill ordered Heth to advance again. Heth's troops moved forward and gradually drove the main Federal force from their position on the rise of ground east of Willoughby Run known as McPherson Ridge toward the more prominent elevation of Seminary Ridge. This success was due in part to the timely appearance at 2:30 p.m. of Major General Robert E. Rodes' division of Ewell's corps on the right flank of the Union First Corps. The prolonged fighting, however, exhausted Heth's troops, many of which had, by late afternoon, run out of ammunition. At 4:00 p.m., Hill, in order to exert more pressure upon the Federals, ordered Pender's fresh division, which had been slowly moving behind and in support of Heth, to advance against the Union line on Seminary Ridge.<sup>33</sup>

Pender deployed his division between the Chambersburg Pike and the Hagerstown Road facing eastward. On the left flank, Scales' brigade, its left resting on the turnpike, numbered 1,250 men. Perrin's brigade, numbering 1,600 men, formed the center. Lane's brigade, on the right

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 81; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 656; report of Abner Perrin, August 13, 1863, ibid., p. 661; report of James H. Lane, August 13, 1863, ibid., p. 665.

<sup>33</sup>Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 575; report of Robert E. Lee, January 20, 1864, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 317; report of Henry Heth, September 13, 1863, ibid., p. 639; Edwin B. Coddington, The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), p. 293; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, p. 88.

flank, numbered 1,355 effectives. Thomas' brigade was held in reserve by Hill to support the artillery, and if necessary, Pender's attack.<sup>34</sup>

As Pender began his assault, Scales' brigade, on the left, rushed forward to the aid of a portion of Brigadier General Joseph R. Davis' brigade of Heth's division, which was engaged with a superior Union force along the Chambersburg Pike near McPherson Ridge. Scales' troops quickened their pace, and, raising the "Rebel yell," crashed into the exposed flank of the Federals and drove them toward Seminary Ridge. Pressing forward, Scales soon came upon a portion of Heth's men (probably Colonel John M. Brockenbrough's brigade) lying down and out of ammunition. Scales passed over this line and crossed McPherson Ridge. The brigade then came under severe artillery fire from Lieutenant James Stewart's battery of the Fourth United States Artillery, which occupied a position where Seminary Ridge intersected the unfinished railroad (which ran parallel to the Chambersburg Pike), and that enabled it to enfilade Scales' left flank. Canister and musket fire soon decimated the ranks of the brigade, and by the time it reached the low ground in front of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (for which the ridge was named), every field officer in the brigade except one had been killed or wounded. Hit in the leg by a piece of shell, Brigadier General Scales turned the brigade over to Lieutenant Colonel G. T. Gordon of the Thirty-fourth North Carolina Infantry

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<sup>34</sup>Warren W. Hassler, Jr., Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1970), pp. 118-119; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 656.

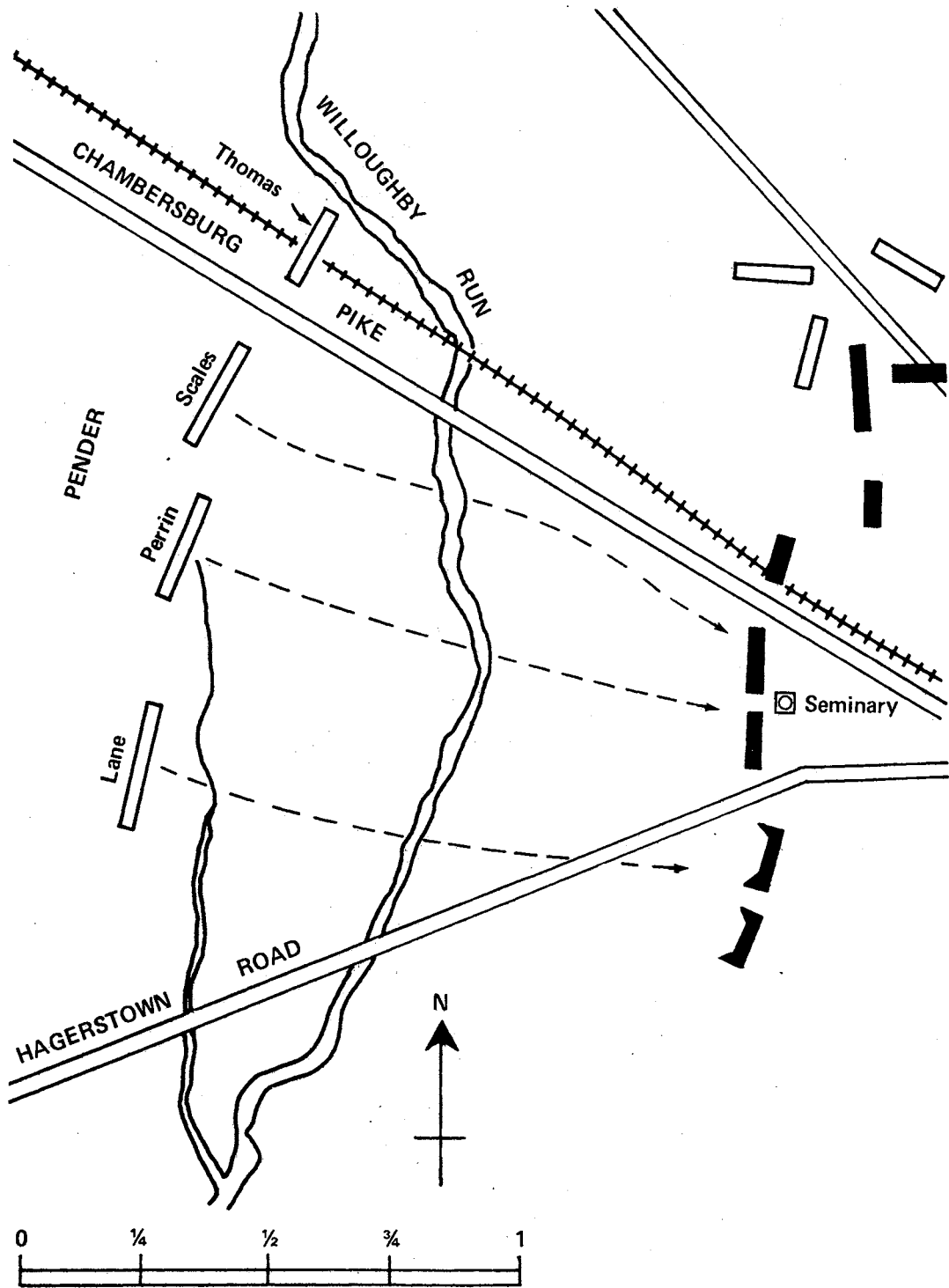


Figure 14. Battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 1863.

Regiment. At this point, the brigade halted to return the fire of the Federals before continuing the advance. This resulted in some confusion, but the brigade was rallied and sent forward again through the efforts of Pender and some of his staff, as well as those of the painfully wounded Scales.<sup>35</sup>

While Scales attacked on the left, Lane's brigade advanced on the right flank of Pender's division. Finding a portion of Buford's cavalry on his right, Lane deployed the Seventh North Carolina Infantry Regiment as skirmishers to protect his flank during the attack. This line of skirmishers, at right angles to the rest of the brigade, was instructed to move by their left flank so as to keep pace with the attacking regiments. As Lane advanced, he passed through a wooded area. When his brigade emerged, he discovered that he had passed Archer's brigade and that his entire front was now unmasked. As the brigade continued to push forward, Lane noticed that his skirmishers had been detained for a short time, and that dismounted Federal cavalry was trying to enfilade his right. To meet this threat, Colonel W. M. Barbour used part of his Thirty-seventh North Carolina Infantry Regiment as skirmishers. After being delayed too long to attack the Union position at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Lane's brigade rushed forward and drove the Federal cavalry and a small body of infantry from

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 657-658; report of Alfred M. Scales, August 14, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 669-670; Hassler, Jr., Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg, pp. 121-122; Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65, Vol. II, pp. 691-692.



the woods just south of the Hagerstown Road on Seminary Ridge.<sup>36</sup>

The spearhead of the assault, however, was led by Colonel Perrin, whose brigade formed the center of the Light Division. Pender personally rode up to Perrin and ordered him to advance, and, if, upon finding Heth's troops to be at a halt, to pass through their ranks and engage the Federals on Seminary Ridge. Leading his brigade forward, Perrin soon came upon Pettigrew's exhausted brigade, and passed to their front. Taking advantage of a ravine which sheltered his brigade from Union artillery fire, Perrin reformed his ranks and instructed his men not to fire at the Federals until ordered to do so. The brigade then moved forward again, keeping pace with Scales' brigade on the left. Leading his men up the slope of Seminary Ridge, Perrin soon noticed that Scales' brigade had halted and that Lane's was far behind on the right. Undaunted, Perrin's troops rushed on toward the Federal position, despite an enfilading fire from Stewart's battery and musket fire from the ridge. Breaking through the Federal lines at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Perrin split his brigade--the First and Fourteenth South Carolina infantry regiments obliqued to the left, while the Twelfth and Thirteenth South Carolina regiments turned to the right--and drove the remnants of Doubleday's First Corps from the ridge. The brigade pursued the routed Federals into the streets of Gettysburg, capturing hundreds of prisoners, thousands of small arms, two pieces of artillery, and four flags, including the Union First Corps standard and the flag of the 104th New York Infantry

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Vol. I, p. 379, Vol. II, pp. 562, 660; report of James H. Lane, August 13, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 665; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 657.

Regiment.<sup>37</sup>

As Perrin's South Carolinians advanced through the streets of Gettysburg, Pender rode through the ranks, raising his hat in salute, and, approaching Perrin, complimented the colonel on his brigade's performance. Then, upon the appearance of Brigadier General Stephen D. Ramseur's brigade of Rodes' division (which continued the pursuit through the town), Pender concentrated his entire division (Thomas' brigade having come up) on Seminary Ridge, with his left flank resting on the Hagerstown Road. There, as the officers of the various regiments called the roll, the full weight of the staggering losses in Pender's division was revealed. Scales' brigade had lost over 500 killed and wounded. So too had Perrin's brigade. Lane had lost considerably less. The day had been a brilliant success for the Confederates, however, and as darkness gathered over the battlefield, Pender and his veteran troops remained confident that the next day would bring victory for the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>38</sup>

No serious fighting took place on the morning of July 2, 1863. Pender still held his position of the night before, with Richard H. Anderson's division now posted on his right along Seminary Ridge.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.; report of Abner Perrin, August 13, 1863, *ibid.*, pp. 661-662; Abner Perrin to Milledge Luke Bonham, July 29, 1863, in Milledge Louis Bonham, "Notes and Documents: A Little More Light on Gettysburg," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (March, 1938), pp. 521-522; Caldwell, The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's," and Subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade," pp. 97-99.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 99; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 658; report of Abner Perrin, August 13, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 663; report of Alfred M. Scales, August 14, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 670; Hassler, Jr., Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg, p. 145.

Rodes' division of Ewell's corps was stationed on Pender's left. Heth's division, under the temporary command of Pettigrew, was held in reserve by Hill. Longstreet's corps, much to the annoyance of General Lee, was not yet on the field. By the time Longstreet had his two leading divisions in position on the Confederate right flank, most of Meade's Army of the Potomac had been concentrated south of Gettysburg.<sup>39</sup>

Soon after 4:00 p.m. Longstreet attacked Meade's left flank--the Union Third Corps--which had been unwisely moved forward from its previous and more formidable position along Cemetery Ridge by its commander, Major General Daniel E. Sickles. Anderson's division of Hill's corps aided Longstreet during the latter part of the attack.<sup>40</sup>

Late in the afternoon, while Anderson's troops were taking part in Longstreet's assault, Pender, accompanied by his assistant adjutant-general, Major Joseph A. Engelhard, rode to the left of the Light Division. There Pender met his old friend, Lieutenant Colonel William G. Lewis of the Forty-third North Carolina Infantry Regiment of Rodes' division. At the suggestion of Pender, the three officers dismounted and sat on a large granite boulder to talk while awaiting orders. The conversation did not last long, for suddenly, Federal artillery opened

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<sup>39</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, pp. 607-608; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, ibid., p. 658; report of Robert E. Rodes, no month or day, 1863, ibid., p. 555; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. III, pp. 86-87, 92; Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 175.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 177-179; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 577; report of Robert E. Lee, January 20, 1864, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 319; report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, ibid., p. 608.

fire upon Pender's division. Pender immediately turned to Engelhard and said, "Major, this indicates an assault, and we will ride down our line."<sup>41</sup> Pender and his aide parted with Lewis and rode off together. As they neared the front of the division's right flank, Pender was struck in the leg by a fragment of shell about two inches square. While the wound did not appear to be fatal, it was severe, causing Pender to relinquish command for the first time on the field of battle. Regretfully he turned over the command of the division to Brigadier General James H. Lane.<sup>42</sup>

That evening, after Pender had been carried to the rear. Lieutenant General Ewell prepared to attack the Union positions on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill with his Second Corps. Prior to the attack, Ewell sent a staff officer to Pender's division to find out what it intended to do. Upon returning to Ewell, the staff officer reported that Lane was now in command, and that the wounded Pender had told Lane to attack if a favorable opportunity was presented. Ewell then sent a message to Lane requesting the cooperation of his division in the assault. Ewell received no answer to his request. Ewell did not attempt to contact Hill, because there was not sufficient time before the attack was to be delivered. Meanwhile, Rodes, whose division formed Ewell's right and

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<sup>41</sup>Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 259; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 451.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 260; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, pp. 193-194; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, pp. 658-659; report of James H. Lane, August 13, 1863, ibid., p. 665.

bordered on Lane's left, informed Lane that he would attack at dark, and requested that Lane protect his right flank. Lane gave no immediate reply, but a little later, sent a message to Rodes saying that he would cooperate. Neither Lane nor Rodes informed Ewell of this decision. Ewell's attack, however, was uncoordinated, and before Rodes could reach his objective, Major General Jubal A. Early's division had already been repulsed. Rodes recalled his troops after driving in the Federal skirmishers. During Rodes' advance, Lane moved the brigades of Thomas and Perrin forward to a sunken road opposite the Federal position on Cemetery Hill.<sup>43</sup>

Having failed to crush either flank of Meade's army, Lee determined to attack the center. This decision culminated in what has since become known as Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863. Major General George E. Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps, plus Heth's division (still under the temporary command of Pettigrew) and two brigades of Pender's division--Lane's and Scales' (the latter now under Colonel William L. J. Lowrance)--were chosen to participate in the attack.<sup>44</sup>

There seems to have been little or no detailed supervision of the placement of units prior to the attack. This resulted in the defective deployment of Lane's and Scales' brigades in the second line of the assault force. The two brigades were placed behind the center and right of Pettigrew's (Heth's) division. This left Pettigrew's

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 666; report of Richard S. Ewell, no month or day, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 447; report of Robert E. Rodes, no month or day, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 556; report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 659; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, pp. 129-130, 134.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146; Freeman, R. E. Lee, Vol. III, p. 112.

left flank extended and unsupported. Proper support would conceivably have been assured Pettigrew by the placement of Lane and Lowrance in echelon behind Pettigrew's left. Longstreet, who was in overall command of the attack, failed to see the mistake. Hill, if he noticed the dangerous deployment, did not mention it to his fellow corps commander. Lane failed to notify Longstreet, and Major General Isaac R. Trimble, who took command of Pender's troops shortly before the attack, probably did not know enough about the situation to be alarmed. Whether or not a change in deployment would have made a difference is uncertain. The attack upon the center of Meade's position was, in any case, a disastrous failure.<sup>45</sup>

The next day, July 4, Lee's army began its long retreat back into Virginia. The three-day Battle of Gettysburg was over, ending Lee's second and last invasion of the North. The casualties on both sides were staggering. Meade's Army of the Potomac, which had some 88,000 effectives at Gettysburg, lost 23,049 killed, wounded, and missing. The Army of Northern Virginia, numbering around 75,000 strong, sustained 27,528 casualties. Of this last number, Pender's division lost over 1,600 men in the campaign.<sup>46</sup>

As the column of wagons, seventeen miles long, carried the Confederate wounded south, Pender lay in an ambulance, intent on going to Good Spring, North Carolina, to recuperate and to be with his family.

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<sup>45</sup>Hassler, A. P. Hill; Lee's Forgotten General, p. 164; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, pp. 148, 150-151, 182-184.

<sup>46</sup>Hassler, Jr., Commanders of the Army of the Potomac, p. 186; Livermore, Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-65, pp. 102-103; return of casualties in the Army of Northern Virginia in the Gettysburg Campaign, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, pp. 344-345.

Alongside him was his friend and subordinate, Alfred Scales. The wounds of both men were serious, but Scales' appeared to be the worst. He was left at Winchester, Virginia, recovered, and fought through the remainder of the war.<sup>47</sup>

Pender's wound was healing by the time he reached Staunton, but the first night there, the large artery in his thigh began hemorrhaging. Quickly applying an improvised tourniquet, Pender stopped the flow of blood. Fearing that Pender might bleed to death, a chaplain inquired about the state of his soul. In a calm voice, Pender replied, "Tell my wife that I do not fear to die. I can confidently resign my soul to God, trusting in the atonement of Jesus Christ. My only regret is to leave her and our two children. I have always tried to do my duty in every sphere in which Providence has placed me."<sup>48</sup>

A short time later, a surgeon arrived; so too did Pender's older brother David. After an attempt to mend the artery failed, the surgeon decided to amputate the leg. Surviving the operation but a few hours, Pender died on July 18, 1863. His mind remained clear to the end, and he expressed his sorrow at the news of the death the day before of Brigadier General James J. Pettigrew, the man whose brigade he had inherited in June, 1862, following the Battle of Seven Pines.<sup>49</sup>

Pender's body was sent to Tarboro, North Carolina, and there laid

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<sup>47</sup> Johnson and Buel, eds., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol. III, pp. 423-424; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 260.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 260-261; Montgomery, "William D. Pender," Peele, ed., Lives of Distinguished North Carolinians, p. 452.

to rest in the churchyard of Calvary Parish.<sup>50</sup> Upon his headstone was placed the inscription, "Patriot by nature, soldier by training, Christian by faith." He left behind his wife Fanny and three sons, one of whom he never saw. Fanny successfully supported the boys, but never remarried. She died in 1922 at the age of eighty-two, and was buried beside her beloved husband.<sup>51</sup>

Pender's death was followed by eulogies from his subordinates and from his commanders. Major Joseph A. Engelhard, in his official report of the operations of the Light Division at Gettysburg, wrote of Pender: "Seldom has the service suffered more in the loss of one man than it did when this valuable officer fell. Gallant, skillful, energetic, this young commander had won a reputation surpassed only by the success and ability of his services."<sup>52</sup> In a letter to the governor of South Carolina after the Gettysburg campaign, Colonel Abner Perrin stated of Pender: "In my humble judgement he was the best Major General in the Army. He was a most thorough officer. He was brave, energetic, a thorough disciplinarian, and in fact everything a soldier should be. His place will be hard to fill in this Army."<sup>53</sup> Pender's friend and immediate superior, Lieutenant General Ambrose P. Hill, in reporting the second day's fighting at Gettysburg, wrote: "On this day . . . the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.; Hassler, ed., The General to His Lady: The Civil War Letters of William Dorsey Pender to Fanny Pender, p. 261.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp. 261-262.

<sup>52</sup> Report of Joseph A. Engelhard, November 4, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 658.

<sup>53</sup> Abner Perrin to Milledge Luke Bonham, July 29, 1863, in Bonham, "Notes and Documents: A Little More Light on Gettysburg," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XXIV, p. 523.



Confederacy lost the invaluable services of Maj. Gen. W. D. Pender, wounded by a shell, and since dead. No man fell during this bloody battle of Gettysburg more regretted than he, nor around whose youthful brow were clustered brighter rays of glory."<sup>54</sup>

Perhaps the praise that would have pleased Pender the most came from the pen of General Robert E. Lee. In a preliminary report of the campaign to General Samuel Cooper, adjutant and inspector general of the Confederate Army, Lee expressed his feelings about the young division commander:

This lamented officer had borne a distinguished part in every engagement of this army, and was wounded on several occasions while leading his command with conspicuous gallantry and ability. The confidence and admiration inspired by his courage and capacity as an officer were only equaled by the esteem and respect entertained by all with whom he was associated for the noble qualities of his modest and unassuming character.<sup>55</sup>

Two months later, after the Battle of Chickamauga in the Western theater, in which Major General John B. Hood was erroneously reported killed, Pender approached front rank in the eyes of the commanding general when Lee wrote to President Jefferson Davis: "I am gradually losing my best men--Jackson, Pender, Hood."<sup>56</sup>

The Gettysburg campaign at last saw the fulfillment of one of Pender's strongest desires--the command of an infantry division. Although his new command had the highest reputation of any unit of its

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<sup>54</sup> Report of Ambrose P. Hill, November, no day, 1863, Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XXVII, pt. 2, p. 608.

<sup>55</sup> Robert E. Lee to Samuel Cooper, July 31, 1863, *ibid.*, p. 310.

<sup>56</sup> Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, September 23, 1863, *ibid.*, Ser. I, Vol. XXIX, pt. 2, p. 743; Dowdey and Manarin, eds., The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee, p. 603.

size in the Army of Northern Virginia, it was no longer the same Light Division it had been in many previous campaigns. Of its original brigade commanders of June, 1862 (minus Pender), only one remained at his post--Edward L. Thomas. Lowrance O. Branch and Maxcy Gregg were dead, Charles W. Field was severely wounded and was out of the war for over a year, and James J. Archer was transferred. The division was reduced to four brigades, two brigades having been transferred. Despite this, Pender entered into his new responsibilities with confidence and a strong hope for a successful and an early end to the war. Although he felt that the campaign into Pennsylvania was a necessity, he sympathized with his wife, who was against a second invasion of the North. Pender, by the time of the Gettysburg campaign, was also growing tired of the war. Perhaps this was but a more mature attitude of the conflict; the old days of glory now seemed long ago. His leadership, however, was as competent as ever. On the march and in camp, he continued to look after his men, and at Gettysburg his attacks were as fierce as they were bold. Whether or not the dangerous deployment of his troops for the fateful attack of July 3, 1863, would have been corrected had Pender not been wounded remains an open question. But then, there is no assurance that this would have changed the outcome.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSIONS

Pender will forever remain in the shadow of Ambrose P. Hill and "Stonewall" Jackson. Both men exemplified the speed and offensive daring of the Army of Northern Virginia. Jackson's Second Corps, to which Pender belonged during most of his battle career, was the element of maneuver in which he developed as an infantry leader.

As a brigade commander, Pender was extremely fortunate in being assigned to the Light Division in the summer of 1862. The division was considered by many Confederates, including Lee, to be the most renowned in the Army of Northern Virginia. From the beginning, Hill relied upon Pender's courage and skill in battle, and in time came to regard him as his best commander.

Although modified, the tactics used in the American Civil War--at least that portion of the war covered in this study--were largely patterned after the Napoleonic concept. Mobility, speed, surprise, and boldness on the battlefield were the doctrines stressed at the United States Military Academy through the teachings of Professor Dennis Hart Mahan. These doctrines were taught to almost every professional officer, and were read by many nonprofessional officers who served in the war. It is in this light that Pender must be judged as a combat leader.

The infantry brigade constituted the basic tactical unit in the

Civil War. Organized within the divisional structure, the brigade could be used in conjunction with other brigades, or it could be employed separately. Since most of the battles in the Eastern theater were fought in Virginia, geography often was a major determining factor in the deployment and use of tactical units. The dense woods of Virginia, which were often choked with heavy undergrowth, added greatly to the problem of cooperation between brigades in an attack. The Peninsular campaign, in which Pender first demonstrated his aggressive prowess, perhaps best typifies this kind of fighting.

Pender quickly matured from a carefree young officer into a seasoned veteran. From the late summer of 1862 through May of 1863, Pender personified a new type of Confederate officer. Leader of a brigade, he was professionally trained, was still learning, and earned his laurels through performance. Combat was his glory.

Pender gained the respect of his officers and men, as well as the admiration, loyalty, and friendship of his commander, A. P. Hill. Of all the brigade commanders in the Light Division, perhaps only Maxcy Gregg equaled Pender in two respects--close personal friendship with Hill, and savage attacks on the field of battle. Although James J. Archer was a more seasoned tactician, he lacked the element of interest and color which characterized Pender. Because of this, Hill relied more upon Pender than upon his other commanders.

On the field of battle, Pender often demonstrated his ability to command larger units than his rank denoted. While still a colonel, he rallied the broken ranks of several regiments at Seven Pines. Taking charge of several brigades at Second Manassas, he attacked and helped drive the Federals from the field. Hill placed him in command

of the attacking brigades which gained strategic ground at Harpers Ferry, and at Chancellorsville, Pender briefly led the entire Light Division.

Like most good battle leaders, Pender set an example for his men. That he was personally brave cannot be questioned. Five wounds on the field of battle were uncommon in the war, even for a general officer, usually the most exposed. He was not foolhardy or reckless, however. Inspired by his personal example, Pender's men followed his orders with an enthusiasm that, on several fields, produced decisive results. Pender's troops may not have always taken their objective, but they never failed to hold a position.

Much of Pender's success as a leader was due to his organizational and administrative abilities. When not actively campaigning, Pender kept his men highly trained. Long hours on the drill field enabled his regiments to perform the necessary tactical maneuvers during the heat of battle. Pender also insisted upon firm but fair discipline for his officers as well as his men. The soldiers of his command respected and admired him for his constant efforts to look after them and to supply their needs. His camps were always orderly and clean. On the road, his troops marched as fast as any in Lee's army. Like most Confederate commanders, however, he was never able to solve the problem of stragglers.

Pender was guided by his patriotism and by his religious faith. Although his family owned no slaves, he believed in the Confederate cause and in the inevitability of Confederate success. In religious matters he was more similar to "Stonewall" Jackson, whom he disliked, than to his friend Hill, who scorned formal religious show. Pender's

faith in God helped sustain him during the long periods away from his family, and during the rigorous campaigns of the war.

As commander of the Light Division in the Gettysburg campaign, Pender continued to demonstrate those qualities of leadership which distinguished his previous military career. He handled the division well before his fatal wound took him from the field. By the summer of 1863, Pender was beginning to gain an understanding of the overall war situation. Although he remained confident of success, war was no longer a glorious adventure. More than anything else, he longed for peace so that he might retire from the army to a farm in North Carolina with Fanny and the children. But his strong personal pride remained. Although his wife did not favor the second invasion of the North, Pender believed that an offensive campaign was the only course open to a possible successful conclusion of the war. He recognized the strategic possibilities of a sustained campaign on Federal soil--relief for war-ravaged northern Virginia, the procurement of plentiful food supplies in the North, Federal war-weariness, and a possible crushing defeat for Union arms.

After the Battle of Gettysburg, a rumor spread through the Army of Northern Virginia that General Lee had stated that Pender was the only officer in his command who could fill "Stonewall" Jackson's place. There seems to be some evidence to support the idea that Lee felt the mortal wound received by Pender deprived the army of victory at Gettysburg and possibly cost the war. His past record suggests that, had he lived, he would have progressed further in command responsibilities with the passing of time, and that this would have eased the strain on the Confederate command system to provide competent leaders in the

last years of the war.

Considering the failing health of both Ambrose P. Hill and Richard S. Ewell during the latter part of the war, it seems quite possible that Pender, had he lived, would have been a corps commander before the end of the war. By the summer of 1864, however, a new form of warfare had developed in Virginia which might have proved to be Pender's nemesis--trench warfare. Maneuver became almost impossible, and attacks with formal, heavy lines of infantry became suicidal. Trench warfare effectively terminated those talents which best characterized Pender on the field of battle. It is interesting to speculate, however, what he might have done against Philip H. Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, where his talents could have been utilized.

As a battlefield commander, Pender was above average in each rank that he held. His capabilities grew with each new responsibility. Pender was what General Lee considered him to be--the most promising young officer in the Army of Northern Virginia.

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APPENDIX

ORGANIZATION OF PENDER'S DIVISION IN  
THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN

PENDER'S DIVISION

Major General William D. Pender (mortally wounded)  
Brigadier General James H. Lane  
Major General Isaac R. Trimble (wounded and captured)  
Brigadier General James H. Lane

FIRST BRIGADE

Colonel Abner Perrin

First South Carolina Infantry Regiment (Provisional Army)

Major C. W. McCreary

First South Carolina Rifles (Infantry Regiment)

Captain William M. Hadden

Twelfth South Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel John L. Miller

Thirteenth South Carolina Infantry Regiment

Lieutenant Colonel B. T. Brockman

Fourteenth South Carolina Infantry Regiment

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph N. Brown

SECOND BRIGADE

Brigadier General James H. Lane

Colonel C. M. Avery

Brigadier General James H. Lane

Colonel C. M. Avery

Seventh North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Captain J. McLeod Turner (wounded and captured)  
Captain James G. Harris

Eighteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel John D. Barry

Twenty-eighth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel S. D. Lowe (wounded)  
Lieutenant Colonel W. H. A. Speer

Thirty-third North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel C. M. Avery

Thirty-seventh North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel W. M. Barbour

#### THIRD BRIGADE

Brigadier General Edward L. Thomas

Fourteenth Georgia Infantry Regiment

Thirty-fifth Georgia Infantry Regiment

Forty-fifth Georgia Infantry Regiment

Forty-ninth Georgia Infantry Regiment

Colonel S. T. Player

#### FOURTH BRIGADE

Brigadier General Alfred M. Scales (wounded)  
Lieutenant Colonel G. T. Gordon  
Colonel William Lee J. Lowrance

Thirteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel J. H. Hyman (wounded)  
Lieutenant Colonel H. A. Rogers

Sixteenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Captain L. W. Stowe

Twenty-second North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel James Conner

Thirty-fourth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel William Lee J. Lowrance (wounded)  
Lieutenant Colonel G. T. Gordon

Thirty-eighth North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Colonel W. J. Hoke (wounded)  
Lieutenant Colonel John Ashford

VITA<sup>2</sup>

Philip Alfred Bevers

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Master of Arts

Thesis: THE CONFEDERATE MILITARY CAREER OF MAJOR GENERAL  
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