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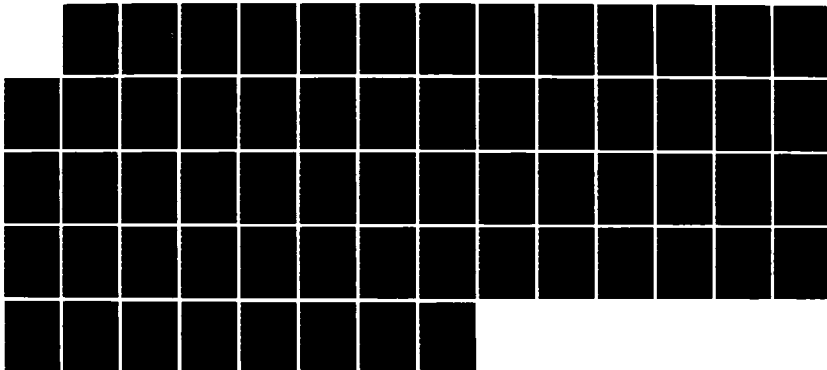
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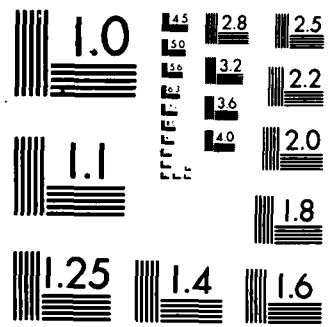
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A Critical Analysis of Lee's Defense at Fredericksburg
-1862: A Tactical Victory or an Opportunity for Operational
Success Lost.

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by

Major Stephen E. Runals
Infantry

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School of Advanced Military Studies
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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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This study also elaborates on the definition of the operational level of war provided in the current FM 100-5 and the concepts for defense as advocated by Clausewitz and adopted by AirLand Battle doctrine. Additionally, the two broad categories of defense, area and mobile, are examined against the requirements for an operational defense.

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ABSTRACT

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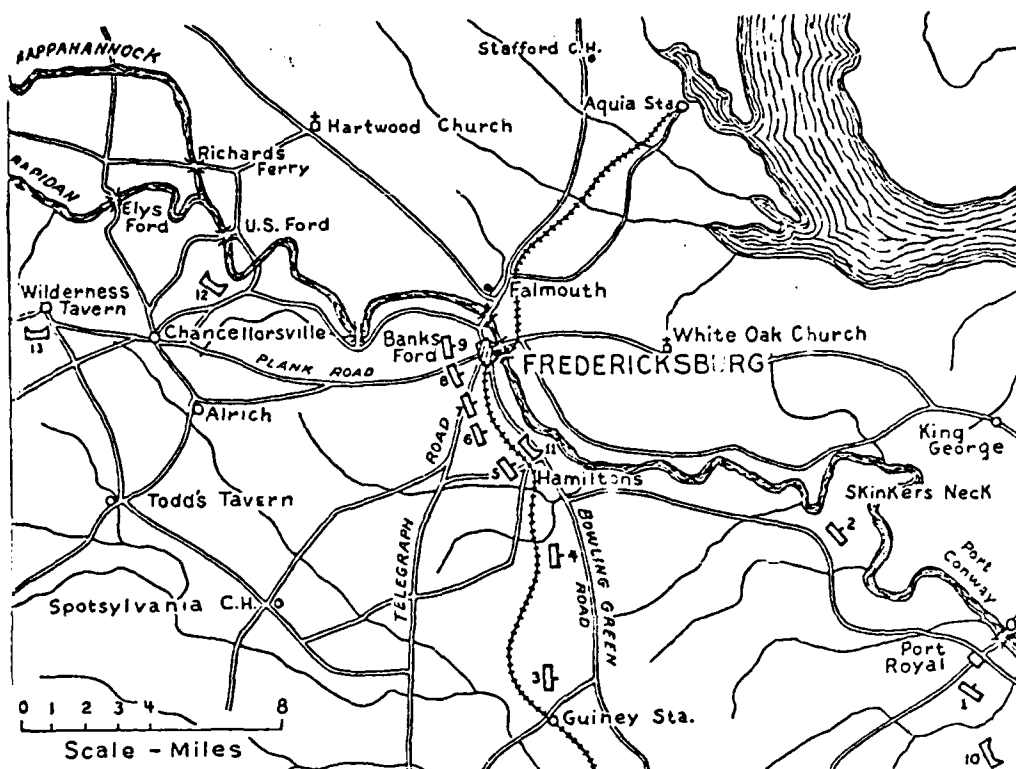
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MAPS

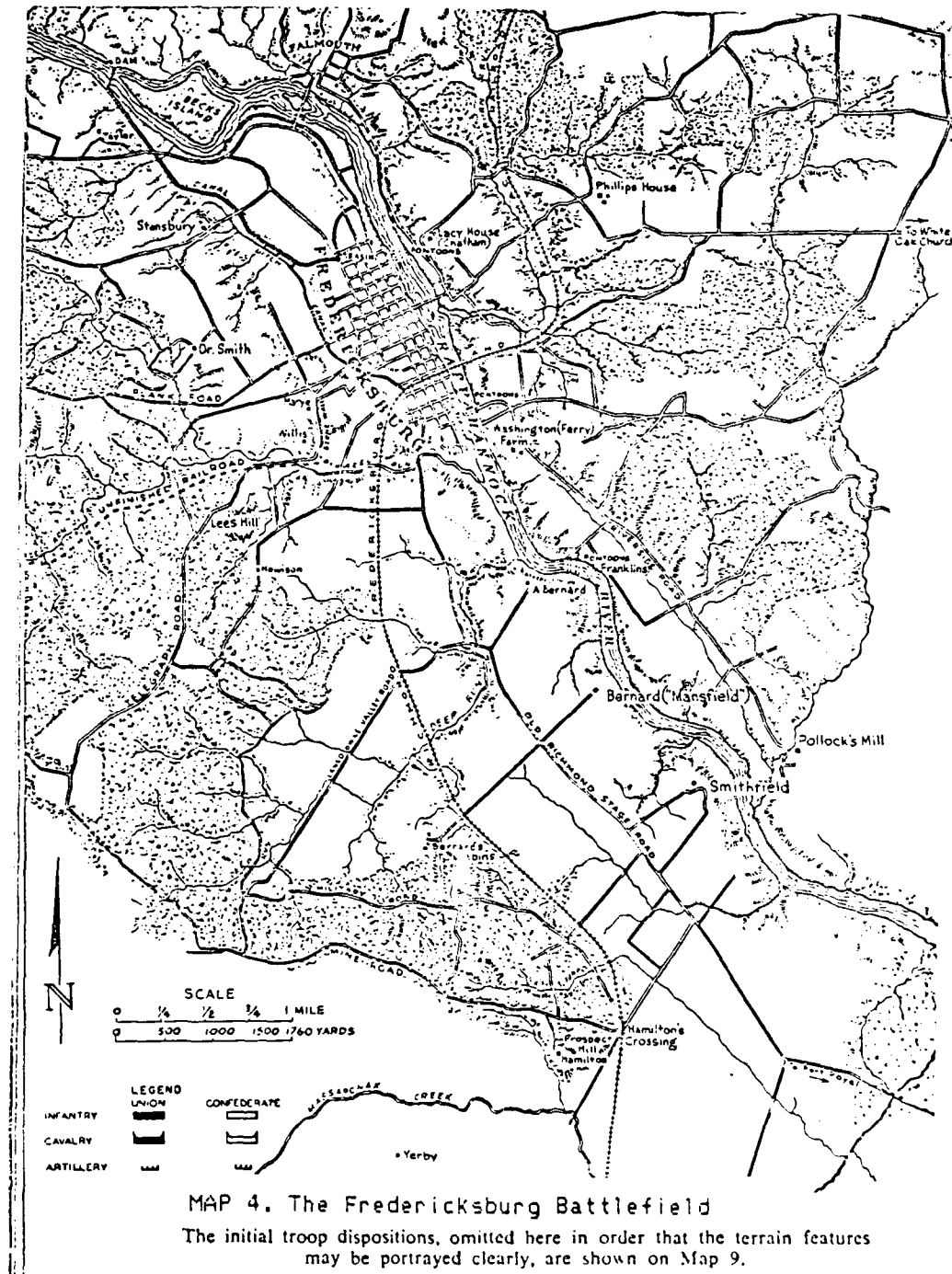
1. The Virginia Theater of Operations
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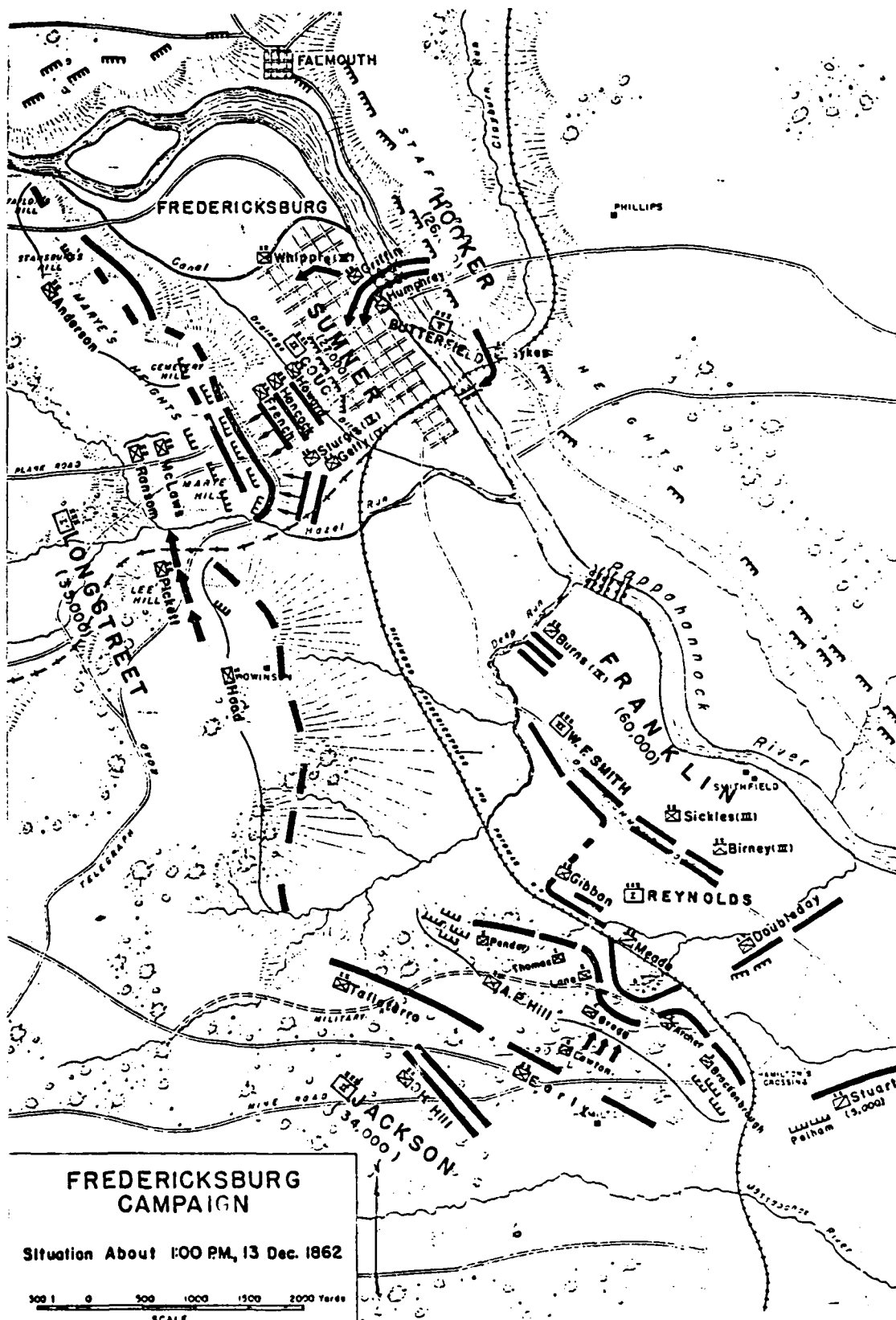
MAP 3. Initial Positioning of Confederate Units, 10 December, 1862

Jackson's corps is on the right, the divisions being indicated by numerals, as follows: 1. D. H. Hill; 2. Early; 3. Taliaferro; 4. A. P. Hill. Longstreet's corps was occupying the ridge west and southwest of Fredericksburg, from the river on the left to Hamiltons Crossing on the right. His divisions are indicated as: 5. Hood; 6. Pickett; 7. McLaws; 8. Ransom; 9. R. H. Anderson. Stuart's cavalry is located as shown, the brigades being: 10. W. H. F. Lee; 11. Fitzhugh Lee; 12. Hampton; 13. Rosser. The Federal army was in camps north and southeast of Falmouth, generally back about a mile and a half from the river.

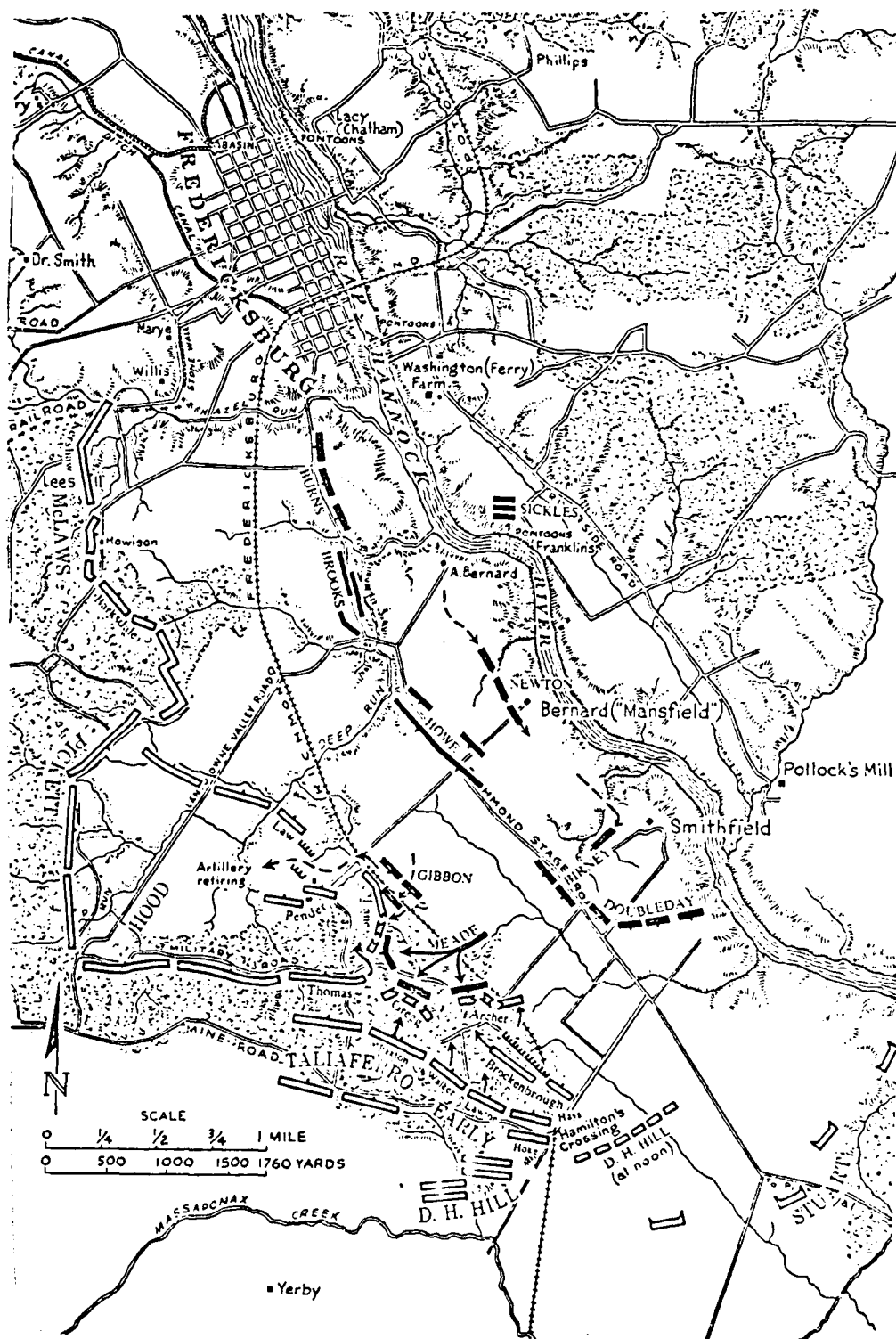
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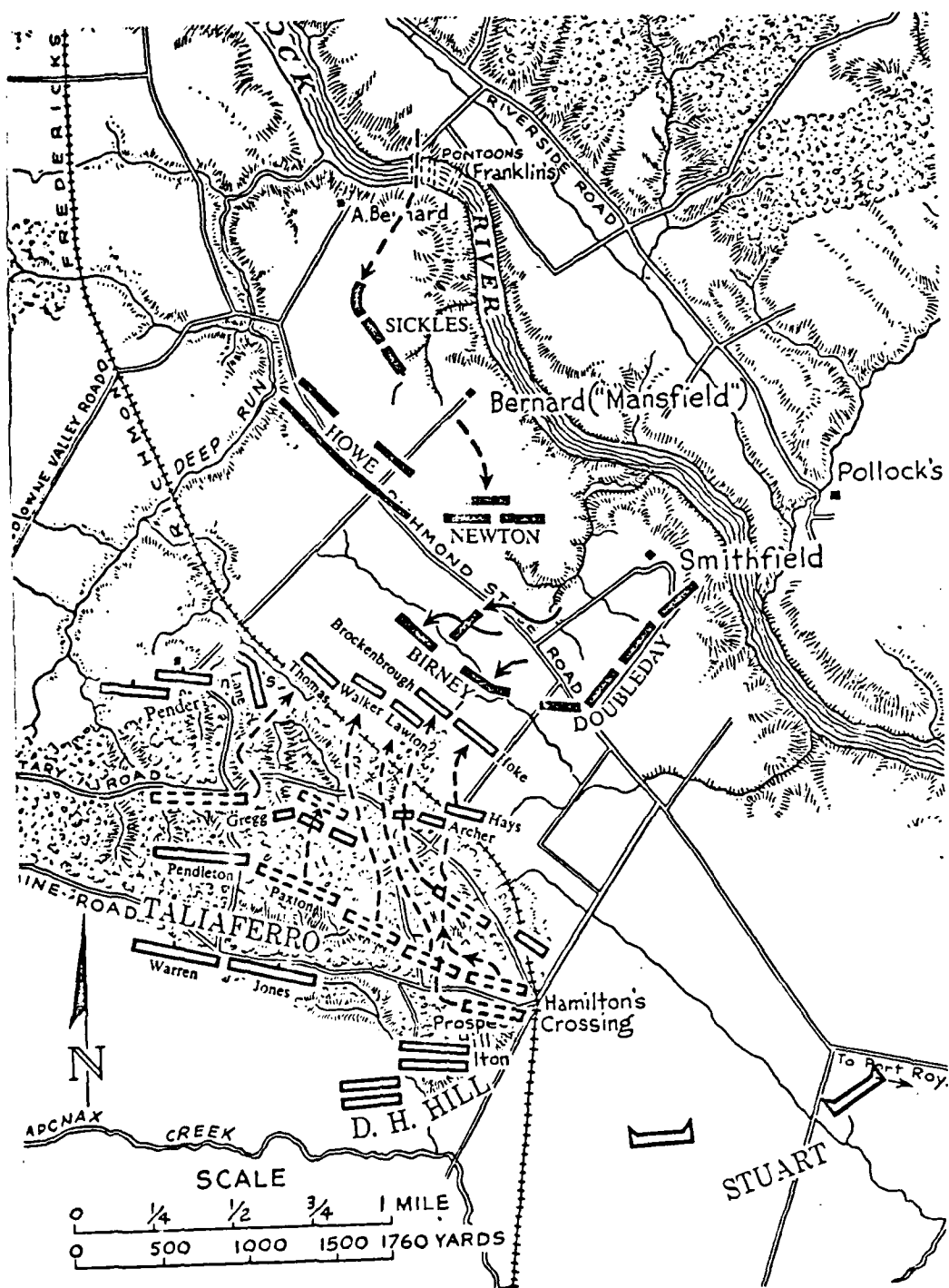


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MAP 7. Meade's Attack, 1330 hrs. 13 December

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MAP 8. The Confederate Counterattack, 1430 hrs. 13 December

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I. Introduction

Today's U.S. Army is in a period of transition from the reactive, tactically oriented doctrine of the 1976 Active Defense to a more offensive, operationally oriented doctrine of the 1982 AirLand Battle. As the Army and its leaders make this transition, commanders at every level must make fundamental changes in the way they approach and develop solutions to the requirements of the modern battlefield.

Underlying this transition is the acceptance that the U.S. Army today, unlike its World War II predecessor, cannot expect to outnumber a potential adversary in a future mid to high intensity war in central Europe. With this realization has come the understanding that even the best planned and executed tactical operations produce friendly casualties and losses in major items of equipment. Without some means to evaluate which engagements and battles must be fought to attain victory, the U.S. Army faces the very real possibility of winning a series of unrelated and ultimately unnecessary engagements and battles only to find itself facing yet another battle, but without sufficient forces left to fight.¹ Since the Army's adoption of the notion of an operational level of war, many previously acceptable concepts of operation and solutions to battlefield problems which met the requirements of our long held tactical approach to war are no longer valid.

Despite its formal introduction into the U.S. Army in 1982 with the fielding of the U.S. Army's Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations, the existence of an operational level of war and the activities and functions of operational art have been acknowledged and practiced from

at least the time of Napoleon.² The concepts and principles of operational art successfully demonstrated by Napoleon Bonaparte on the battlefields of central Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were further refined and applied to modern warfare by the German armies of World Wars I and II, by the Soviet Army in growing proficiency from late 1942 onward, and most recently, by the Israeli Army during the 1967 and 1973 Mid-East Wars. Since the formal introduction of operational art to U.S. Army doctrine four years ago, military thinkers inside and outside the Army have devoted much effort and study in attempting further to refine both the definition and concept of an operational level and the art required to translate the theoretical concepts of this intermediate level of war to the reality of the future battlefield.

FM 100-5, Operations, (Draft 1985) defines operational art as the art of "employing military forces to attain strategic goals in a theater of war or theater of operations through the design, organization, and conduct of campaigns and major operations."³ Essentially, operational art fills a void between strategy and tactics by translating the aims and objectives of strategy into the maneuver of large units within a theater of operations and provides the tactical unit commander the objectives for the execution of his individual actions. Operational commanders maneuver and concentrate major units to achieve favorable conditions in relation to deliberately selected enemy units or positions. Once tactical units have been positioned by operational maneuver, tactical unit commanders move and concentrate the fires of their units against selected points of contact to destroy the enemy.⁴ Operational art requires commanders at every echelon to view the

planning and execution of their individual tactical operations as sequential events within a larger operational context. This paper examines one aspect of warfare at the operational level, the defense, and attempts to identify how the elements of planning, preparation, and execution, previously applied during the conduct of our tactically oriented Active Defense, must be modified when conducting an operational defense .

The Confederate defense at Fredericksburg, 13 December 1862, provides an excellent opportunity to examine the results of a two dimensional (strategic and tactical) approach to battlefield defense. In his great work, On War, Carl von Clausewitz describes a model for critical analysis of historical events which requires the analyst to establish the facts, trace these facts to their sources, and finally, investigate and evaluate the means employed by the commander to achieve his desired end.⁵ This Clausewitzian model provides an excellent vehicle for the examination of the conduct and results of the Battle of Fredericksburg and a means to consider possible alternatives which might have resulted had the Confederate theater commander, General Robert E. Lee, applied the concepts of operational art during the conduct of this defensive battle. Though many aspects of American military thinking and our national style of war have changed since the American Civil War, a common thread, emphasizing victory through attrition, has generally remained fundamental to the American approach to warfare since the mid nineteenth century. The concept of battle and the methods of fighting characteristic of the linear, attrition-oriented battles of the American Civil War can be found in our recent concepts of Active Defense.

Under the influence of the 1973 Middle East War and subsequent computer simulations of a mid to high intensity war in central Europe, American military doctrine prior to 1982 continued to view decision in war to be the result of successive tactical actions which focused on defeating advancing enemy echelons as they arrived in the main battle area. Victory was to be gained through attrition. This concept, expressed in the 1976 FM 100-5 as the "Active Defense", entailed placing a defender's smaller strength against the enemy's main effort and relying on high technology firepower, delivered from protected positions, to gain victory on the battlefield. Such an approach to mid to high intensity warfare implied a shallow, linear defensive battlefield which, upon closer examination, did not conform to the expected nature of a highly fluid future battlefield.⁶ Current U.S. Army doctrine accepts the reality of modern warfare and the capabilities and vulnerabilities of the U.S. and Soviet Armies. Our concept of AirLand Battle has moved conceptually away from a doctrine of attrition toward a doctrine which places a greater emphasis on maneuver and sequencing of tactical actions. As a result, the concept of operational art is now central to the successful understanding and execution of AirLand Battle.

This paper will focus on the major aspects of the 1862 Confederate defensive campaign which culminated in the major Battle of Fredericksburg and its consequences rather than a detailed examination of individual actions during the fighting. Through an examination of the fall campaign of 1862 in the East and the results of this battle, the paper will attempt to identify, for today's serving officer, the central factors which must form the basis for a successful operational

approach to present and future battlefield defense planning, preparation, and execution. Although the planning and conduct of the Federal offensive operations throughout this period also provide insights into the nature and conduct of the operational art, an in-depth examination of this aspect of the 1862 fall campaign falls outside the scope of this paper.

II. BACKGROUND

The General Situation:

The two months following General Robert E. Lee's aborted invasion of Maryland and defeat at Antietam were used by the two major armies of the east, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and General George McClellan's Army of the Potomac, to recover and reorganize. The Confederate Army which withdrew to Virginia on 19 September had never been disorganized. The hard fighting and rapid marching of the 1862 campaign had significantly reduced the army's strength and the defeat at Antietam on 17 September had greatly affected its morale. Despite the unique opportunity offered the Federal Army, McClellan remained north of the Potomac regaining strength in his slow, methodical manner, all the while fending off President Lincoln's repeated calls for action. Lee used this opportunity to rebuild and reorganize his badly fragmented army.⁷ In early October, a "thorough reorganization took place" which formally divided the Army into two self-contained corps. Lee gave General James

Longstreet command of the newly formed I Corps and General Thomas (Stonewall) Jackson command of the II Corps. As of 20 November, I Corps reported a strength of some 34,900, while the somewhat smaller II Corps reported 31,700. This gave Lee, with Army artillery and cavalry, a total strength of approximately 78,500 men.⁸

Central to Lee's campaign planning throughout the fall of 1862 was the desire to delay McClellan as far north as possible to keep Federal foragers off southern lands and allow the approaching winter to bring an end to the campaign season. In an 11 October letter to George W. Randolph, Confederate Secretary of War, Lee outlined out his general campaign plan:

While this Army holds its position, we are consuming provisions that would otherwise fall into the hands of the enemy. ... If the enemy can be detained in our front for some weeks, it will give them but little time before winter to operate south of the Potomac [River].⁹

Lee deployed his two newly organized corps by placing Longstreet's I Corps across the direct route to Richmond, east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, at Culpeper Court-House and Jackson's II Corps to the north in the Shenandoah Valley. If McClellan elected to advance on Culpeper Court-House, Lee had the option of directing Jackson to threaten McClellan's right flank and lines of communications or moving him to reinforce Longstreet. On the other hand, if McClellan advanced on Jackson in the Valley, Lee had similar options with respect to the movement of Longstreet's Corps, now positioned on McClellan's left flank (see map 2). Lee hoped that the threat posed from the positioning of his major maneuver units would deter McClellan from advancing south into Virginia so late in the year.

In spite of the positioning of Lee's army, McClellan, under constant pressure from Lincoln to advance, finally began to move on 26 October.¹⁰ By 6 November the Army of the Potomac, numbering 120,000 men, had advanced 50 miles south to Warrenton, Virginia and to within fifteen miles of Lee's still separated army. Its further advance was blocked only by Lee and Longstreet with a total of 45,000 men at Culpeper Court-House. On 7 November, Lee decided to unite his army. As soon as McClellan advanced from Warrenton, Jackson was to ascend the Valley, cross the Blue Ridge at Fisher's Gap and reinforce Longstreet, who would retire slowly in front of McClellan to a position in the vicinity of Gordonsville. The Confederate Army would then be concentrated on McClellan's right flank should he decide to continue his advance on Richmond.¹¹ Almost immediately after notifying Jackson of his intention by message, Lee was informed that the Federal advance had suddenly stopped.

Despite McClellan's recent action, Lincoln had grown increasingly tired of McClellan's lack of offensive spirit and political intrigues. On 6 November, Lincoln suspended McClellan and the next day replaced him with Gen Ambrose E. Burnside. Almost immediately, Burnside submitted a new campaign plan to Washington which abandoned McClellan's advance on Lee's Army at Culpeper Court-House. In its place he proposed a "rapid move by the whole force to Fredericksburg, with the view to a movement upon Richmond from that place".¹² Burnside's focus had become Richmond rather than Lee's army.

Lincoln finally approved Burnside's plan on 14 November on the condition that it must be rapidly executed. The following day, moving with uncommon speed for the Army of the Potomac, Gen E.V. Sumner's Right

Grand Division began movement toward Fredericksburg.¹³ Burnside's whole plan was based upon the expectation of an immediate occupation of Fredericksburg. Once across the river, he planned to make a rapid and direct march upon Richmond. Lee, at first puzzled by the sudden halt in the Federal advance, had foreseen that Jackson's presence in the Valley might influence the Federals to change their line of operations. On 15 November, Lee sent a regiment of infantry and one artillery battery to reinforce the small Confederate garrison at Fredericksburg. These forces were not intended to block a Federal advance across the river at that point, but rather to be used for observation. At this early stage, Lee had no intention of concentrating at Fredericksburg.¹⁴

After a delay of almost 24 hours, Lee discovered Sumner's movement toward Fredericksburg and on the 17th ordered an advance element from Longstreet's corps toward Fredericksburg. On the 19th, after a raid by Confederate cavalry toward Warrenton confirmed the movement of the entire Federal Army toward Fredericksburg, Lee ordered the remainder of Longstreet's Corps to Fredericksburg. Lee arrived at Fredericksburg on the 21st and surveyed the situation. Until the 25th, Lee remained uncertain about Burnside's actual intentions. In a message to Jackson on the 23d, Lee ordered II Corps to Culpeper Court-House but not on to Fredericksburg. From that position, Jackson could move quickly to reinforce Longstreet at Fredericksburg or, should the opportunity present itself, across the Rappahannock north of Burnside and threaten his flank and line of communication in an attempt further to delay a Federal advance south.¹⁵

By 25 November, Lee believed that he fully understood Burnside's plan of action. In a dispatch to Jackson and letter to President Jefferson Davis, both dated the 25th, Lee described his plan.

... it appears to me that should General Burnside [be forced to] change his base of operations, the effect produced in the United States would be almost equivalent to a defeat. the longer we can delay him and throw him into winter, the more effective will be this undertaking. It is for this reason that I have determined to resist him at the onset, and to throw every obstacle in the way of his advance. 16

Lee had decided to concentrate the entire 78,500 men of the Army of Northern Virginia at Fredericksburg and defend along the Rappahannock.

The Battlefield:

The terrain along the Rappahannock was to prove decisive to the outcome of the Battle of Fredericksburg. Upon the arrival of his Right Grand Division opposite Fredericksburg, Sumner quickly occupied the area around Stafford Heights. These Heights completely dominated crossing sites over the Rappahannock and the entire river plain which opens up to a depth of almost two miles before sinking into the valley of the Massaponax River some six miles below Fredericksburg (see map 4).¹⁷ The Federal Army further added to the importance of the Stafford Heights by eventually positioning some 147 siege guns and long range batteries along these Heights to cover their crossing operations. Any defensive position at Fredericksburg was so completely dominated by the Stafford Heights that Lee gave up any hope of effectively opposing crossings of the Federal Army on the river. Instead he selected a position a short distance away from the river to resist the enemy's advance after crossing. Potential crossing sites were to be guarded only by a force

"sufficient to impede his [Burnside's] movements until the Army could concentrate".¹⁸ Lee initially positioned Longstreet's corps in Fredericksburg and along the hills which rise sharply less than a mile behind Fredericksburg, known as Maryes' Heights. Longstreet's line continued along the high ground which overlooks the river plain to a point five miles southeast of Fredericksburg near the intersection of Prospect Hill and the Massaponax River.

The natural strength of Longstreet's defensive positions offered the Confederates a position stronger than they had ever occupied. Lee, if forced back, could easily withdraw but a counterattack could be effectively contested by the strong Federal artillery positioned along Stafford Heights. Because of the natural strength of Longstreet's position, Lee did not believe that Burnside would attempt a crossing opposite Fredericksburg but in the low country further to his right.¹⁹

On the 29th, Jackson arrived at Fredericksburg and was directed to occupy positions to block likely crossing sites below Fredericksburg. During the next two days, Jackson's Corps occupied positions as far south as Skinkers Neck and Port Royal, 20 miles below Fredericksburg. This initial deployment reflected Lee's confidence in his ability to concentrate his two corps against any point where Burnside might choose to cross the river. Each corps could hold and fight to gain the necessary time for the other to move to the Federal point of main effort.

Sumner's Right Grand Division had arrived opposite Fredericksburg on 17 November. Despite limited Confederate resistance, Burnside had specifically directed Sumner not to cross the Rappahannock until the remainder of the Army had closed and sufficient pontoons to bridge the

river were available. Burnside had originally hoped to cross unopposed at Fredericksburg, but the arrival of Longstreet's Corps on the 21st initially ruled out this crossing. On 26 November, the date finally selected for his crossing, Burnside had only received sufficient bridging to construct one bridge. This he viewed insufficient to support the Army. Blocked by Longstreet's strong position opposite Fredericksburg, Burnside next looked downstream for possible crossing sites. Like Lee, Burnside saw the potential for crossings at Skinkers Neck and Port Royal. The delay in the timely arrival of sufficient pontoons and the subsequent arrival of two divisions from Jackson's Corps at Skinkers Neck and Port Royal now dissuaded Burnside from attempting a crossing below Fredericksburg.²⁰

The Battle:

The Battle of Fredericksburg may be divided into two phases for the purposes of analysis: the attack on the left by Franklin's Left Grand Division with reinforcements against Jackson's positions, and an attack by the Federal right, conducted with Sumner's Right Grand Division and attachments, against Longstreet. Hooker's Center Grand Division was so broken up in support of Sumner and Franklin that it played no major part in the battle.²¹ Burnside's plan of attack seems to have been based on the fact that Lee's army was so widely dispersed it could be outmaneuvered by a rapidly executed surprise crossing just below Fredericksburg that would drive a wedge between the two separated Confederate Corps.²² Burnside gave his commanders precise instructions concerning the actual crossing of the Rappahannock, but beyond that his

orders were "indefinite, conditional, and completely devoid of positive, specific unit missions, representing only a hazy concept of what the operation should achieve".²³

Operations to bridge the Rappahannock began on the night of 10-11 December. Despite initial success at the crossing sites below Fredericksburg, which went in quickly, the crossing sites directly opposite Fredericksburg were strongly contested. Only after heavy fighting and much delay was Sumner able to secure a bridgehead and complete construction of his crossing sites by late afternoon on the 11th. On 12th, Burnside began crossing his army. The defense of a single Confederate brigade held up the advance of Burnside's 100,000 men and gave Lee the time he needed to begin the concentration of his army.

Lee used the 11th and 12th to begin concentrating his forces. A.P. Hill's division was moved forward to replace Hood's Division located at the end of Longstreet's defensive line. Hood was shifted toward Fredericksburg to strengthen the line between Prospect Hill and Marye's Heights. Taliaferro's Division was moved forward from Guiney Station to support A.P. Hill. Despite these initial moves, Lee completed the concentration of his army only after a personal reconnaissance shortly before noon on the 12th confirmed Burnside's intention to attack at and immediately below Fredericksburg. Jackson was ordered to move his two remaining divisions up from their positions at Skinkers Neck and Port Royal. Arriving after a hard night march, Jackson placed Early's division on line with Taliaferro in A.P. Hill's second line and D.H. Hill's division behind Early as a third line and reserve (see map 5). Jackson's Corps was now concentrated in great depth along a front of less than two miles. By the morning of 13 December, Lee's army was

again concentrated and in a position to "do them all damage in our power when they move".²⁴

The 13th dawned with a heavy morning fog covering the river and the entire Federal Army, now deployed on the river plain in and below Fredericksburg. During an early morning conference, Jackson and Jeb Stuart urged Lee to order an immediate attack on the massed Federal army before the fog lifted. Lee dismissed this idea by stating that he would meet the Federals where they stood, "wearing them down, letting them break their fine divisions in hopeless assaults on our positions", while he held back and conserved his strength. Only then did Lee intend to attack.²⁵

Burnside's attack had been delayed by the same morning fog. Deceived by the skill with which Jackson had hidden his corps and believing that the major portion of the II Corps still remained in positions at Skinkers Neck and Port Royal, Burnside ordered Franklin to seize the heights at Prospect Hill with only Gen George Meade's 4,500 man division. The remainder of Franklin's 60,000 man Grand Division was to remain on the river plain and await the results of Meade's attack.²⁶

Shortly after 1100, Franklin began his attack. Despite an initial delay by Major John Pelham's Confederate horse artillery, Meade, supported only by BG John Gibbon's division, drove forward through a weak spot in the woods of A. P. Hill's first line and surprised and routed BG Maxey Gregg's brigade in the Confederate second line. Jackson responded immediately, ordering Early to support A.P. Hill. Early launched a "furious counterattack", advancing into the flank of Meade's penetration and closing the gap in A.P. Hill's line with the help of Taliaferro's division.²⁷ Meade's defeat and withdrawal ended any

further attacks by Franklin. Jackson now saw a chance to counterattack and attempted to attack just before dusk. However the confusion and delays resulting from the shifting of units during Early's earlier unplanned attack, and the immediate response of the Federal artillery caused Jackson to abandon this attack almost before it could develop.

Burnside's supporting attack, directed at Maryes' Heights to pin down Longstreet's II Corps, also began just before noon. First by Sumner's divisions and later by two divisions from Hooker's Grand Division, these attacks all failed to penetrate the strong Confederate positions along the stone wall at the base of Marye's Hill. By late afternoon, both Sumner and Hooker ended their assaults and withdrew their forces into the cover of Fredericksburg.

The relative ease with which the Confederates had repulsed Burnside's attacks strongly affected Lee. He firmly believed that Burnside would attack again in the morning and ordered the strengthening of positions and rapid resupply of all units.²⁸ Burnside also wished to attack on the 14th, but was dissuaded by the firm position taken by his commanders that additional attacks would only result in further defeat. Throughout the 14th and the 15th, both armies remained relatively inactive. The Confederates continued to strengthen their positions and the Federals remained in positions in and below Fredericksburg, exposed but under the constant protection of their artillery on Stafford Heights. On the night of 15 December, under the cover a rain storm, the Federal Army recrossed the Rappahannock and returned to their bivouacs beyond Stafford Heights. The Confederates offered no resistance, learning of the withdrawal only on the morning of the 16th.

The Costs:

Casualties for both sides were relatively small for the total number of forces available. Burnside lost some 12,500 out of an effective strength of over 104,000 (12%). The Confederates listed 5,309 casualties out of less than 30,000 actually engaged (18%); and only 7% of Lee's total force of over 78,500.²⁹

On 20 January 1863 Burnside attempted to move up the Rappahannock to turn Lee's left flank, but heavy rains and rapidly raising water halted the "Mud March". The combination of the defeat at Fredericksburg and the subsequent aborted offensive in January caused Union morale to sink to a new low. On 25 January, Lincoln relieved Generals Burnside, Sumner, and Franklin, and gave command of the Army of the Potomac to Gen Hooker.

III. Analysis

I am opposed to fighting here. We will whip the enemy but gain no fruits of victory. I have advised the line of North Anna, but have been overruled --- LTG Thomas Jackson, CSA (on or about 29 Nov 1862) ³⁰

The Nature of Defense:

Before attempting to analyze Lee's campaign plan and the battle of Fredericksburg from the perspective of the operational art, we must first examine the purpose and intent of defensive operations in general. Our current AirLand Battle doctrine has adopted much of Clausewitz's

concept of the defense.³¹ We should therefore begin our examination of the defense by first reviewing what Clausewitz says about the purpose and intent of defensive operations.

Clausewitz viewed warfare as a contest between two opposing independent wills, each attempting to achieve aims and objectives established by their own national policies.³² Fighting, the basic element of war, is composed of two distinct elements: attack and defense. Because a final decision in war consists of the results of a number of successive engagements and battles, these elements, offense and defense, are irrevocably linked.³³ Clausewitz believed that while the defense was the stronger form of war it could achieve only a passive purpose: preservation. As a result, some form of offensive operation must generally be conducted to achieve the aims and objectives of the war. Clausewitz therefore concluded that defense in war can be only relative, "applying only to the basic concept, not to all of its components". A defensive campaign should be conducted with offensive battles, and defensive battles could be fought by employing subordinate elements offensively.³⁴

The purpose of the defensive portion of a battle or campaign is to inflict heavier losses on the enemy than on one's own army to create a favorable balance of strength and the conditions for a shift to the offensive.³⁵ Clausewitz firmly believed that the transition from defense to the offense must be in the defender's mind from the start, an integral part of his concept of defense -- "indeed one of its essential features".³⁶ Clausewitz went further in outlining what, in his view, constituted an effective defensive plan and execution. The defensive position must be held in depth, with reserves at every level for

immediate use once the strength of the defensive phase of the fighting had done its work. A substantial reserve, as much as one-third of the total force, should be kept well back to the rear of the main position to be used against a major portion of the enemy once the attacker has "revealed his entire plan of action". This reserve was to be used to "open a minor offensive battle of its own, using every element of attack, assault, surprise, and flank movements".³⁷

Because the US Army's AirLand Battle doctrine accepts Clausewitz's position that the ultimate outcome of war is determined by the planning and coordination of the effects of individual tactical actions, engagements and battles, it fully adopts the concept of the battlefield defense as a mixture of static and dynamic elements:

Whatever the design, commanders conducting defensive campaigns mix offensive with defensive tactical actions and contest the initiative in the theater at every opportunity. ... As a rule, whatever concept of [defensive] operations is adopted should reflect the greatest possible use of mobility, surprise, and offensive tactics. The ultimate objective should be to return to the offensive and defeat the enemy decisively.³⁸

Central to the concept of coordination of individual tactical actions is the idea of sequencing future actions based on the probable outcomes of present tactical actions. Clausewitz maintained that there is no such thing as a "victory" for the operational commander or his major subordinate commanders, only successes or defeats. The major fruits of tactical success or failure lie not with tactical results of individual actions but rather in the ability of the commander to exploit the results of each tactical action.³⁹ The requirement to plan and execute each individual tactical operation as a sequential event within a larger operational context, regardless of operational limitations,

remains critical to the understanding and application of the operational art and AirLand Battle. Sequential planning establishes the general dispositions, objectives, and missions for subordinate commanders following the current engagement or battle. Such plans are critical to the execution of operational art because they determine how the results of tactical actions will be exploited or minimized. They determine when and how the "transition from exploitation, counter attack, withdrawal, retreat or reorientation of the main effort" will take place after each tactical action.⁴⁰ Most important, the effective transition from one form of maneuver to another can only take place if it has been planned in advance. The principal task for the operational commander, therefore, is not only to position his forces in the most favorable position to concentrate superior strength at a decisive time and place for the current battle, but more important, to position these forces to achieve the best possible conditions for the next battle.⁴¹

It is important to keep in mind that military operations should always be an extension of national policy. The constraints and restrictions on the actual conduct of military operations are provided to the theater commander and his subordinate units by national military strategy through assignment of theater specific goals and objectives and allocation of national assets. While operational commanders must operate within these limitations, they must never forget that their assigned objectives can generally be attained only through a deliberate application of the operational art. This sequential method or approach to achieving assigned missions and objectives is required not only of the theater commander and his principal subordinates, but also by subordinate commanders at every level of command.

From our initial review of Robert E. Lee's campaign plan for the fall of 1862, it is readily apparent that he had a firm understanding of Clausewitz's concept of defense. Lee's initial positioning of his two corps, Jackson's II Corps in the Shenandoah Valley and Longstreet's I Corps at Culpeper Court-House, was designed to favorably set the terms for future battle by placing these corps in position not only to confront a Federal advance but also to threaten its flank and line of communication. Dispatches from Lee to Stonewall Jackson throughout October and November urged Jackson to "fall on anyone of the enemy's columns which may expose itself should the opportunity arise" and that he should "endeavor to lead the enemy forward for that purpose".⁴² Even after arriving at Fredericksburg and deciding to fight along the Rappahannock, Lee initially searched for opportunities to transition to the offense. Jackson was first directed to occupy a position at Culpeper Court-House from which he might be able to advance across the Rappahannock and threaten Burnside's flank and rear.⁴³ Admittedly Lee's initial objective was not the destruction of the Federal army, but rather to deter its advance, by the continual placement of his corps on the flanks and rear of the most likely avenues of Federal advance. However, should deterrence fail, Lee hoped these same positions would allow him to bring the enemy to battle under the most favorable conditions for his decisive defeat.⁴⁴ Only after Lee had examined Longstreet's position at Fredericksburg and seen its great tactical strength did he abandon the considerations required for an operational defense.

The Confederate Campaign Plan:

In fairness to General Lee, the decision to fight along the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg was determined by more than just the strength of Longstreet's defensive position. Lee, as a theater commander, was strongly affected by constraints and restrictions of national military policy in choosing the means to achieve his assigned aims and objectives.

Lee viewed Virginia as the most critical theater of operations in determining the South's ultimate success or failure. From the summer of 1862 until the spring of 1864, Lee developed and executed a defensive theater strategy based on aggressive maneuver and limited offensive operations to break up the enemy's campaign plans and keep the Federal armies from the heart of Virginia and the Confederacy-- Richmond.⁴⁵ In a letter to President Jefferson Davis on the eve of his 1862 Maryland invasion, Lee stated his concept for the defense of Virginia:

Still, we can not afford to be idle, and though weaker than our opponent in men and military equipment, must endeavor to harass if we can not destroy him. I am aware that the movement [invasion of Maryland] is attended with much risk, yet I do not consider success impossible, and shall endeavor to guard it from loss. As long as the armies of the enemy are employed on this frontier I have no fears for the safety of Richmond. ⁴⁶ (underline added)

During the two months which followed the indecisive Battle of Antietam (17 September 1862), Lee's campaign planning was focused toward delaying McClellan as long as possible on Virginia's northern border to allow the approach of winter to bring an end to the 1862 campaign season. The positioning of Jackson in the Valley and Longstreet astride the two major invasion routes south toward Richmond from McClellan's position reflected an accurate understanding of the Federal commander's

natural hesitancy for offensive operations, the capabilities and limitations of the opposing forces, and the growing importance economic conditions were beginning to play in the South's ability to continue the war. Despite Lee's intention to throw the enemy off balance by being in a position to "retard and baffle his designs",⁴⁷ he had not forgotten that successful maneuvering does not, by itself, win wars. On 6 November, Lee directed Jackson to be in position and prepared to shift rapidly to the offense:

I request that you will have your divisions as much united as possible, so that you may fall upon anyone of the enemy's columns which may expose itself should the opportunity occur, and crush it.⁴⁸

Even after McClellan's advance had come to an unexplained stop in the vicinity of Warrenton, Lee continued actively to search for opportunities to create favorable conditions to shift from the defensive.⁴⁹ On 19 November, after the cause of the unexplained halt in McClellan's advance and Burnside's subsequent rapid movement toward Fredericksburg had become clear, Lee still hoped to position his corps to threaten a Federal advance, if not inflict a decisive defeat.

As early as the 19 November, Lee was attempting to discern the intent of the Federal movements and develop a more specific plan from which to best position his two corps to take advantage of any Federal vulnerability. Jackson, though still in the Valley, was concerned that any battlefield upon which Lee determined to stand should allow for maneuver. In response to an earlier dispatch from Jackson, Lee wrote on the 19th that he had no intention of making a determined stand at Fredericksburg.⁵⁰ Lee was well aware that a battle at Fredericksburg, if fought under the dominating heights of the north bank, would deprive the Confederates of any possibility of a decisive counterattack by

providing a beaten Federal army a covered route of withdrawal.

Operationally, a defense along the North Anna, some 35 miles further south, would still offer a strong defensive position. More importantly, the lack of a major obstacle such as the Rappahannock and the absence of the commanding Stafford Heights would offer the defender an opportunity to attack a beaten attacker on his exposed flanks and rear. An enemy beaten at North Anna might successfully be pursued and "the real fruits of victory gathered".⁵¹

Lee still had not decided to make a determined stand at Fredericksburg when he arrived there on 21 November. However after conducting a personal reconnaissance of Longstreet's defensive positions, he began to see the tactical advantages of the Fredericksburg position. Lee quickly saw that once concentrated, his army could block any advance that might be made directly against the position.

More important, strategic considerations dictated a strong defense at Fredericksburg. Finding sufficient supplies to maintain its armies in the field had become a major problem for the Confederacy. A withdrawal to the North Anna would mean the loss of too much productive, and as yet untouched, territory which Lee was finding would make the critical difference in his ability to maintain the effectiveness of his army. Additionally, a battle on the North Anna would put a Federal army within 25 miles of the Confederate capital. Lee and President Davis were concerned over the political and economic effects such a withdrawal would have on the Confederacy and on their continuing attempts to gain international recognition for their cause. More than ever, the waning resources of the "commonwealth warned them to relinquish no space to the enemy which might yield important supplies".⁵² By 25 November, over the

strong protest of Jackson, Lee had decided to defend at Fredericksburg.⁵³ The constraints and restrictions of national and theater strategy had become the overriding consideration in Lee's final decision. As with Burnside's new campaign plan to move on Richmond, the focus of Lee's operational planning and tactical execution had shifted away from the defeat of the enemy's army.⁵⁴

By accepting the position occupied by Longstreet at Fredericksburg, Lee was left with little real opportunity for a defensive counter-stroke. Forced to remain on the defensive, Lee passed the initiative to Burnside to determine when and where the battle would take place. More important, when Burnside attempted an attack under the protection of Stafford Heights, the entire Federal army did not have to be committed to assure success or avert defeat from an unsuccessful attack. On the other hand, if Burnside chose, he could have concentrated the entire army against a portion of the Confederate position with no requirement to retain major forces to guard against a possible Confederate attack on his flanks or rear.

An Examination of Alternatives:

We have now examined the major factors which influenced Lee's decision to defend at Fredericksburg. Lee's objective to block a Federal penetration toward Richmond, protect fertile Virginia farm land, and bring an end to the 1862 campaign season by forcing Federal operations into the winter was indeed accomplished by the methods and means which he adopted. If the Battle of Fredericksburg could be viewed in isolation without regard to the events of the remaining two years of the Civil War in the East, Lee and the South might have been able to

claim the battle as a great success. Lee however, did not share President Davis' enthusiasm over the Federal repulse on 13 December. Most of the Confederate field commanders, to include Lee, were extremely disappointed by the failure of Burnside to resume the attack on the 14th and 15th. After discovering the Federal withdrawal, Lee regretted that he had been unable to do more against an enemy so exposed. Despite the almost effortless repulse of Burnside's assaults, the capture of badly needed arms, and the inflicting of heavy casualties on the enemy, Lee sensed Southern defeat.⁵⁵ After Fredericksburg, Lee's growing realization that a war of attrition could never be won by the South was also being sensed by the soldiers in the field. Tactical victories alone would not bring the Confederacy its independence.

While providing a means for a significant tactical success, the course of action adopted by Lee to achieve his strategic and operational aims did not produce the conditions necessary for a strategic victory. To complete our analysis of the campaign and battle of Fredericksburg, it is now necessary to determine if there were any alternative courses of action, still within the constraints and restrictions imposed upon Lee as the theater commander, which if adopted might have produced a more decisive result.

One alternative to a positional defense along the Rappahannock might have been initially to delay along the river at Fredericksburg, falling back to a main defensive line along the North Anna. This had been Lee's original intention and indeed might have provided the opportunity to achieve a more decisive victory had Burnside elected to follow Lee and chosen to fight. From a position on the North Anna, a defeated enemy would indeed have presented an extended and exposed

target for an aggressive counter-offensive.⁵⁶ However, unless Lee could so decisively defeat Burnside during this battle that the North would end the war (a possibility he viewed as remote) the destruction resulting from even a temporary Federal occupation of the critically needed Virginia territory between the Rappahannock and the North Anna might have proven fatal to the Confederacy. While attractive in purely operational terms, this course of action must be ruled out as being strategically unacceptable.

A second Confederate course of action which ignored Burnside at Fredericksburg and attempted a Confederate advance on Washington can be ruled out for many of the same reasons. Lee could not afford to take the risk that Burnside would not continue to advance on Richmond. By 1862, Federal armies had grown so large that while an offensive by Lee might weaken the strength of a southern thrust, there was no guarantee had such a bold action might completely halt it. Equally important, the approaching winter also precluded a second invasion of the North. The Confederate supply system, already stretched to the limit supporting Lee in his current positions, would never be able to sustain such an advance so late in the year. Thus a quick review of theater level alternatives to a defensive campaign focused on defending at Fredericksburg would indicate that, although he might not like it, Lee was forced by strategic constraints and limitations to adopt a forward defense along the Rappahannock.⁵⁷

FM 100-5 identifies two broad types of defense. A mobile defense which focuses on destruction of an attacking force by permitting it to advance into a position which exposes its flanks to preplanned counterattacks and envelopments by mobile reserves and an area defense.

The area defense focuses on the retention of terrain by absorbing the enemy into an interlocking series of positions where it is then destroyed largely through the effects of firepower.⁵⁸ Lee, accepting his strategic limitations, adopted the most restrictive form of area defense, the linear or positional defense, to block a Federal advance beyond the Rappahannock. This form of the area defense focuses on the retention of specific terrain by attempting to defeat the enemy forward of a main line of resistance. It, more than any other form of defense, relies on attrition delivered from static positions to stop an advancing enemy. FM 100-5 cautions commanders that the area defense, and especially a linear or positional defense, does not promise "outright destruction of the attacking force"; it presumes some other "simultaneous or subsequent operation to achieve a decisive defeat of the enemy".⁵⁹ Despite Lee's exceptional understanding and use of the operational art during the pre-battle maneuvering to position his corps in the vicinity of the Fredericksburg battlefield, his selection of the linear defense reflects a purely tactical solution to the requirements of the situation. While he selected the naturally strong defensive position along Maryes Heights for its purely tactical advantages, it appears not to have occurred to Lee that these same positions might later prove to be a liability.⁶⁰

As discussed earlier, the key to the understanding and application of operational art is the awareness that individual tactical actions are but links in a chain of events which only together provide the means to achieve the desired aims and objectives of strategic planning. Moreover, despite a variety of possible means to achieve this end, generally the most effective means is the one which, within the

constraints and restrictions imposed by higher headquarters, most totally achieves the destruction of the enemy's forces.⁶¹ Despite the initial dispersal of Jackson's II Corps to the rear and right of Longstreet, there is no indication that Lee attempted to adopt a more flexible form of the area defense by allowing Burnside an opportunity to penetrate into his defensive line with the intent of fighting the battle in the area immediately behind the Maryes Heights position. Lee's deployment was consistent with his view of fighting an attrition-oriented tactical defense with the objective of blocking a Federal advance, not destroying it. Once the point of the Federal main effort was determined, Lee wanted to be able to concentrate forces at that point to thicken the defense. Lee's concept of defense was very similar to the attrition, tactically oriented Active Defense of 1976.

One alternative to this form of defense might be found in the more operationally-oriented defense advocated by Clausewitz and FM 100-5, and demonstrated by a master of the operational art, Napoleon, during the 1805 battle of Austerlitz. At Austerlitz, Napoleon was faced with the problem of how to bring an Allied army to battle on terms which would allow its decisive defeat. A simple tactical victory, no matter how impressive, which left the Allied army still intact would only compound a difficult French situation. Seeing beyond the tactical advantage of retaining the dominating Pratzen Heights and Plateau, Napoleon deliberately allowed his enemy a virtually unopposed occupation of this dominating tactical terrain in an attempt to lure the enemy's main attack into a position from which it could be decisively defeated. On 2 December 1805, the Allies, thinking they were achieving great tactical

success, advanced into Napoleon's trap, thereby exposing their flank and more importantly, their line of retreat, and were decisively defeated.⁶²

Though there are significant differences between Napoleon at Austerlitz and Lee at Fredericksburg, there are enough similarities in both the general situation and aspects of key terrain to provide at least one alternative course of action to the one adopted by Lee. Napoleon, who kept in mind the destruction of the enemy force as the most effective means to achieve his theater and strategic aims, put into practice all the key elements of the operational art by insuring that the main enemy force would be in position to be destroyed at the time and place of his choosing. At Fredericksburg, the center-of-gravity of the Federal attack was the artillery positioned along Stafford Heights. If Lee could have lured a substantial portion of Burnside's army into a position outside the protective cover of that artillery and concentrated a large portion of his army against the flank and rear of that force, Burnside could have been decisively defeated. Jubal Early's unplanned counterattack in support of A.P. Hill following Meade's penetration and rout of Hill's second defensive line confirms this possibility. Early's attack was stopped cold by the Federal artillery once it had pursued Meade out of the woods and on to the river plain. Like Napoleon at Austerlitz, Lee might deliberately have allowed Franklin's Right Grand Division a penetration onto the Heights at Prospect Hill. Not only might this have allowed Jackson the opportunity for a deliberately planned counterattack on a now exposed Federal flank and rear but it would have conformed with Burnside's plan to reinforce Meade only if he was able to achieve a significant penetration.⁶³ The destruction of

Franklin's 60,000 man Right Grand Division would have proved far more decisive than the defeat of Meade's 4,500.

Despite the opportunity, Lee fought this battle to gain a tactical victory rather than attempting to achieve a decisive operational success. The effect of Lee's limited tactical approach to the Fredericksburg defense was not however, limited to his own conduct of the battle and the emplacement of his two corps.

Jackson, despite his usual desire to shift to the offense at the first opportunity, fell victim to Lee's linear, attrition oriented tactical approach to the battle. Rather than preparing his positions in depth deliberately to allow an initial penetration into his position to provide the room and create the reason for Franklin to commit additional forces, Jackson placed his divisions in three lines, generally one behind the other. Each line was prepared to support the one to its front to retain the linear nature of the defense. Meade's penetration, while surprising, was dealt with in the expected manner. Two divisions from Jackson's second defensive line attacked the front and flanks of Meade's penetration, quickly restoring A.P. Hill's front. Though Early achieved a tactical victory, his unplanned counterattack established conditions which prevented Jackson from taking advantage of a much greater opportunity.

Following the success of Early's attack, Jackson, sensing a significant drop in the Federal morale following Meade's bloody withdrawal, issued orders for a general Corps counterattack to be launched at dusk to drive Franklin's forces into the river. In the hour or so which remained before the planned attack, Jackson was unable to overcome the general confusion resulting from Early's earlier

counterattack. Brigades from all three divisions were now so badly mixed together that Jackson and his staff were unable completely to organize his corps for the general counterattack.⁶⁴

It is doubtful that Jackson's dusk attack would have been able to advance through the protection of the Federal artillery even if it could have been more effectively organized.⁶⁵ Certainly the confusion resulting from Early's and Taliaferro's earlier tactical success prevented any possibility of a major success, however remote. Whether Jackson or Lee could have executed a more flexible, operational oriented defense is a matter of conjecture. Some answer to this question might be found in the execution of Jackson's earlier campaign in the Shenandoah Valley and in Lee's operations at Chancellorsville during May of the following year. In both cases, these commanders planned and executed offensive operations within the context of defensive campaigns to exploit the results of earlier tactical victories which in turn created the conditions necessary for operational success. It is of some interest to note that Lee's army at Chancellorsville was essentially the same army that fought at Fredericksburg. At Fredericksburg, both Lee and Jackson were never in position to seize the opportunities offered them because both failed to capitalize fully on the defender's most important advantages, preparation of the ground and surprise.⁶⁶ Lee's defense at Fredericksburg was oriented to achieve tactical victory rather than operational success.

IV. Conclusion

The Battle of Fredericksburg essentially ended the fighting in the East for 1862. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had won a major defensive victory and had achieved the limited aims and objectives of Lee's campaign plan. The battle had inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and forced him to abandon a major offensive directed against the heart of the Confederacy. Lee's defense at Fredericksburg, however, had not included preparations for a decisive counter-stroke. The position had been chosen solely for its strength in a passive tactical defense. Despite Lee's desire to block a Federal advance and force the Federal army to change its line of operations, criteria so recently accepted as measures of success, many Confederate leaders, including Lee, knew that a great opportunity had been lost and "some wondered whether such an opportunity would come again".⁶⁷ Though impressive, Lee's repeated tactical victories were extracting a slow but steady cost from the Confederacy. The attrition from losses in equipment, and most important, manpower, resulting from each battle and so easily made up by the North, were becoming more and more difficult for the South to replace. Tactical victories were not creating the conditions necessary for an end to the war.

The nature of future war will be markedly different from that of the Civil War. Advances in technology have increased the sophistication and lethality of modern weapons resulting in a future battlefield marked by intense action, rapidly changing conditions, and multi-dimensional operations. In contrast to the limited size and scope of the fighting

at Fredericksburg where nearly two hundred thousand men fought over an area of less than twenty square miles, future battles will be fought over greatly extended distances. The highly fluid nature of the future battlefield will force commanders to integrate fully the two basic elements of combat, attack and defense, into a constantly changing pattern of action-reaction conducted over broad geographical areas. While today's advanced technology will play a major part in the actual conduct of any future battlefield defense, the commander's conceptual approach to how the defense will be conducted and how current technology will be used remains key to the usefulness of each tactical engagement or battle.

Many of the strategic constraints and restrictions which forced Lee to adopt a defensive theater campaign plan and fight a strong forward defense at Fredericksburg can be seen today in NATO's dilemma for the defense of central Europe. The need to protect the vital industrial and population centers of western Germany from even a temporary Soviet occupation has forced NATO commanders to adopt a similar theater plan of defense to deter and, if deterrence fails, to block any Soviet/Warsaw Pact attempt to enter Germany.

Until 1982 and the formal introduction of operational art, our doctrinal approach to fighting the battle for the Inter-German Border (IGB) reflected a limited tactical, attrition-oriented approach toward defense similar to that adopted by Lee at Fredericksburg. Despite advances in technology, once an enemy has decided to accept the potential cost of aggression, a static, attrition-oriented approach toward defense which allows individual commanders to view tactical victories as ends in themselves may also fail to achieve the aims and

objectives of a war in Europe. Leaders at every level can no longer view the successes or failures of their units as ends in themselves. Rather they must view individual tactical successes as merely means to achieve their higher commanders' aims and objectives. From our analysis of Lee's approach to the defense at Fredericksburg and an alternative solution to the same situation based on Napoleon's defense at Austerlitz, it becomes apparent that the fundamental differences in these two approaches toward solving the requirements of a battlefield defense can be summarized by contrasting differences in apparent focus, purpose, and anticipation.

A tactically-oriented defense is limited in focus. It assumes that individual tactical actions are ends in themselves. The results of each individual action are viewed for the value they provide for the moment. Ignored is the possibility that a tactical victory in one area may indeed lead to definite disadvantages in other areas or the break-down of the commander's overall plan of defense. A tactical defense is generally focused forward, with unit commanders primarily concerned only with what is happening to them in their own immediate area. In contrast, an operationally-oriented defense takes on a broader focus. Commanders view the results of each tactical action as victories or defeats only when they are linked together within the broader context of the entire plan of defense, whether as part of an engagement, major operation, or campaign. Each unit action becomes an important link in the overall execution of the entire plan of defense. Commanders who maintain an operational focus are concerned not only with what is happening to their immediate front (main battle) but also with the movement and positioning of the enemy's follow-on echelons and beyond

their immediate flanks and rear (rear operations). Additionally, because the operationally-oriented commander is focused on the broader impact of each tactical action, he must continually weigh each engagement against how well it contributes to the success of his superior's mission or how it might contribute to the success of an enemy commander's plan.

Tactical and operational approaches to defense also differ in purpose. Since the tactical defense focuses on the short term, the missions and objectives assigned tactical unit commanders emphasize a limited purpose. Missions such as seizing a specific piece of terrain, destroying a specific unit, or holding a specific position become the focus of tactically oriented operations. The longer term purpose or intent for each tactical action is generally left unstated. Furthermore, because each unit's defense is seen as an end in itself, Clausewitz's concept of the defense as a combination of passive and offensive elements is generally not included within the commander's plan of defense. As a result, creating the conditions for a deliberate shift to the offensive is not an integral part of the commander's initial concept of the defense.⁶⁸

The operationally oriented defense begins with a broader, longer term focus. Tactical unit commanders must be provided the objective behind each assigned mission and the part their actions play in the successful accomplishment of that objective. This approach allows the unit commander to fulfill the higher commander's intent despite changes in battlefield conditions which render the originally assigned mission no longer valid or necessary.

Finally, tactical and operational approaches to defense differ in the importance unit commanders place on anticipation. Since the focus and purpose of a tactical defense is to achieve aims and objectives which affect the present and the immediate future, little attention is placed on how the results of current operations will be exploited or minimized. Lee failed fully to anticipate the results of his strong defense at Fredericksburg. By adopting a position so strong that Burnside's commanders quickly saw the futility of further attacks, and so limited in operational options that a general counterattack was impossible, Lee created the conditions for a battle that at best could result in a limited tactical victory, "whipping the enemy" but gaining no fruits of victory.⁶⁹ Jubal Early's counterattack to restore A.P. Hill's defensive line provides another example of a failure to anticipate the results of individual tactical actions. Early's initial success prevented Jackson from effectively organizing a general corps attack. If either Lee or Jackson had built his concept of defense around an anticipated shift to the offensive, Fredericksburg might have resulted in a decisive Federal defeat.

Equally important, a tactically oriented defense requires commanders to be strong everywhere. Success is generally viewed as the simple sum of individual tactical actions which use the results from the attrition of combat to determine victory or defeat. The operational defense requires commanders to identify enemy centers-of-gravity. It is against these selected targets that the planning and execution of all tactical action is directed. Individual actions are linked together as sequential events within a broad plan of action to defeat these vulnerabilities. Sequential planning establishes the general

dispositions, objectives, and missions for subordinate commanders following their current operations. Such plans are critical to the execution of the operational art because they determine where and when tactical actions must be fought and how the results of these actions will be exploited or minimized.⁷⁰ From our examination of the Confederate operations at Fredericksburg we have seen that the transition from one form of combat to another can effectively take place only if it is in the mind of the commander from the start.

Effective execution of the operational art requires commanders continually to view the the results of their tactical actions as sequential events which must be properly integrated within the context of a larger operation to provide the capability for decisive action. For today's serving officer, implementation of AirLand Battle doctrine will require a conscious effort to view the requirements and possible solutions to battlefield actions and requirements from a new perspective. The formal adoption of the concepts of operational art expressed in our current FM 100-5 is a major first step in the development of this perspective. Effective adoption of operational art within the U.S. Army will require painful and extensive education and training, continual emphasis, and most importantly, time to modify a national approach to warfare built upon a history of military experience reaching back to our Civil War.

ENDNOTES

1. William S. Lind, "Preparing For Maneuver Warfare", (Marine Corps Gazette, June 1984), p. 48.
2. Though the concept of an operational level of war has existed for some time, there has been no commonly accepted term to describe its function or characteristics. Throughout history the terms strategy, Grand Tactics, and now operational art have been used to describe the art and activity which links the strategic aims and objectives of war to the actions of a nation's tactical units.
3. FM 100-5, Operations, (DRAFT) Oct 1985, p. 2-2.
4. Col Wallace P. Franz, USA Reserve, "Grand Tactics", (Military Review, December 1981), p. 34.
5. Michael Howard, et al., Carl von Clausewitz On War (Translated by M. Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 156.
6. LTC (P) Huba Wass de Czege, USA, et al, "The New FM 100-5", (Military Review, July 1982), p. 54.
7. Lenoir Chambers, Stonewall Jackson - Vol II Seven Day's I to the Last March, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1959), p. 235. Chambers writes that during this period of relative inaction, stragglers who had fallen behind during the earlier campaigning were rounded up and returned to their units. By 8 October the Army of Northern Virginia had increased in strength by some 20,000 men.
8. E. P. Alexander, Chief of Artillery, Longstreet's Corps, Military Memoir's of a Confederate, (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1977. Originally published 1907), p. 279. Alexander writes: "at last we became an army rather than a collection of brigades, divisions, and batteries". Alexander provides a complete breakdown of both corps' organizations and Army cavalry and artillery reserve on pages 279-280. Lee would start the Fredericksburg campaign with the largest and best organized army he would ever lead during the war. Though his Army during during the Seven Days Battle was numerically larger, it was not organized as effectively.
9. The War of Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies - VOL XIX, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), p. 662. Hereafter referred to as OR (Official Record).
10. The West Point Atlas of American Wars VOL I - 1689-1900, (Compiled by The Department of Military Art and Engineering, The United States

Military Academy, West Point New York. Chief Editor, Col. Vincent J. Esposito. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), map 70. Despite having the better part of September and October to plan his movements McClellan appeared to advance with no firm plan in mind.

11. George F.R. Henderson, Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War, (Modern Abridgment, with an Introduction by E.B. Long. Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1968), p. 457.

12. Alfred Guernsey and Henry M. Alden, Harpers Pictorial History of the Civil War, (New York: The Fairfax Press, 1866), p. 406. It is not the intent of this study to examine in detail the rationale behind Burnside's change in campaign plan. Suffice it to say that most sources point out that an advance following McClellan's line of attack, supplied by rail through Alexander-Culpeper Court-House -Gordonsville, involved transporting supplies over a single tracked railroad a distance of over 150 miles. An advance proposed by Burnside, through Fredericksburg supplied from a base at Aquia Creek, would be only 75 miles long and lead directly to Richmond. Not only would the support distance be much less, but by advancing directly south through Fredericksburg the Union lines of communication would be less exposed to any potential threat from the Shenandoah Valley.

13. Shortly after taking command, Burnside reorganized the Federal Army into three Grand Divisions. MAJ-GEN E.V. Sumner was given command of the Right Grand Division, composed of the 2d and 9th Corps. MAJ-Gen Joseph Hooker was given command of the Center Grand Division, consisting of the 3d and 5th Corps. MAJ-Gen W.B. Franklin, given command of the Left Grand Division, consisting of the 1st and 6th Corps; Francis W. Palfrey, Campaigns of the Civil War - Vol III The Antietam and Fredericksburg, (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963), p. 138.

14. Henderson, p. 458. Also in a dispatch to Jackson, dated 19 Nov, Lee writes: "As to the place where it may be necessary or best to fight, I can not now state, as this must be determined by circumstances which may arise. I do not now anticipate making a determined stand north of the North Anna", OR XXI, p. 1021.

15. OR XXI, p. 1031.

16. OR XXI, p. 1029 and p. 1031.

17. LTG James Longstreet, CSA, From Manassas to Appomattox, Memoirs of the Civil War in America, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott Co., 1896), p. 297.

18. OR XXI, p. 551.

19. Ibid, p. 1037.

20. Skinkers Neck was especially attractive because the major bend in the river at that point and its increased width and depth would allow the Federal gun boats to support a crossing. Also, because of the increased width of the river below Fredericksburg, 1,000 ft vs. 400 ft, a crossing at Skinkers Neck would require almost three times the number of pontoons as a similar number of crossing points opposite Fredericksburg.

21. Palfrey, p. 173.

22. OR XXI, p. 91.

23. Edward J. Stackpole, Drama on the Rappahannock: The Fredericksburg Campaign, (Harrisburg: Military Service Publishing Co., 1957), p. 124. See also OR XXI, pp. 78-80.

24. Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. 275.

25. Ibid, p. 275.

26. Henderson, p. 468.

27. Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Vol II - Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 357.

28. Ibid, p. 555.

29. Alexander, p.313. Almost 2,000 of the total Confederate losses were from A.P. Hill's division which Meade had penetrated. Meade however, had lost over 40% of his force in his initial attack and the subsequent counterattack and forced withdrawal.

30. R.L. Dabney, Prof D.D., Life and Campaigns of LTG. Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall Jackson), (New York: Blekock & Co., 1866), p. 595.

31. LTC (P) Huba Wass de Czege, USA, et al, "The New FM 100-5" (Military Review, July 1982), p. 69.

32. Michael Howard, et al., Carl von Clausewitz On War (Translated by M. Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 77.

33. Ibid, pp. 79 & 357.

34. Ibid, p. 357.

35. Ibid, p. 358.

36. Ibid, p. 370.

37. Ibid, p. 390. FM 100-5 expresses the same general concept for the use of the reserves, p. 9-3.
38. FM 100-5, Operations, (DRAFT) Oct 1985, p. 9-3.
39. Clausewitz, p. 363. Clausewitz earlier makes this same point when he states that decision in war consists of several successive acts, each when seen in context, provides the "gauge for those that follow", p. 79.
40. FM 100-5, p. 3-9.
41. Ibid, p. 3-2, 3-9.
42. OR XIX, p. 696.
43. OR XXI, p. 1031.
44. FM 100-5, p. 3-11.
45. Thomas L. Connelly and Archer Jones, The Politics of Command: Functions and Ideas in Confederate Strategy, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), p. 42.
46. OR XIX, p. 590.
47. OR XIX, p. 706.
48. Ibid, p. 696.
49. OR XXI, p. 1019. Lee in a dispatch to Jackson on 18 Nov writes: "It is possible that they [the Union Army] may have attempted to seize Winchester, Culpeper, and Fredericksburg, which would embrace their favorite strategic plan of advancing in three columns, but I think by doing so they will much expose themselves. I hope we may be able to take advantage of it."
50. OR XXI, p. 1031.
51. Alexander, p.287.
52. Dabney p. 595. See also Chambers, p. 271 and Freeman's Lee, p. 268.
53. OR XXI, p. 1031 and Freeman's Lee, p. 270. From the OR Lee writes: "As far as I can judge, his [Burnside] plan is to advance on Richmond from his base, and, to delay him as long as practicable and throw into winter, I have determined to resist him from the beginning".
54. Allen Tate writing in 1928 states: "Lee saw intellectually the object of war more clearly than his statesmen. Like every complex sensibility, he was subject to intuitions that disturbed his vision of this objective. Up to certain limits he could pursue it with a singular

purpose. But his character, unlike his great subordinates, was not in any respect overdeveloped. He saw everything. He was probably the greatest soldier of all time, but his greatness as a man kept him from being a completely successful soldier. He could not bring himself to seize every means to the proposed end. Jackson, who saw one object only, could use them all". Allen Tate, Stonewall Jackson: The Good Soldier, (New York: Balch & Co., 1928), p. 272.

55. Freeman, Lee, p. 281.

56. On 21 Nov, 1862 the Charleston Mercury, writing about Burnside's replacement of McClellan and subsequent shifting of his line of operations to Fredericksburg, wrote: "The best thing that can happen to the South, is a campaign of invasion towards Richmond. Freezing nights and boggy roads are incompatible with the safe retreat of a beaten foe, It may be a Russian campaign"; quoted from Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Vol Two Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville, (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1943), p. 313.

57. FM 100-5, p. 3-6. FM 100-5 anticipates that in the future theater commanders will face similar frustrations as they attempt to deal with the constraints and restrictions imposed on their actions by strategic limitations: "Strategic guidance will constrain operational methods by ruling out some otherwise attractive alternatives".

58. Ibid, p. 8-12.

59. Ibid, p. p. 8-14.

60. Clausewitz, p. 182.

61. Ibid, p. 97.

62. David G. Chandler, The Campaigns of Napoleon, (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1966), p. 413.

63. OR XXI, p. 71 and 107 and Henderson, p. 468.

64. Chambers, p. 291 and Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, p. 370 report on the confusion resulting from the earlier counterattack to restore A.P. Hill's lines. Chambers writes that Hill's position was now organized with brigades from all three divisions involved in the counterattack. Freeman states that the confusion, compounded by Hill's line being in the woods, resulted in some commanders receiving their orders for the counterattack quickly while others, like A.P. Hill, did not receive their orders until dark. Hood received his orders just as the sun was setting and Early was not aware of the planned attack until he saw D.H. Hill's line advancing. When Early did receive his orders they were "contradictory, adding to the confusion".

65. Despite the general confusion, Jackson decided the opportunity for attack could not be passed up. As described earlier in the section on the conduct of the battle, Jackson's attack was quickly halted under the massed fire from Federal artillery positioned on Stafford Heights.

66. FM 100-5, p. 8-6 and Clausewitz, p. 360.

67. Chambers, p. 305.

68. Clausewitz, p. 370.

69. Dabney, p. 595.

70. FM 100-5, p. 3-9.

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