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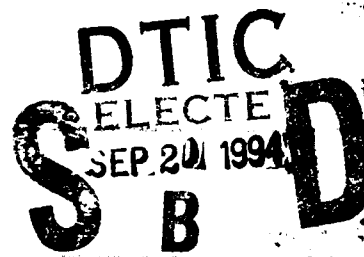
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Dragoon or Cavalryman, Major General
John Buford in the American Civil War

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This study investigates the American Civil War role and contributions of Major General John Buford. Buford, a 1848 graduate of the United States Military Academy, began his Army career on America's frontier with the First United States Dragoons. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Buford was selected to command a cavalry brigade in John Pope's Army of Virginia, and participated in the Second Manassas Campaign. Buford went on to make significant contributions to the Union efforts in the Eastern Theater; however, history has generally portrayed Buford as a one-dimensional character based on his stand along McPherson and Seminary Ridges on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg. Several historians have presumed that the dismounted cavalry (or Dragoon) tactics used by Buford at Gettysburg were the culmination of a method of fighting which he helped develop and propagate within the Union cavalry. However, this thesis shows that contrary to this Dragoon image, Buford was in fact a remarkable cavalry officer. His battlefield tactics were fairly traditional, but it was not in pitched battles that Buford excelled. His significant contributions were in the established roles of cavalry; performing reconnaissance and providing security for the army he was supporting.

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**DRAGOON OR CAVALRYMAN,
MAJOR GENERAL JOHN BUFORD
IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR**

**A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree**

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

**MARK R. STRICKER, MAJ, USA
B. A., Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas, 1980**

**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1994**

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ABSTRACT

**DRAGOON OR CAVALRYMAN, MAJOR GENERAL JOHN BUFORD IN THE
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR by MAJ Mark R. Stricker, USA, 186 pages.**

This study investigates the American Civil War role and contributions of Major General John Buford. Buford, a 1848 graduate of the United States Military Academy, began his Army career on America's frontier with the First United States Dragoons. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Buford was selected to command a cavalry brigade in John Pope's Army of Virginia, and participated in the Second Manassas Campaign. Buford went on to make significant contributions to the Union efforts in the Eastern Theater; however, history has generally portrayed Buford as a one-dimensional character based on his stand along McPherson and Seminary Ridges on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg. Several historians have presumed that the dismounted cavalry (or Dragoon) tactics used by Buford at Gettysburg were the culmination of a method of fighting which he helped develop and propagate within the Union cavalry.

However, this thesis shows that contrary to this Dragoon image, Buford was in fact a remarkable cavalry officer. His battlefield tactics were fairly traditional, but it was not in pitched battles that Buford excelled. His significant contributions were in the established roles of cavalry; performing reconnaissance and providing security for the army he was supporting.

To Sherri, Rebecca, and Bethany

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At approximately 0730 hours on 1 July 1863, just west of the Pennsylvania town of Gettysburg, the vedettes of Brigadier General John Buford's First Cavalry Division, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, opened fire on advancing Confederate infantry under the overall command of General Robert E. Lee. For the next several hours the three thousand troopers and six artillery pieces of the First Division conducted a delaying action against elements of both the Confederate II and III Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia. These initial clashes developed into the historic Battle of Gettysburg.¹

Although Buford had made significant contributions to Union efforts in the Eastern Theater both before and after Gettysburg, history generally portrays him as a one-dimensional character based on his stand along McPherson and Seminary Ridges. Several historians have presumed that the dismounted cavalry (or Dragoon) tactics Buford used at Gettysburg were the culmination of a method of fighting which he helped develop and propagate

¹Warren W. Hassler, Jr., *Crisis at the Crossroads: The First day at Gettysburg* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press; repr, Gettysburg, PA: Stan Clark Military Books, 1991.), 28-29.

within the Union cavalry. For example, General Edward Stackpole in his book, *They Met at Gettysburg*, states:

[Buford] thought of the horse as a means of transportation, useful chiefly because of the greatly increased mobility which it gave to the mounted troops. He treated cavalry as mounted infantry. . . . The procedure was to move rapidly. . . and dismount the troops to quickly form an infantry skirmish line.²

Contrary to this dragoon image, Buford was, in fact, a remarkable cavalry officer who only dismounted his troopers when absolutely necessary. His battlefield tactics were fairly traditional, and Buford was successful on several battlefields; however, it was not close combat in which Buford excelled. His significant contributions were in the established roles of cavalry--performing reconnaissance and providing security for the army he was supporting. In those roles Buford stood out as the best Union cavalryman of the Civil War.

The Bufords In Early America

Various constraints do not allow in-depth discussion of Major General Buford's life and career before the Civil War. However, this section briefly describes important aspects of his first 36 years.

John Buford's ancestors, the Beaufords of England, first immigrated to America in 1635 and settled in Lancaster County, Virginia. Members of the family were large landowners and were extensively involved in raising horses. The family's involvement in martial activities began before the Revolutionary period. In addition to providing soldiers to fight in the early

²Edward J. Stackpole, *They Met at Gettysburg*, 3d ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1986), 120.

campaigns against the Indians, members of the Beauford family saw service with the Revolutionary Army. Because of the Beauford's support for American independence, the family changed the spelling of their name to Buford during this period. Colonel Abraham Buford's command was massacred by British Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton's Tory Legion at the Waxhaws, South Carolina, in 1780. In 1790, with the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, Simeon Buford moved from Virginia to seek new opportunities in Kentucky. Simeon Buford was John Buford's grandfather.³

John Buford was the son of John and Anne Bannister Watson Buford. He was born in Woodford County, Kentucky, on 4 March 1826. John was the half brother of Union Major General Napoleon Bonaparte Buford and cousin of Confederate Brigadier General Abraham Buford. Napoleon Buford commanded the 27th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment under Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant at Belmont, Missouri, and an infantry brigade under John Pope against Island Number 10. Abraham Buford commanded a cavalry division, but he did so in Nathan Bedford Forrest's Cavalry Corps of the Army of Tennessee.⁴

³Allen Johnson, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 3:243-244; James H. Wilson, "Major-General John Buford," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* 8, no. 30 (September 1895): 173-174. Mark M. Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary*, rev. ed. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc, 1988), 97.

⁴Johnson, 243; Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: The Centruy Co., 1887; repr., Secaucus, NJ: Castle, no date noted), 1:355, 463; Boatner, 185.

John Buford Before the Civil War

By the 1840s the Buford family had moved to and settled in Rock Island, Illinois, and it was from this state that Buford was appointed to the United States Military Academy. He graduated from West Point in 1848, standing sixteenth out of a class of 38 cadets. After graduation Buford was posted to the First Dragoons as a brevet second lieutenant. His initial assignments included garrison and frontier duty in Missouri, Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas. Within a year the Army advanced Buford to permanent second lieutenant in the Second Dragoons, and on 9 July 1853 he was promoted to first lieutenant. After his transfer to the Second Dragoons, Lieutenant Buford continued to serve at various outposts in Texas, Missouri, and Kansas.⁵

On 9 May 1854, while at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, Buford married Martha McDowell Duke, a cousin from Scott County, Kentucky. This marriage made Buford indirect kinsmen of several important Union and Confederate officers. One of Miss Duke's cousins was Confederate cavalry Brigadier General Basil W. Duke. General Duke was married to one of the Morgan sisters. (The other sister was married to Lieutenant General A. P. Hill.) The sisters' brother was Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan. Mrs. Buford was also a second cousin of Major General Irvin McDowell. Because he was from the border state of Kentucky, Buford experienced the "brother against brother" nature of the Civil War more than many other officers.⁶

⁵Ezra W. Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 52-53; George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1868), 2:215.

⁶Frank B. Borries, Jr., "General John Buford: Civil War Union Cavalryman" (MA thesis, University of Kentucky, 1960), 2-3; Boatner, 97.

In 1855 Buford's commander appointed him regimental quartermaster of the Second Dragoon Regiment in time to participate in the battles against the Sioux from 1855 to 1856. This campaign was precipitated by an inexperienced officer named John Grattan. On 19 August 1854, Lieutenant Grattan and his small command entered a Lakota Sioux village near Fort Laramie, Nebraska Territory. Grattan was looking for a tribe member who had been accused of killing cattle belonging to nearby white emigrants. Unfortunately, Grattan ordered his soldiers to fire on the Indians after the Sioux had refused to cooperate. The infuriated warriors then attacked and overwhelmed the soldiers, killing the entire command.⁷

In early 1855, the Army ordered Brigadier General William S. Harney to organize an expedition to punish the Sioux responsible for the "Grattan Massacre," and elements of the Second Dragoons under Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke were part of this force. Over the next year, General Harney's campaign crushed the Sioux and at Fort Pierre, Nebraska Territory, forced the Lakota into the harsh Harney Treaty of 1 March 1856. In his reports, Colonel Cooke commended the proficient work of Lieutenant Buford.⁸

It is interesting that almost certainly a young Sitting Bull was at the treaty conference. Of course, in 1876 he led the Sioux in destroying Buford's fellow cavalryman, George Armstrong Custer. In a roundabout way John

⁷Robert M. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967; repr., Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 113-15.

⁸Robert M. Utley, *The Lance and the Shield, The Life and Times of Sitting Bull*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1993), 45-46; Johnson, 243.

Buford enjoyed more success against the Sioux than the more famous Custer. In 1866, the Army constructed Fort Buford, at the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, in North Dakota near the border with Montana. As Robert Utley points out in his biography of Sitting Bull:

Fort Buford represented a spear thrust deep into the Hunkpapas [Sioux] world, the most alarming military intrusion yet. From the first, the Hunkpapas hated it like no other, and for four years Sitting Bull centered his offensive on this detested emblem of the white invasion.⁹

Years later, on 19 July 1881, a defeated Sitting Bull entered the parade ground of Fort Buford and finally surrendered to the United States Government. Indirectly, John Buford had accomplished what Custer could not.¹⁰

By 1856, Buford and the Second Dragoons had help quiet the civil war in Kansas. However, the situation in Utah caused the troopers to hasten to a new field of action. In 1857, the new administration of President James Buchanan became concerned over alleged violations of United States laws by the Mormons in Utah. In October 1857, Brigadier General Albert Sidney Johnston was ordered to Salt Lake City with a force of less than 1,000 men. These troops, and those which followed later, constituted the so-called Mormon Expedition (also incorrectly named the "Mormon War"). It became apparent that additional troops would be necessary to effectively re-establish U.S. Government authority in Utah. Therefore, with less than one week's notice, the Army ordered the Second Dragoons to move over 1,100 miles from Kansas to Utah. This arduous trek had to be made over the Rocky Mountains in the dead of winter. After losing many horses and some troopers to the severe

⁹Utley, *The Lance and the Shield*, 71.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 231.

wilderness conditions, Buford and the command finally reached Salt Lake City. During the march Buford, as quartermaster, had one of the most difficult jobs in the regiment; Colonel Cooke once again praised Lieutenant Buford as a "most efficient Officer."¹¹

Buford remained in Utah until August 1858 when he returned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he was promoted to Captain in March 1859. Over the next two years, Captain Buford served in the Oregon Territory and then returned to the Utah Territory. He was assigned to Fort Crittenden (located southwest of Salt Lake City) which was the headquarters for the Utah Military Department. In 1861 while he was in Utah, and probably because of his links to Virginia and Kentucky, the Confederate government formally offered Captain Buford a general officer's commission. It is a testament to his loyalty to the United States that he refused the offer saying, "I will live and die under the flag of the Union." The U.S. Army promoted Buford to Major in November 1861, and shortly thereafter ordered him east to Washington, D.C. On his arrival, Buford was assigned to an unenviable position in the Inspector General's Department.¹²

At this point in his career, however, John Buford had done something many of his fellow West Point classmates had not been able to do; he had survived. As Figure 1 shows, by 1861 two-thirds of the Academy Class of 1848

¹¹E. B. Long, *The Saints and the Union, Utah Territory During the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 6-7; Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (Fort Riley, KS: Capper Printing Company, Inc., 1939), 54-55; Johnson, 243.

¹²Cullum, 2:215-216; Frank Moore, *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc.* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1861-63; D. Van Nostrand, 1864-68), 8:25.

had already been killed or died on frontier duty, joined the rebellion, or had resigned from the Army. Only two of Buford's peers would command at the regimental or higher level within the Union Army, and only John Tidball would, like Buford, reach the rank of Major General.¹³

It is possible that Buford's hard service on the frontier was the cause for his rough appearance and physique. One observer described Buford in this manner:

[Buford] being rough in his exterior, never looking after his own comfort, untiring on the march and in the supervision of all the militia of his command, quiet and unassuming in his manners.¹⁴

In 1863, Colonel Lyman, of General Meade's staff, provided one of the most descriptive narrations of Buford.

[Buford] is one of the best of the officers of [cavalry] and is a singular-looking party. Figurez-vous a compactly built man of middle height, with a tawny mustache and a little, triangular gray eye, whose expression is determined, not to say sinister. His ancient corduroys are tucked into a pair of ordinary cowhide boots, and his blue blouse is ornamented with holes; from one pocket thereof peeps a huge pipe, while the other is fat with a tobacco pouch. Notwithstanding this get-up he is a very soldierly looking man. He is of a good-natured disposition, but not to be trifled with.¹⁵

For whatever reason, John Buford did look older than a man in his mid-thirtys.

Figure 2 shows John Buford as a Brigadier General.

¹³The information in this paragraph is based on analysis of data contained in Cullum, 2:207-226.

¹⁴Allan Nevins, ed., *A Diary of Battle, The Personal Journals of Colonel Charles S. Wainwright, 1861-1865* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962), 309.

¹⁵George R. Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-1865, Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman* (Boston, MA: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1922), 21.

After his transfer to Washington the rugged looking John Buford was soon given the opportunity to defend the Union against Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

CHAPTER 2

BRIGADE COMMAND

Brigade Command in the Army of Virginia

The summer of 1862 held much promise for the Union. Major General George McClellan, as commander in chief of the Union armies, had spent several months in efficiently organizing the large number of new volunteers into some semblance of a coordinated force. In March 1862 he moved twelve divisions to Fort Monroe, Virginia, to begin the Peninsular Campaign. By April, McClellan and the Army of the Potomac had started to move from Fort Monroe toward Richmond.¹

The Union did have another Federal Army in the Eastern Theater during this time; although, it not as well known as the Army of Potomac. In late June 1862, the Army of Virginia had been formed from the Departments of the Rappahannock and Shenandoah, and the Mountain Department (each of which had been a corps-size independent army). President Lincoln appointed Major General John Pope, who had successfully commanded the Army of the Mississippi during the New Madrid and Island Number 10 Campaign, as the commander of this new army. The President further indicated that the Army of Virginia would have a threefold mission.

The Army of Virginia shall operate in such manner as, while protecting Western Virginia and the national capital from danger or insult, it shall

¹Mark M. Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary*, rev. ed. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc, 1988), 632.

in the speediest manner attack and overcome the rebel forces under Jackson and Ewell, threaten the enemy in the direction of Charlottesville, and render the most effective aid to relieve General McClellan and capture Richmond.²

Clearly, the President saw an offensive mission for the Army of Virginia (in concert with McClellan's forces), and Pope would need officers with initiative for his new command. Unfortunately for the Union, within a few days of Lincoln's order the strategic situation in Virginia changed dramatically. By 1 July, General Robert E. Lee had forced the Army of the Potomac away from Richmond to the banks of the James River at Harrison's Landing. On 4 July, Pope stated in a communication to McClellan that the Army of Virginia's primary mission, therefore, had become the defense of Washington.³

Even with this new mission, the creation of the army required a staff to be assembled. Consequently, in July 1862, Major John Buford reported for duty in the inspector-general's department of the Army of Virginia. It is unlikely that Pope knew Buford personally before 1862. Pope had graduated from West Point in July 1842, two years before Buford arrived at the Academy as a plebe. Although both officers were in New Mexico at the same time in 1851, Pope was away from his assigned post at Fort Union (a district headquarters post located sixty miles northeast of Santa Fe) on an independent survey of the Santa Fe Trail. This was the only time that the two officers were stationed in the same state before they met in 1862.⁴

²U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 12, part 3:435. Cited hereafter as *Official Records*.

³*Ibid.*; 1, 11, 3:295-297.

⁴George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1868),

Of course, Pope was sure to have known of John Buford. Like Buford, Pope was born in Kentucky and grew up in Illinois. In addition, when Pope was leading the Army of the Mississippi against Island Number 10, Colonel Napoleon Bonaparte Buford (commanding the important Flotilla Infantry Brigade) was one of his subordinates. It is possible that Napoleon Buford discussed his brother with Pope. What is known is that, once General Pope found John Buford on his staff, he was surprised that an officer of Buford's talents was not commanding troops. Buford explained to Pope that he had attempted to get a command, but he was without sufficient influence to secure one. Pope immediately began the necessary arrangements to have Buford promoted to Brigadier General and placed in an appropriate command.⁵

Although historians have been critical of John Pope, his failures as commander of the Army of Virginia can be partially mitigated by the many problems he faced in the summer of 1862. The Army he commanded had no established sense of identity or esprit de corps. It was also an army demoralized by defeat. Earlier in the year, during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, the units which made up the Army of Virginia had been unsuccessful in destroying the Confederate forces under Lieutenant General Stonewall Jackson. To overcome these deficiencies, Pope demanded aggressive actions from his subordinates. Brigadier General John Hatch, in

2:49-50, 215-216; Wallace J. Schutz and Walter N. Trenerry, *Abandoned by Lincoln, a Military Biography of General John Pope* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 32-43.

⁵Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: The Century Co., 1887; repr., Secaucus, NJ: Castle, no date noted), 1:463, 2:491.

command of the cavalry brigade of the Army of Virginia's II Corps, did not meet this standard.⁶

In early July, the Army of Virginia moved south into positions along the Rapidan River. To cut Confederate lines of communications with the Shenandoah Valley, Pope ordered his cavalry to conduct raids south of the river. Between 14 and 27 July 1862, General Hatch was ordered to carry out two such raids. Both times he failed to accomplish anything. Therefore, on 27 July 1862, Pope relieved Hatch from command and appointed Buford to replace him. New Brigadier General Buford joined his brigade on 2 August 1862, and he was immediately ordered by Pope to establish a picket line along the Rapidan River west of Rapidan Station (Figure 3). Buford spent the next four weeks leading his cavalryman in the Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas.⁷

Cavalry Tactics, Organization and Equipment

To better understand General Buford's actions and abilities during the Second Manassas Campaign, the following section briefly describes the tactics, organization, and equipment of the cavalry units of that period. This section also serves as a baseline to determine how Buford adapted or influenced Civil War tactics.

Cavalry Tactics

At the beginning of the Civil War, the cavalry arm of the United States Army had been in continuous existence less than thirty years. It was

⁶John J. Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run, The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 6; Boatner, 101.

⁷*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:23-24; 1, 12, 3:514, 525-526.

not until March 1833 that the United States Government officially constituted the Regiment of Dragoons. Of course, there had been several small regiments of light dragoons in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, but during periods of peace those units were normally disbanded.⁸

Most cavalry during the two conflicts fought dismounted. For example, during the Revolutionary War in the southern theater, Generals Thomas Sumter, Andrew Pickens, and Francis 'Swamp Fox' Marion all led small mounted militia units against the British under Colonel Tarleton. The men of these South Carolinian officers were armed with rifles and rode their own horses. When they approached the enemy they dismounted and fought on foot. In 1780 and 1781, other militia horsemen fought dismounted at King's Mountain and Cowpens in the Carolinas. In the War of 1812, mounted militia units again gave good account of themselves while fighting dismounted.⁹

From 1833, when the Regiment of Dragoons was formed, until the beginning of the Civil War, Congress authorized the creation of the Second Dragoons (1836), the Regiment of Mounted Rifleman (1846), and the First and Second Cavalry (1855). All of these units usually fought dismounted. For example, during the Florida War of 1837, the Second Dragoons fought on foot because of the broken terrain. At Chapultepec, during the Mexican War, the Mounted Rifles earned their motto, "Brave Rifles! Veterans!" fighting as infantry.¹⁰

⁸Mary L. Stubbs and Stanley R. Connor, *Army Lineage Series, Armor-Cavalry, Part I: Regular Army and Army Reserve* (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1969), 5-8, 91.

⁹John K. Herr, *The Story of the U. S. Cavalry, 1775-1942* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co., 1953), 12-22. Stubbs, 6-7.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 9-11.

It would be inaccurate to state that American cavalry units before the Civil War never fought mounted. However, doing so was the exception. Because of this mounted infantry tradition, one could assume that Civil War cavalry commanders would fight dismounted. However, primarily because of European influence in the two decades before the Civil War, this was not the case. European tactics were introduced into American through the United States Army's cavalry tactics manuals, instruction at West Point, and European officers commanding many of the first volunteer cavalry regiments.

The cavalry tactics manual in use in the eastern theater during the Civil War was *Cavalry Tactics*, published in 1841. This manual was also known as the Poinsette or "1841" Tactics, and an adaptation of it served as the basis for the cavalry tactics manual for the Army of Northern Virginia. Significantly, *Cavalry Tactics* was an almost verbatim translation of the then current French cavalry manual.¹¹

The main tenet of these manuals was a reliance on the mounted cavalry charge with the saber and pistol; shock over firepower. To increase the impetus of the cavalry, units would always maneuver in two ranks. In 1861, the War Department officially adopted a new manual called *Cavalry Tactics, or, Regulations for the Instruction, Formation and Movements of the Cavalry*. This manual was written by Colonel Philip St. George Cooke from his observations of the Franco-Austrian War in 1859 and from reports on European armies written by General George McClellan. To increase the firepower of the cavalry unit, Cooke's manual replaced the double rank with a

¹¹U. S. War Department, *Cavalry Tactics* (3 parts, Washington, D.C.: J. and G. S. Gideon, 1841); Alonzo Gray, *Cavalry Tactics as Illustrated by the War of the Rebellion* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Army Service Schools Press, 1910), 8-10.

single line. The outbreak of the Civil War, however, stopped the issuing of this manual, but even this new guidebook made only minor concessions to the increased importance of firepower over shock. Cooke even states that the charge remained "the decisive action of cavalry."¹²

European predominance, with its emphasis on mounted tactics, was also strong within the United States Military Academy. One of the most influential professors at West Point was Dennis Hart Mahan. After Mahan had been sent to France as a student and observer, he taught at the Academy from 1832 to 1871. In 1847, Mahan published *An Elementary Treatise on Advanced-Guard, Out-Post, and Detachment Service of Troops, and the Manner of Posting and Handling Them in Presence of an Enemy*. Although it is difficult to determine from the title, this book (usually known simply as *Out-Post*) is a doctrinal manual on how to conduct war. In it Mahan makes it clear that cavalry is to attack the enemy with "prompt and vigorous charges." He goes on to state "cavalry is seldom called on to use firearms."¹³ Mahan harshly characterizes the mounted infantry traditions of the U. S. Army.

The dragoon, when first instituted to combine the functions both of the foot soldier and cavalier, was found, like most mongrels, to have the qualities of neither in a very serviceable degree.¹⁴

¹²T. F. Thiele, "The Evolution of Cavalry in the American Civil War, 1861-1863" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1951) 508-509; Philip St. G. Cooke, *Cavalry Tactics, or, Regulations for the Instruction, Formation and Movements of the Cavalry* (Two parts, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1862) 2:60-61.

¹³Dennis H. Mahan, *An Elementary Treatise on Advanced-Guard, Out-Post, and Detachment Service of Troops, and the Manner of Posting and Handling Them in Presence of an Enemy* (New edition, New York: John Wiley, 1861), 56-57.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 44.

Mahan sums up the role of cavalry by emphasizing its need for speed, boldness, and recklessness. In this manner the cavalry arm will be a "truly fearful one." Significantly, Mahan also assisted in the organization of the Virginia Military Institute, thus helping to increase his influence over the officer corps of the Confederacy.¹⁵

European tactics also influenced many Civil War cavalryman, because numerous foreign-born officers served in the volunteer cavalry regiments of the Union Army. Officers such as Lieutenant Colonel Frederick von Schichfuss (1st New York), Colonel Louis Palma di Cesnola (4th New York), Colonel 'Sir' Percy Wyndham (1st New Jersey), and Colonel Alfred Nattie Duffie (1st Rhode Island) all were quick to teach the European manner of cavalry tactics to their units. Stephen Starr points out in his history of the Union cavalry that, "indeed, it was a rare regiment of cavalry that did not have among its officers one or more veterans of a foreign army." In fact, troopers in two regiments, which would operate with Buford during the Second Manassas Campaign, were almost exclusively non-English speakers. The 4th New York was known as a German regiment and the 5th New York had personnel from nineteen different countries in its ranks.¹⁶

Cavalry Organization and Formations

While Union cavalry tactics might have been more European, the organization and manner of deployment of units was more traditionally American. The War Department, in General Orders issued in May 1861 and

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 43; Boatner, 501-502.

¹⁶Stephen Z. Starr, *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 1:93-97, 109.

July and September 1862, established the official organization of each volunteer cavalry regiment. The orders dictated the company as the basic building block of regiments. Although early in the war volunteer regiments were authorized eight, ten, or twelve companies, twelve was the official number after 1861 (Figure 4). The regular regiments began the war having only ten companies, but this number was later raised to twelve. The companies were lettered in alphabetical order, with the letter "J" omitted. A captain commanded each company, and he was assisted by two lieutenants who commanded the company's two subordinate platoons. Although each company was authorized as many as one hundred personnel, few could muster this size force. Two companies operating together constituted a squadron. The senior of the two captains commanded. Two squadrons, led by a major and a small staff, made up a battalion (Figure 5). The battalion was usually the smallest formation which could operate independently.¹⁷

The regiment could maneuver on the battlefield in a number of formations; however, the two most common were the line and column (Figures 5 and 6). Generally, the line was used to bring the maximum amount of combat power against the enemy. However, the regiment could maneuver more easily in one of the various types of column formations. Unless the column was close (only twelve yards between units), it maintained its frontage as the interval between units. If sufficient space was available, a cavalry brigade could even form a column of regiments (Figure 7).¹⁸

¹⁷*Official Records*, 3, 1:152, 155-156; 3, 2:281, 518-519; Gray, 6; Figures 4 and 5 are from the information in *Cavalry Tactics*, 1:3-7.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, Figure 6 is adapted from the diagrams at the end of vol. 3; Gray, 10.

Cavalry Weapons and Equipment

A cavalryman was usually equipped with his regulation McClellan saddle and such items as saddlebags, blanket roll, gum poncho, and canteen. The Union cavalryman was usually armed with saber, carbine, and revolver. The Heavy Cavalry (Dragoon) Saber, Model 1840, based on a French pattern, was regulation until about 1858. Many of these heavy swords were used in the early years of the Civil War. The Model 1840 was gradually replaced by the less ponderous Light Cavalry Saber, Model 1860. The pistol was usually a Colt or Remington percussion in the Army (.44 caliber) or Navy (.36 caliber) version. Into 1863, many companies had only twelve men armed with carbines. These men acted as sharpshooters, pickets, and scouts.¹⁹

Carbines came in various models; for the Federal cavalryman almost all were rifled single-shot breech-loaders. Figure 8 shows some of the makes. The most popular model was the .52 caliber Sharps, but over 50,000 Burnside carbines in .54 caliber were also issued. Other models included the Smith and the Maynard, both in .50 caliber. The Hall Carbine was the oldest design in use (used in the Mexican War), and it was the only smooth-bore. The Halls which were available were usually old and in poor condition. The famous Spencer repeater did not enter service until after Gettysburg.²⁰

¹⁹Jack Coggins, *Arms and Equipment of the Civil War* (Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1962; reprint, 1987) 53-55; Frederick P. Todd, *American Military Equipage, 1851-1852* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980), 177; Earl J. Coates and Dean S. Thomas, *An Introduction to Civil War Small Arms* (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 1990) 54-55, 61.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 38-47.

Status of Buford's Brigade

On 2 August 1862, when Brigadier General John Buford replaced John Hatch as the commander of the Cavalry Brigade, II Corps, Army of Virginia, hard campaigning and temporary detachments had already reduced the brigade's combat capabilities. Initially, it consisted of five regiments; however, by mid-August the official organization of the brigade had been reduced to four regiments. Each of these regiments had already seen several months of action during the Valley Campaign earlier in the year. The 1st Michigan, 1st Maine (five companies), 1st Vermont, and 5th New York had all been part of Hatch's Brigade of the Department of the Shenandoah. Companies from the 1st West Virginia had served in the Department of the Rappahannock and the Mountain Department.²¹

It is clear the cavalry horses of the Army of Virginia had not had time to recover from the exhaustive campaigning in the Valley. Numerous reports from different regiments indicate that excessive marching, high temperatures, and lack of forage and horseshoes had resulted in broken down and starving animals. Toward the end of August, both Buford and Brigadier General George D. Bayard (commanding the cavalry brigade assigned to III Corps, Army of Virginia) reported to Pope "that there were not five horses to the company that could be forced into a trot."²²

Another important factor contributing to the reduced effectiveness of Buford's regiments was a lack of carbines. This was apparently a problem throughout the cavalry of the Army of Virginia. Bayard reported that two of

²¹*Official Records*, 1,12, 2:24, 240; 3:308-313, 400.

²²*Ibid.*, 1, 12, 2:45; see Starr, 1: 299-302 for details.

his regiments had no carbines at all. Buford's own 1st Michigan had only twenty carbines in the entire regiment. In a report concerning an engagement with Confederate cavalry in June 1862, Major Charles H. Town of the 1st Michigan states,

I would respectfully represent that, owing to the topography of the country and the character of the force with which we had to contend, armed as our regiment is with only pistol and saber, barring the few carbines already mentioned, it is next to impossible to encounter our foes successfully, as he is never in position where saber and pistol can be used.²³

Later in the war, Federal forces came to expect lavish amounts of arms and equipment. However, in 1862 the vast potential of the North's industrial sector had yet to be effectively tapped.

Buford's lack of weapons was not his only concern. Another practice which continued to deplete the strength of the Union cavalry was the attaching of cavalry to various infantry headquarters for escorts, provost duty, or guard duty. Because of this routine, Buford was short two of his four regiments at the critical battle near Lewis Ford on 30 August 1862.²⁴

Pope attempted to correct this problem once the campaign began. In what was a significant step in the organizational development of the Union cavalry in the eastern theater, Pope ordered the cavalry regiments consolidated into brigades. On 16 August 1862, he issued Special Order, Number 45:

V. Hereafter the cavalry of each army corps of this army will be massed and placed under command of the chief of cavalry of that corps. Commanders of army corps will be allowed to detach for duty at their own headquarters such cavalry as may be necessary for their personal escorts.

²³*Ibid.*, 1, 12, 3:617; 1, 12, 1:816.

²⁴See endnotes 46 and 47.

Companies or detachments of cavalry now on duty at division or brigade headquarters will be sent at once to report to the chief of cavalry of their respective corps.

Ten mounted men only will be allowed to each division headquarters, and five only to each brigade headquarters as orderlies. These will be obtained by requisition on the commander of the army corps to which such divisions or brigades belong.

When divisions or brigades are temporarily detached, the cavalry required for service with them will be furnished for that temporary purpose only by the commander of the army corps.

Whenever divisions or brigades thus detached return to their corps the cavalry with them will at once rejoin their proper command.²⁵

Unfortunately, Pope did not take the next logical step and unite his three cavalry brigades into one cavalry division. By this time, Lee's three cavalry brigades were operating under one commander, Major General J. E. B. Stuart. As the next section describes, Lee was able to obtain better results from his cavalry because of its consolidation under one commander.²⁶

Therefore, in the Second Manassas Campaign, Buford had command over several depleted regiments. However, the attrition of campaigning had one positive benefit, the remaining soldiers were not the green troopers of early 1862. The Union cavalry which had operated in the Valley had gained maturity and self-confidence. As one writer indicates, "the men had now become 'old campaigners.' They had learned, by that best of schools, experience, how to take care of themselves under any and all circumstances."²⁷

²⁵*Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:581.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 1, 12, 2:550. Stuart's brigades were Hampton's, Lee's, and Robertson's with fifteen battalions/regiments and two artillery batteries.

²⁷Edward P. Tobie, *History of the First Maine Cavalry* (Boston, MA: First Maine Cavalry Association, 1887), 76.

The Second Bull Run Campaign

Between 2 and 9 August 1862, Buford's Brigade was on picket duty between Barnett's Ford on the Rapidan River (just west of Rapidan Station) and the Blue Ridge Mountains. For the next two weeks, Buford and his regiments operated independently on the western, or right, flank of the Army of Virginia. The brigade was, therefore, not with Banks and the II Corps when it engaged Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain on 9 August. As Jackson's forces advanced across the Rapidan, Buford fell back toward Madison Court House and then Sperryville, keeping Pope constantly informed of enemy movements. On 12 August, Buford led the entire Brigade from Culpeper toward Rapidan Station in pursuit of Jackson's forces. He encountered Confederate stragglers and large numbers of wounded from the Cedar Mountain fight. A temporary truce to bury the dead from that battle, plus poor weather conditions, prevented Buford from maintaining contact with the enemy.²⁸

By 17 August, the Brigade had shifted east to the vicinity of Raccoon Ford. On this date, Buford ordered Colonel Thornton Brodhead to take elements of his regiment (the 1st Michigan), along with a detachment from the 5th New York, and conduct a reconnaissance across the Rapidan River toward Louisa Court House.²⁹ Brodhead crossed the Rapidan at Raccoon Ford on the night of 17 August and moved toward Verdierville. It was the Union's good fortune that J. E. B. Stuart and his staff were spending the night in the

²⁸Louis N. Boudrye, *Historic Records of the Fifth New York Cavalry, First Ira Harris Guard* (Albany, NY: S. R. Gray, 1868) 39; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 1:200-201; 2:134, 240.

²⁹Boudrye, 39.

village. On the morning of 18 August, Stuart was almost captured by the Federal cavalry. Brodhead did manage to take Stuart's adjutant, Major Norman Fitzhugh, prisoner.³⁰

Significantly, Fitzhugh was carrying two satchels filled with important dispatches, one of which detailed Lee's plans to attack Pope with the entire Army of Northern Virginia. After leaving Verdierville, Brodhead retreated back across the Rapidan at Germanna Ford. The important contents of Fitzhugh's bags were immediately sent to Culpeper and Army headquarters. This critical information convinced Pope that Lee was attempting to turn his eastern flank. Pope, therefore, decided to fall back across the Rappahannock River to a new defensive line.³¹

During this retrograde operation (between 18 and 21 August) Buford commanded the rear guard for Jesse L. Reno's division of Burnside's IX Corps, Army of the Potomac. Buford and his troopers delayed northward toward Kelly's Ford (on the Rappahannock River) with an attached force of three infantry regiments and an artillery battery. Buford now controlled forces equivalent to a small division. In a report to Pope, Reno praised Buford's success in keeping the Confederate forces at bay.³²

Once Buford had crossed to the north side of the Rappahannock, Pope ordered him to move his brigade across the rear of the entire army to Warrenton, by way of Fayetteville. After this two-day march, Buford was directed to screen the army's right (or western) flank near Waterloo Bridge.

³⁰*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:725-726.

³¹*Ibid.*, 29; See Hennessy for an excellent description of the Verdierville Raid, 45-48.

³²*Official Records*, 1, 12, 1:202.

On the afternoon of 24 August, Buford attempted to burn this bridge in order to prevent Confederate forces from using it to cross the Rappahannock River and turn the army's flank. He also scouted the area between Warrenton and Waterloo Bridge and reported to Pope that this area was free of Confederate forces.³³

On 22 August, while Buford was moving to Warrenton, Fitzhugh Lee conducted a daring cavalry raid against Pope's headquarters near Catlett's Station. The Confederate cavalry commander was able to capture papers which indicated large portions of the Army of the Potomac would join Pope within several days. In a decisive move to defeat the Army of Virginia before it could be reinforced, Lee decided to use Jackson's Corps and Stuart's cavalry to conduct a strategic envelopment around Pope's right (western) flank. With Buford at Waterloo Bridge, Jackson would have to cross the Rappahannock at Hinson's Mill Ford farther to the west. The Confederates started this maneuver on the morning of 25 August, and Jackson arrived in Salem that night. The next day, with Stuart's cavalry acting as an advance guard, Jackson cut Pope's supply line at Manassas Junction and Bristoe Station.³⁴

Buford, along with others, reported Jackson's march, but Pope believed Lee's army was moving into the Shenandoah. Buford also passed to his superiors that his brigade "is almost disorganized" because of broken down horses. However, late on the evening of 25 August, Buford sent units to scout toward "Miller's Ford" (probably Hinson's Mill Ford), Waterloo Bridge, and Salem to ensure the army's flank has not been turned. On 26 August, this

³³Boudrye, 40; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:609-610; 2:60, 263.

³⁴Boatner, 102-103.

reconnaissance allowed Buford to report to Pope that a large enemy force had already moved through White Plains toward Thoroughfare Gap.

Unfortunately, Pope apparently did not see the threat to his rear that these reports indicated.³⁵

Late on 26 August 1862, Jackson's infantry supported by Stuart's cavalryman had captured both Manassas Junction and Bristoe Station. This cut the important Orange and Alexandria Railroad which Pope's army was using as its main supply line. By midnight Pope had determined that a large Confederate force was in his rear. But he also realized that, with Lieutenant General James Longstreet's Corps to his front and most of Jackson's Corps near Manassas, Lee had split the Army of Northern Virginia. If the Army of Virginia could turn northeast and mass against Manassas using interior lines, Jackson could be defeated before Longstreet could move to support. Early on 27 August, Pope ordered his army to abandon the defensive line along the Rappahannock River and move toward Gainesville.³⁶

As the infantry of the Army of Virginia moved to attack Jackson, Buford was ordered to find Longstreet's Corps. On 26 August, McDowell (commanding III Corps) ordered Buford to leave at dawn the next day to conduct a reconnaissance toward the Blue Ridge Mountains. Colonel John Beardsley and his cavalry brigade (from the I Corps) were ordered to report to Buford at Warrenton for this mission. Beardsley's command consisted of the 4th and 9th New York and the Sixth Ohio regiments, 1st Connecticut Battalion (three companies), and two artillery pieces. Buford's force of two brigades

³⁵*Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:657, 653; 2:69.

³⁶Again, Hennessy has an excellent description of the battle for these important rail stations, 111-115; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:35, 70-71.

departed Warrenton early on 27 August and arrived at Salem about noon. Assuming Buford moved across Rappahannock Mountain and on to Orleans, his command took about six hours to cover over twenty miles. This is a good sustained movement rate, especially considering the condition of the command's horses.³⁷ The importance of the mission demanded a rapid pace; however, it was not without cost. Beardsley stated in his official report that "all along our route [to Salem my horses] were dropping down with their riders and dying."³⁸

By coincidence, while at Salem, the two brigades were located only about two miles in front of Longstreet as he marched toward Thoroughfare Gap to join Jackson. Several historians have indicated that Buford's command dismounted and made a determined stand to keep Longstreet from moving across the Bull Run Mountains. However, in reading the official reports, it is clear that this did not occur. As McDowell relayed to Pope, Buford's tasking was to "ascertain as soon as he can and as far as he can the extent of the enemy's movement toward White Plains." Beardsley's detailed account, supported by Major Charles Knox's (Commanding the 9th New York) abbreviated report, makes it clear that Buford had no intention of becoming engaged with Longstreet. Buford's intent was to have the Federal cavalry gain information on the location of the enemy and report back as quickly as possible.³⁹ As Longstreet states,

³⁷*Ibid.*, 350, 271-272, 251; see Paddy Griffith, *Battle in the Civil War, Generalship and Tactics in America, 1861-65* (Mansfield, England: Fieldbooks, 1986), 9.

³⁸*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:272.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 352, 271, 275.

A dash of several squadrons of Federal cavalry into Salem, in front of us . . . delayed our march about an hour. Not having cavalry, I was unable to ascertain the meaning of this movement: hence the delay. The cavalry retired and the march was resumed.⁴⁰

From Salem, Buford moved on to White Plains, then turned south to reach Warrenton by 2100 hours, 27 August. The return trip was apparently slowed by a large number of captured stragglers from Jackson's Corps.⁴¹

On 28 and 29 August, Buford continued to monitor and report on Longstreet's progress toward closure with Jackson, while acting as the rear guard for Brigadier General James B. Rickett's division of McDowell's III Corps. For example, on the morning of 29 August, Buford sent the following dispatch to Ricketts:

Seventeen regiments, one battery, and 500 cavalry passed through Gainesville three-quarters of an hour ago on the Centreville road. I think this division [of Longstreet's Corps] should join our forces, now engaged, at once.⁴²

Unfortunately, McDowell did not deliver this important information to Pope until late in the day. If he had, Pope may have realized that Longstreet had now joined with Jackson.⁴³

The Battle Near Lewis House

During the morning and early afternoon of 30 August 1862, Pope received various reports of Longstreet's Corps moving to attack the Army of Virginia's left (south) flank; however, he continued to ignore the

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 564.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 271-272.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 1, 12, 3:730.

⁴³Hennessey, 305.

implications of this information. Finally, Brigadier General John Reynolds, commanding the three Pennsylvania Reserve Brigades, personally went to Pope to explain the situation. Yet, again Pope remained unconvinced of any danger. However, Reynolds' report did cause the Army commander to order Buford to "take your cavalry and see if the enemy is turning our left."⁴⁴

Buford spent the remainder of the afternoon falling back in front of and reporting on Longstreet's attack, finally taking up a screening position on the south flank of the Army (Figure 9) near Lewis' Ford. At the time Buford was withdrawing back to Lewis' Ford, Brigadier General Beverly Robertson's cavalry brigade of J. E. B. Stuart's command had been given the mission of flanking Pope's retreating army. Robertson stated,

I moved my entire brigade rapidly forward in order to press [Pope's] flank, and, if possible, to intercept his retreat in the direction of Centreville by way of the Stone Bridge [across Bull Run].⁴⁵

Between 1600 and 1700 hours, Robertson's lead regiment, the 2nd Virginia under Colonel Thomas Munford, detected a company of Federal cavalry moving across Lewis House Hill. Munford immediately ordered his front squadron to attack the enemy cavalryman. Robertson did not realize that his unit had encountered the advance guard of Buford's Brigade. Munford's advance was the initial move in what became a major action between the two cavalry brigades.

⁴⁴Ruggles to Porter, 10 June 1877, Porter Papers, quoted in Hennessy, 329.

⁴⁵*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:746.

Buford's Brigade at Lewis Ford

As the battle near Lewis Ford began on the afternoon of 30 August, John Buford only had two of his normal cavalry regiments to engage Robertson's forces. The remaining two regiments were on detached service and were not with the brigade. Fortunately, Buford had temporary control of the 4th New York Cavalry Regiment from John Beardsley's cavalry brigade of the I Corps (Figure 10).⁴⁶

The 12 companies of the 5th New York were one of the two regiments normally with Buford. However, on 27 and 28 August, the 5th Regiment was ordered to detached service as orderlies and escorts. On the 27th, Companies I, K, and L were instructed to act as escorts for Major General Heintzelman (commanding the III Corps, Army of the Potomac) while Company B reported to General Banks' headquarters. On 28 August, the balance of the regiment was made escorts or orderlies for General Pope.⁴⁷

The 1st Vermont was the second of Buford's missing regiments. Its location on 30 August could not be determined with precision from any available sources, but the regiment was apparently not with Buford. No eyewitness account makes any reference to the 1st Vermont taking part in the battle. For example, both Colonel Harman and Colonel Munford, commanders of the 12th and 2nd Virginia Cavalry Regiments, respectively, state in their reports that Robertson's Brigade had engaged only the 1st Michigan, 1st West Virginia, and 4th New York regiments. In addition, the casualty reports for the 1st Vermont show only nine losses from 16 August to 2 September 1862.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 268,272,274.

⁴⁷Boudrye, 40.

This seems much too low if the regiment had been engaged at Lewis Ford, since the three Union regiments which were at the battle suffered between 64 and 118 casualties in the same period. It is likely that the 1st Vermont was with the bulk of the Union cavalry in reserve near the stone bridge across Bull Run (Figure 9).⁴⁸

Without the 5th New York or 1st Vermont, Buford was left with the 1st Michigan and 1st (West) Virginia Regiments. Colonel Thornton Brodhead's 1st Michigan was probably Buford's most combat-capable unit. Brodhead's daring raid to Verdiersville had added to the *esprit de corps* of a unit which had already been hardened by the earlier Valley Campaign. The dashing Brodhead was being compared by his men to the brilliant leader of Stonewall Jackson's cavalry in the Shenandoah Valley -- Brigadier General Turner Ashby.⁴⁹ If the total number men killed during the war is any indication of the fortitude of a unit, the 1st Michigan must be counted as one of the most stalwart cavalry regiments. Among cavalry regiments, only the 1st Maine had more personnel killed during the course of the war. The 1st Michigan

⁴⁸Official Records, 1, 12, 2:748, 752, 274, 253, 251; John B. Fay, "Cavalry Fight at Second Manassas," *Confederate Veteran* 23 (June 1915): 263-264. A member of the 1st Vermont was at Lewis Ford; S. A. Clark of Company F gave an account of the action in an article written over 25 years after the engagement. This seems to indicate that the 1st Vermont was at Lewis Ford, but Clark was detached from his regiment on the brigade staff as the Post Sergeant (the mail clerk). "Second Bull Run, The Cavalry in that Memorable Fight," *National Tribune* (21 June 1888). George Benedict indicates that the 1st Vermont was likely behind the infantry near Beardsley's Brigade. He also confirms that two of the regiment's ten companies were not on the battlefield of 2nd Bull Run; these units had been cut off while on picket at Kelly Ford and did not rejoin their regiment until early September. George G. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War, A History of the Part Taken by the Vermont Soldiers and Sailors in the War for the Union, 1861-65*, 2 volumes (Burlington, VT: The Free Press Association, 1886-1888), 2:537-538, 574.

⁴⁹Hennessey, 42.

later become part of Custer's famous Michigan Brigade which sustained the highest number of total killed of any Union cavalry brigade.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, the 1st (West) Virginia Cavalry Regiment was not of the same caliber as the 1st Michigan. In fact, in May 1862, Major General Shields described the Regiment as "good for nothing." During Jackson's Valley Campaign the 1st Virginia earned the scorn of many Union soldiers. This was mainly because of the Regiment's actions during the engagement at Port Republic where it broke and ran at the first sight of the enemy.⁵¹

The 1st Michigan Regiment had the common structure of twelve companies in three battalions. However, exact strength figures for the regiment on 30 August 1862, could not be found. Colonel Munford states that the 1st Michigan and the 4th New York had approximately 800 troops between them (four times his own strength of about 200). Subtracting the 130 personnel in the 4th New York (see below) would give a strength of 670 for Brodhead's regiment, but this seems high. Based on known strength returns from June 1862, and reducing this figure because of attrition, a more likely on-hand strength for the regiment on 30 August would be approximately 510.⁵²

⁵⁰William F. Fox, *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War, 1861-1865* (Albany, NY: Brandow Printing Co., 1898; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1985); 6, 120.

⁵¹*Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:208; 1:688, 698.

⁵²Fox, 376; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:748; The returns for the Department of the Shenandoah for 16 June 1862 (at the end of Jackson's Valley Campaign) show a present for duty strength for the eight companies of the 1st Michigan with General Banks, of only 444. This is about 55 personnel per company. By 24 June, the companies of the 1st Michigan which had been on detached service in the Capitol area had joined the regiment bringing the unit up to twelve companies. Assuming an attrition of about 10 percent per month, and that the four companies joining the regiment from Washington also averaged about fifty-five troopers per

The organization of the 1st (West) Virginia was unlike any of the other regiments under Buford's command. This regiment was organized in July 1861 under General Order Number 15 of 4 May 1861. This General Order allowed cavalry regiments to be accepted into active service with fewer than twelve companies, and the 1st Virginia initially had only eight companies in four squadrons. The regiment maintained this organization until at least May 1862.⁵³ By August 1862, an additional company had likely been organized giving the regiment a total of nine companies. Unfortunately, not all of the Regiment was with Buford, since at least three companies (C, E, and L) were assigned to Brigadier General Milroy's independent brigade.⁵⁴ The remaining six companies with Buford's brigade probably contained a total of approximately 100 troopers.⁵⁵

company, gives an aggregate for the regiment on 30 August of about 510; see *Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:399-400, 429.

⁵³Fox, 490; *Official Records*, 3, 1:152; 1, 12, 3:208, 309, 311.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 2:251; At least two of these companies were probably the same ones which had been operating away from the bulk of the regiment with Brigadier General Jacob Cox's District of the Kanawha, see *Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:309. As is pointed out in the text, by August 1862, a Company L is part of the Regiment. This would seem to indicate that the Regiment had eleven companies (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L) by this time, but this may not have been the case. During the Gettysburg Campaign the 1st (West) Virginia had a Company M and N but not an I or K. Apparently, as new companies were raised after the first eight, they were lettered from L (i.e. L, M, and N, omitting I and K). See John W. Busey and David G. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, NJ: Longstreet House, 1986), 107.

⁵⁵It is likely that the six companies of the 1st (West) Virginia with Buford were those which had been operating under the old Department the Rappahannock, see *Official Records*, 1, 12, 3:311. Colonel Samuel Carroll, under whose command these six companies operated during the engagement at Port Republic on 8 June 1862, indicates that the 1st Virginia had 150 present for duty before the battle; see *Official Records*, 1, 12, 1:698. Assuming about ten percent losses during the Regiments' rout at this fight and an additional ten percent attrition in each month until the action at Lewis Ford, a total of

Information on the size and organization of the 4th New York, at the time of the battle at Lewis Ford, is readily available. Like the 1st Michigan, the 4th New York was a twelve company regiment. Further, Colonel Nazer, the commander of the 4th indicates in his after-action report that he had approximately 130 troopers present for duty during the battle. Buford was probably comfortable having the 4th New York under his command, since this regiment was one of those which had joined Buford for his reconnaissance to Salem and White Plains.⁵⁶

So, as his brigade entered combat, Buford had two regiments he could count on -- the 1st Michigan and the 4th New York-- even though Colonel Nazer's troopers were few in number. Unfortunately, his third regiment, the 1st (West) Virginia, was both small and of questionable combat effectiveness.

Robertson's Brigade

Like Buford, Brigadier General Beverly H. Robertson did not have all of his units with him during the fight near Lewis Ford (Figure 11). Robertson's brigade normally had five cavalry regiments or battalions and a supporting artillery battery. However, both the 17th Virginia Cavalry Battalion and Chew's Horse Artillery Battery were absent. On 29 and 30 August, the 17th Battalion was detached from the Brigade to support Jackson's Corps. Chew's Horse Artillery Battery, which normally operated with Robertson's Brigade, was west of Warrenton with Jackson's trains awaiting

approximately 100 cavalymen would have been present in the 1st Virginia on 30 August 1862.

⁵⁶Boudrye, 18-22; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:274.

ammunition. General Robertson had to make do with his remaining units – the 2nd, 6th, 7th, and 12th Virginia Cavalry Regiments.⁵⁷

Fortunately for the Confederates, all of these units were seasoned veterans of Jackson's Valley Campaign. In fact, the 7th and 12th Regiments, the 17th Battalion, and Chew's Battery had all been part of Turner Ashby's famous 7th Cavalry Regiment (also known as the Laurel Brigade). By June 1862, the 7th Regiment consisted of 27 companies or batteries and was much too large. After Brigadier General Ashby's death, on 6 June 1862, Stonewall Jackson ordered the reorganization of the 7th Regiment. The new 7th Regiment was reduced to ten companies. Ten companies formed the new 12th Regiment, and the remaining companies formed the 17th Battalion or were transferred to other cavalry units.⁵⁸

Even though, with four regiments, the Confederates had one more regiment of cavalry on the battlefield than Buford, Robertson apparently had fewer men in the saddle during the fight. Colonel Thomas Munford, commanding the 2nd Virginia Cavalry, indicates in his report for the period 26 to 30 September 1862, that he had approximately 200 men in action at the engagement near Lewis House.⁵⁹ Hard marching and lack of supplies had

⁵⁷Richard L. Armstrong, *11th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1989), 13; George M. Neese, *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (New York and Washington: Neale Publishing Co., 1911; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1988), 106.

⁵⁸Michael P. Musick, *6th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1990), 10-16; Richard L. Armstrong, *7th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1993), 37.

⁵⁹*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:748-749. The figure of about 200 was derived from the 163 personnel reported in action on 2 September, plus the 35 killed and seriously wounded from the fight on 30 August (163 + 35 = 198). It is assumed that the 12 troopers who were reported as slightly wounded from the fight with Buford had returned to duty by 2 September, and were included in the 163 figure.

reduced the 7th Virginia to only about 80 men.⁶⁰ Captain William N. McDonald, the ordnance officer of the Laurel Brigade, states in his history of that unit that the 12th Cavalry had about 120 present on 4 September 1862. If the losses from the fight at Lewis Ford are added to this figure, then the 12th would have entered the fight with roughly 125 troopers.⁶¹ In September, after the Battle of Sharpsburg, the 6th Cavalry was engaged with Union cavalry at Ashby's Gap through the Blue Ridge Mountains. At this time the Regiment had an effective strength of about 130. It is likely, therefore, that the 6th had about 140 to 150 troopers in the field on 30 August.⁶² Therefore, Robertson was able to put approximately 550 battle-tested veterans onto the field of action against Buford's forces.

The Initial Fight

As pointed out earlier, Robertson's Brigade had been ordered to move in the direction of the Stone Bridge over Bull Run. The Brigade advanced in march column with the 2nd Virginia Regiment leading.

⁶⁰*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:751-752; Fay, 264. As Trooper Fay points out, Captain Samuel B. Myers (from Company C) commanded the 7th Virginia at Lewis Ford; Colonel William Jones was away from the unit. To give some idea of the depleted nature of the regiment, Fay indicates that some companies could only field five to eight men. Given the small size of the unit's companies, it is probable nine or ten of the 7th Virginia's companies were at Lewis Ford. However, Fay mentions only companies E and F, in addition to Myers' Company C. See Armstrong, *7th Virginia Cavalry*, pages 199 and 143 for short biographies of Myers and Fay respectively.

⁶¹William N. McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade: Originally the Ashby Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia and Chew's Battery* (Baltimore, MD: Sun Job Printing Office, 1907; Reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., 1987), 90; *Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:752.

⁶²Musick, 23. The figure of 130 allows for attrition of about ten percent in the earlier part of September.

Munford's 2nd was followed by the 12th and 7th Regiments with Harman's 6th bringing up the rear. At about 1700 hours, as the 2nd Virginia moved onto Lewis House Hill, Munford encountered Buford's advance guard or outposts (about a company-size force). He immediately had his first squadron, under Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Watts, charge the enemy force (Figure 12). As Watts and his squadron came over the crest of Lewis House Hill, he was able to see Buford's brigade deployed in column of regiments. Realizing that discretion was in order, Watts halted so that the remainder of the 2nd Virginia could come up to his support. Munford quickly formed his regiment into line of battle, but it was apparent that his 200 troopers would not be able to defeat Buford's force alone. He, therefore started to have the regiment fall back to the rest of the brigade. Buford's actions, however, prevented this; the two forces were only a short distance apart, and the Confederates could distinctly hear Buford ordering his lead regiments into a charge.⁶³

General Buford had not had long to determine how to respond to the approach of Robertson's Brigade. Lieutenant Colonel Nazer and the 4th New York had joined Buford only a few minutes before Munford's approach. Nazer had been patrolling further west than Buford and had detected Robertson's approach. After informing Buford of the approaching Confederates, Nazer formed his regiment in line behind the 1st Michigan. With his staff, Buford then took command of Brodhead's troopers and ordered sabers to be drawn in readiness for a charge. Before Munford could withdraw, Buford sounded "forward, trot."⁶⁴

⁶³*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:748.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 274; M. D. Steward, "Death of Colonel Brodhead," *The National Tribune*, 15 October 1885; Myles W. Keogh, *Biographical Sketch of John Buford*, John Buford Papers, US Military Academy, 1.

Munford did not want to receive Buford's charge while changing his regiment's facing, so he ordered an immediate countercharge against the oncoming Union force. Unlike the Buford's cavalrymen, however, the 2nd Virginia went forward with pistols, shotguns, or carbines at the ready. The momentum of the Confederate charge carried many of Munford's troopers through the 1st Michigan and into the 4th New York. One observer described the resulting fight as one in which "the shooting and running, cursing and cutting that followed [the charge could] not be understood except by an eye-witness."⁶⁵

Outnumbered approximately three to one, the 2nd Virginia troopers scattered in every direction after the brief but destructive melee. Even Colonel Munford had his horse killed and was unhorsed by a saber stroke. As John Fay of the 7th Virginia arrived at the site of this initial clash, he recounted the following vivid description:

The dead and wounded of both sides lay scattered about, riderless horses were dashing here and there, and the deep gulleys which frequent rains had cut into the hillside were filled at places with men and horses, struggling to extricate themselves. It had evidently been a fierce and bloody hand-to-hand encounter, though of brief duration.⁶⁶

After Buford's defeat of the 2nd Virginia, he recalled the 1st Michigan and the 4th New York and had them reform behind the 1st (West) Virginia. Buford had kept this regiment in reserve to the rear of his other regiments for just this purpose. However, the Union troopers did not have long to regroup before Robertson's remaining regiments again attacked.⁶⁷

⁶⁵Steward.

⁶⁶Fay, 264.

⁶⁷*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:752.

The Final Phase

Leaving the 6th Virginia in reserve, Robertson quickly moved the 12th and 7th Virginia into a brigade line with what remained of the 2nd Virginia. He then ordered an advance toward the 1st (West) Virginia (Figure 13). As the Virginians approached the Union cavalymen, Robertson ordered the Confederates to charge.⁶⁸

The sight of this thundering mass must have been too much for the Union regiment, since they apparently broke and fled before any contact had been made. The momentum of the Confederates then carried the fleeing 1st (West) Virginia back into the 1st Michigan and the 4th New York. These units had not had time to completely reform, and could not withstand Robertson's new attack. Buford's entire brigade was then forced back in disorder across Bull Run. The Confederate cavalry pursued, but darkness forced Robertson's regiments to fall back to rejoin the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia.⁶⁹

While making a desperate attempt to rally their units, both Colonel Brodhead and Buford were wounded. Thornton Brodhead was captured and died the next day. Buford had received a shotgun blast to the knee. The wound was not mortal, but it was serious and bothered Buford for the rest of his life. These officers were not the only casualties on the Union side. Every officer on Buford's staff had either been wounded or their horses had been killed.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Fay, 264.

⁶⁹*Official Records*, 1, 12, 2:752.

⁷⁰Keogh, 1; Fay, 264.

Assessment of Buford at Lewis Ford

Although the fight at Lewis Ford had ended in defeat for Buford, he and his troopers had generally fought as well as could be expected. The significant exception to this was the poor showing of the 1st (West) Virginia. But even some of Buford's foes thought highly of his actions. Lieutenant Colonel William Blackford, J.E.B. Stuart's adjutant, makes it clear what he thought of Buford's performance in the initial phase of the action:

This was the first time their cavalry had ever made any show of resistance and the sight of the charges and sabre (sic) fighting in the clear, open fields was very fine. Munford made a mistake in beginning his charge too soon and got his ranks opened too much before the shock came, while the enemy advanced at a trot and only took the charge pace when within a hundred yards of the meeting; his ranks were then solid and Munford's opened, strung-out force was dashed aside.⁷¹

If Buford had had one or both of his detached regiments, or if the 1st (West) Virginia been more resolute in its actions, the tactical outcome of the engagement at Lewis Ford might have been different. However, this was not to be. But, even though the fight at Lewis Ford was a tactical defeat for Buford, at the operational level the Union cavalry's stand at Bull Run had a positive effect. By the time Buford engaged Robertson, Pope's army was withdrawing across Bull Run in the face of major attacks by the infantry of Jackson and Longstreet. If the Confederate cavalry could have moved into the Union rear as had been planned, the Army of Virginia could have been completely routed and destroyed. Although much of Buford's command had

⁷¹William W. Blackford, *War Years with Jeb Stuart* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945; reprint, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 134.

been sacrificed, the Union troopers had purchased enough time for the hard pressed Union infantry to fall back toward Centreville.

The Antietam and Fredericksburg Campaigns

Primarily because of his wound at Lewis House, Buford gave up command on 7 September 1862. However, by 10 September 1862, he was well enough for Major General McClellan to appoint him as the chief of cavalry of the Army of the Potomac. In this capacity, Buford acted as the primary staff officer for cavalry matters within the headquarters of the Army during Lee's first invasion of the North. Unfortunately, the assignment had no command authority over the cavalry of the Army. Buford would have to be content with relaying McClellan's orders to Brigadier General Alfred Pleasonton, the commander of the Cavalry Division.⁷²

Certainly Pleasonton enjoyed more authority than Buford, but even his control over much of the cavalry within the Army of the Potomac was limited. McClellan had allowed a return to the normal practice of attaching cavalry to various infantry headquarters for escorts, provost duty, or guard duty. The equivalent of about three regiments (at least thirty-four companies or twenty percent of the cavalry of the army) were assigned to such duties and were not under Pleasonton's control.⁷³

After McClellan turned over command of the Army of the Potomac to Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, Buford remained the Chief of Cavalry. He was in this post during the Fredericksburg Campaign. On 31 December 1862, both Buford and Burnside were temporarily in Washington, D. C., to testify in

⁷²*Official Records*, 1, 19, 2:242; 334.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1:169-180.

the trial of Major General Fitz John Porter. Buford remained in the Capital, detailed to court martial duty, until late in February 1863.⁷⁴

The Chancellorsville Campaign

The new year not only brought a new commander to the Army of the Potomac, it also saw Buford's return to lead a cavalry brigade. On 25 January 1863, Major General Joe Hooker became the third commander of the Union Army in the east. One of his first acts was to reorganize the Army of the Potomac, particularly the cavalry. For the first time the cavalry would have a corps organization of its own.⁷⁵

The Reorganization of the Cavalry

If Major General John Pope was responsible for the first step in the consolidation of the Union cavalry, Joe Hooker completed the task. Hooker's General Order Number 6, dated 5 February 1863, states,

III. The cavalry of the army will be consolidated into one corps, under the command of Brigadier-General Stoneman, who will make the necessary assignments for detached duty.⁷⁶

Major General George Stoneman was quick to organize the new Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The Corps consisted of three divisions each of two brigades. Alfred Pleasonton was appointed commander of the First Division, while the Second Division was lead by William Averell. Finally, the Corps' Third Division was under David Gregg. In addition to these three

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 1, 12, 2 supplement: 1002-1010; 1, 25, 2:93.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 1, 25, 2:3.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 51.

divisions, the Corps also had one separate reserve brigade. It was this last brigade which John Buford was assigned to command.⁷⁷

It is interesting to note that only Pleasonton was senior to Buford (and only by eleven days), so it may seem odd that Buford was not given command of one of the divisions.⁷⁸ Actually, Buford's command was considered to be the equivalent of the divisions in all but name. For example, in size Buford's "brigade" had approximately the same number of subordinate regiments as the Cavalry Corps' divisions.⁷⁹ Also, the Reserve Brigade contained all five of the Army's Regular cavalry regiments; the three divisions were made up of volunteer units. The Regulars were considered the most combat-effective cavalry regiments in the Corps. The Reserve Brigade was truly Hooker's 'Guard' cavalry.

The Stoneman Raid

The Army of the Potomac spent most of the early months of 1863 reorganizing and refitting. Although Averell's Second Division saw combat at Kelly's Ford (on the Rappahannock River) on 17 March 1863, the rest of the Cavalry Corps spent most of its time training or on picket duty watching for possible raids by Stuart's cavalry. By late April 1863, "Fighting Joe" Hooker was ready to move against Lee's defensive line near Fredericksburg. In a technically sound operational move, Hooker planned to conduct a wide

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 71-72.

⁷⁸Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 13, 53, 187, 373.

⁷⁹The number of regiments in each unit were: First Division, 7; Second Division, 7; Third Division, 6; and Buford's Reserve Brigade, 6. Buford's total includes the 6th Pennsylvania which was not technically under the Reserve Brigade but habitually operated with it.

envelopment of the Army of Northern Virginia with his infantry by way of Kelly's Ford. With the Army of the Potomac threatening his lines of communications with Richmond, Lee would be forced to fall back from the Rappahannock. The move by Hooker's infantry was planned for late April 1863.⁸⁰

To support this flanking move, Hooker ordered Stoneman to cross the Rappahannock on 13 April (two weeks ahead of the infantry) and conduct raids on the lines of communications of the Army of Northern Virginia. Stoneman was to take most of the cavalry with him, while only a brigade under Pleasonton would remain with the Army of the Potomac's main body. These raids could have had a dramatic impact on the Chancellorsville campaign if they had occurred as planned. However, because of very heavy rains, which made the Rappahannock unfordable, the Cavalry Corps did not cross until 29 April. This was the same day the infantry moved across. The result was that the cavalry raids did not have time to have any impact before the decisive infantry battle, and only served to deprive Hooker of his cavalry.⁸¹

This paper will not go into the details of the Stoneman Raid, primarily because Buford's part in it was minor. Although several detachments of Union cavalry went rampaging around central Virginia and caused much concern in Richmond, the Reserve Brigade remained in the area between Kelly's Ford and Louisa Court House (Figure 3).

⁸⁰See Boatner, 451, 136-140 for an excellent synopsis of the Kelly's Ford fight and the Chancellorsville Campaign.

⁸¹Based on Boatner, 803.

On 29 April 1863, the Regular Reserve Brigade crossed the Rappahannock River at Kelly's Ford. On the morning of 30 April, Buford pushed his men to the south to find a way across the Rapidan. After finding several fords impassable, the Brigade finally crossed at Raccoon Ford on the morning of 1 May. By 2 May, Buford's regiments had arrived in the vicinity of Louisa Court House. For the next several days Buford sent detachments out to raid the Virginia countryside within about fifteen miles of Louisa. They burned bridges, cut telegraph lines , and destroyed railroad equipment. By 6 May, the Reserve Brigade's mission was considered completed, and Buford moved to the north. The Union troopers crossed the Rapidan early on 7 May at Raccoon Ford. On 8 May, the Brigade again used Kelly's Ford to move to the north side of the Rappahannock River.⁸²

The crossing of the Rappahannock ended Buford's part in the Stoneman Raid. Once across the River, the Reserve Brigade went back to its normal routine of picket duty between Fredericksburg and Rappahannock Station. The Brigade had endured several weeks of very hard campaigning and, although the raid had little lasting impact, it had served to further the level of experience within the Union cavalrymen.

The end of the Raid was also the end of Buford's time as a brigade commander. Within a month, he would move up to lead a new division in the Cavalry Corps.

⁸²*Official Records*, 1, 25, 1:1087-1095.

CHAPTER 3

BRANDY STATION

Robert E. Lee Takes the Offensive

By the end of the Battle of Chancellorsville, Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had repulsed two determined Federal attempts to penetrate Confederate defensive positions near Fredericksburg. Not wanting to wait for a third Union attempt to march on Richmond, Lee planned once again to take his forces on the offense. After consulting with President Jefferson Davis and Secretary of War James Seddon, Lee decided that the Army of Northern Virginia would advance up the Shenandoah Valley and drive into Maryland and Pennsylvania in an invasion of the North.

By early June 1863, Lee began moving units to the northwest from Fredericksburg in preparation for the march into the Union. By this time the Army of Northern Virginia had been reorganized following the death of Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville. The Army now consisted of Lieutenant General James Longstreet's I Corps, Lieutenant General Richard Ewell's II Corps, and Lieutenant General A. P. Hill's III Corps. These three corps contained all of the Confederate infantry. Stuart's cavalry had now been expanded to six brigades. By 8 June, all of these forces were in the Culpeper area with the exception of Hill's Corps which had remained at Fredericksburg, and Jenkin's Cavalry Brigade which was operating in the Valley.¹

¹Mark M. Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary*, rev. ed. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1988), 332.

Pleasanton Takes Command of the Cavalry Corps

At the conclusion of the Chancellorsville Campaign, changes also occurred in the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac. By 22 May 1863, Brigadier General Alfred Pleasanton assumed the temporary leadership of the Corps.² General Stoneman had requested and received a leave of absence because of poor health.³ With Pleasanton's absence from the First Division, Colonel Benjamin F. Davis moved up to head that unit. In addition, by this time Colonel Alfred N. Duffie had replaced Averell as the commander of the Second Division.⁴

Buford must have felt some disappointment that he had not been Hooker's choice to take Stoneman's position, but as has been pointed out, Pleasanton was senior by eleven days. Although Buford would not live to know it, Hooker in later years indicated that John Buford would have been the better selection for commander of the Corps.⁵

During May 1863, the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac settled back into its normal routine of watching the fords and bridges over the Rappahannock River. The Reserve Brigade moved to Dumfries, and the First

²U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 25, part 2:513. Cited hereafter as *Official Records*.

³*Official Records*, vol. 27, 3:11.

⁴*Ibid.*, vol. 25, 2:529, 533.

⁵Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), 44.

Division remained near Fredericksburg. Brigadier General David Gregg was placed in command of both his own Third Division and the Second Division and ordered to Bealeton. From there he could monitor the crossing sites in the vicinity of Rappahannock Station. On 28 May, Gregg sent the following alarming dispatch to Pleasonton who forwarded it to Hooker.

A scouting party, just in from Sulphur Springs, reports Stuart camped 4 miles from Culpeper, on the road to the Springs; Fitzhugh Lee, W. H. F. Lee, Hampton, and Field at Jefferson. Rebel scouts numerous about Warrenton and the Springs. The forces represented as being very large.⁶

If this report was factual, it meant that Stuart had already slipped across the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers and had flanked Gregg's forces. Stuart would also be in a position to raid into the rear of Hooker's Army or to cover any movement of Lee's infantry up the Valley. As time would show, Gregg's information was not accurate.

The Battle of Brandy Station

Hooker was obviously concerned by this report. He immediately ordered steps to be taken to have any Confederate units which had crossed the upper Rappahannock forced back to the south. To accomplish this Hooker wanted to primarily use the Cavalry Corps. By late morning on the same day that he had received Gregg's intelligence Hooker directed Major General George G. Meade (commanding the V Corps) to have one of his infantry divisions relieve Gregg's cavalymen of picket duty along the Rappahannock. Again on 28 May, in correspondence with Pleasonton, Hooker ordered that Buford was "without delay" to take his brigade and join Gregg's forces at Bealeton. It is interesting to note that Hooker directed that Buford was, "by

⁶*Official Records.*, vol. 25, 2:536.

virtue of his rank, to assume command of all the cavalry forces operating in that district of country." Buford now commanded all of the Cavalry Corps except the First Division.⁷

The Initial Moves

The mission which Pleasonton ordered John Buford to carry out was rather daunting considering the forces which Buford had available and the fact that he would be moving against several thousand of Stuart's cavalymen.

On arriving at Bealeton, should you find yourself with sufficient force, you will drive the enemy out of his camp near Culpeper and across the Rapidan, destroying the bridge at that point.

The advance of the enemy's cavalry in the vicinity of Warrenton may have for its object to conceal a movement in force up the Valley. Spare no effort to ascertain the true object of the movement.⁸

It seems Buford thought Pleasonton somewhat out of touch with the situation, since his reply to his chief was the rather cryptic, "Your dispatch has been received. I'll do my best." It is interesting to speculate, in light of his reputation as a glory seeker, why Pleasonton did not command so large and important an operation himself.⁹

It was quickly apparent that Buford would do his usual best in gathering the wanted intelligence, but he would do it in the face of several major obstacles. First, Pleasonton proceeded to ignore the fact that he had placed Buford in command of all of the cavalry forces in the upper

⁷*Ibid.*, 2:534-537.

⁸*Ibid.*, 2:538.

⁹*Ibid.*, The famous quote concerning Pleasonton's reputation was that he was "pure and simple a newspaper humbug," Fairfax Downey, *Clash of Cavalry* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959; reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., 1987), 50.

Rappahannock area and made requests directly to Gregg. More troublesome to Buford, however, was a lack of supplies. This was made worse when Mosby's Partisan Rangers raided Buford's supply line. Finally, Brigadier General James Barnes, who commanded the First Division of the V Corps and was to have relieved the cavalry from picket duty, refused to release one of Buford's brigades. However, even with the distraction of Hooker constantly demanding information, within three days Buford was able to systematically develop an accurate intelligence picture in the area of the upper Rappahannock River.¹⁰

On 1 June 1863, Buford forwarded to Hooker the results of the zone reconnaissance which the cavalry had completed late on 31 May:

A reconnaissance returned late yesterday, satisfying me that there are no rebel troops on this side of the river, save those who have been here all winter. Sulphur Springs, Waterloo, and Orleans were visited yesterday. Another command penetrated as far as Gainesville, returning by New Baltimore and Warrenton. Nothing was heard except that some small parties belonging to Mosby were seen by Negroes a few days since.¹¹

So Buford determined that as of late May there were no major Confederate forces threatening the Army's flank or rear. However, the number of reports reaching Hooker concerning an impending movement by Lee around the right flank of the Army of the Potomac were increasing. Once again, Hooker turned to Buford to gather information on Lee's intentions. On 2 June, Hooker passed orders directly to Buford instructing him to, "aid in fixing the locality and numbers of the enemy's cavalry especially, with a view to our future movements." Since Stuart's cavalry would play a pivotal role in any new Rebel

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 2:565,571-572,579,

¹¹*Ibid.*, 2:593.

offensive, Hooker had determined that the location of the enemy horseman would provide important clues to Lee's intent.¹²

Characteristic of Buford, he obtained the information required by his Army Commander in an expeditious manner. On 5 June, Buford passed the following intelligence to the Cavalry Corps Headquarters:

I have just received information, which I consider reliable, that all of the available cavalry of the Confederacy is in Culpeper County. Stuart, the two Lees, Robertson, Jenkins, and Jones are all there. Robertson came from North Carolina, Jenkins from Kanawha, and Jones from the Valley. Jones arrived at Culpeper on the 3d, after the others. Since the Chancellorsville fight, their cavalry has been very much increased. . . . My informant—a refugee from Madison County—says Stuart has 20,000.¹³

Although Buford's intelligence was not entirely accurate, particularly concerning the strength of Stuart, he was correct in stating that the Confederate cavalry was massing in the Culpeper area. Only Jenkins Brigade had not actually arrived in the vicinity of Culpeper.

On 6 June, Hooker again informed Buford he was concerned about a report of large numbers of Confederate cavalry operating near Jefferson on the north side of the Rappahannock River. An exasperated Buford passed to General Butterfield (Hooker's Chief of Staff) the rather blunt reply that, "[Hooker's] information is incorrect." Buford likely felt that he had already made clear that the Confederate cavalry was located near Culpeper, and he would have immediately passed word of any large scale enemy movement across the Rappahannock River. To strengthen his report about the lack of Rebel units on the north side of the River, Buford reminded Army Headquarters that he had a large force of cavalry patrolling the Jefferson

¹²*Ibid.*, 2:528,531,595.

¹³*Ibid.*, vol. 27,3:8.

area. In addition, he passed on to Pleasonton that, "cannon firing was heard toward Culpeper. I suppose it was a salute, as I was told Stuart was to have had [on 5 June] an inspection of his whole force." This information was entirely correct; Stuart had that day in fact held a grand review of his entire cavalry force near Culpeper Court House.¹⁴

Buford's information had finally convinced Hooker that the vast majority of Stuart's cavalry truly was near Culpeper. Now galvanized into action, Hooker wrote Major General Halleck on the afternoon of 6 June 1863, concerning his plans:

I am determined, if practicable, to break [the accumulation of Stuart's cavalry near Culpeper] up in its incipency. I shall send all my cavalry against them, stiffened by about 3,000 infantry. It will require until the morning of the 9th for my forces to gain their positions, and at daylight on that day it is my intention to attack them in their camps.¹⁵

From this correspondence with Halleck, and his more detailed orders to Pleasonton, it is clear that Hooker's intent was for the Union cavalry to attack and disable Stuart. After the Union cavalry had failed to destroy Stuart during the Battle at Brandy Station, Pleasonton claimed Hooker's orders had only required him to make a reconnaissance in force in the direction of Culpeper.¹⁶

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 12,14; George M. Neese, *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (New York and Washington, D.C.: Neale Publishing Co., 1911; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1988), 166-167.

¹⁵*Official Records*, 1:33.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 3:27-28.

The Cavalry Corps' Plan of Attack

Although there was apparently some confusion between Hooker and his Cavalry Corps commander as to what the specific mission would be, after the cavalry crossed the Rappahannock, Pleasonton quickly organized his available forces for the undertaking. On the same day that Hooker telegraphed Halleck of his intention to attack Stuart, Pleasonton formed the Cavalry Corps into two wings. One wing, commanded by Buford, consisted of the Reserve Brigade, along with the First Cavalry Division, and an ad hoc infantry brigade under Brigadier General Adelbert Ames. The other command, consisting of the Second and Third Cavalry Divisions and a further brigade of infantry, was under General Gregg.¹⁷

By 8 June 1863, Pleasonton had issued orders for the operation to his two subordinate commanders. His plan called for a double envelopment of Stuart's cavalry in the vicinity of Culpeper (Figure 14). Gregg's force would cross the Rappahannock River at Kelly's Ford while Buford and his units would cross further to the northwest at Beverly's Ford. The initial crossings were to be made as close as possible to dawn on 9 June. Once across the River Pleasonton planned to have the two infantry brigades move immediately toward Brandy Station and combine into one small division under his control. The two cavalry wings would also make contact at Brandy Station, and would then advance in front of the infantry in a drive in the direction of Culpeper. As Pleasonton's forces approached Culpeper, the two wings were to envelop the Confederates from the north and south. Pleasonton also made provisions to have his rear and southern flank covered. Five hundred infantrymen from

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 15-16; 1:168-170, 1043-44.

Meade's V Corps would hold Kelly's Ford. In addition, Gregg was directed to picket or watch the Rapidan crossing sites.¹⁸

Pleasanton's plan was a sound one as long as Stuart's units remained concentrated near Culpeper. As the Union cavalry found, on the morning of 9 June, that was not the case. As late as 8 June, Stuart and the entire Cavalry Division of the Army of Northern Virginia had been just east of Culpeper Court House conducting a grand review for General Lee. However, at the conclusion of this parade, Stuart deployed his brigades further east to picket the Rappahannock River and to have them ready to cross the River the following day. Stuart's cavalry was to move east of the Blue Ridge Mountains to cover the eastern flank of the Confederate infantry as it moved toward Maryland along the Shenandoah Valley. However, Pleasanton's early morning attack on 9 June 1863, preempted this move.¹⁹

To maintain security, Buford waited until 1700 hours on 8 June before moving near the north side of Beverly's Ford. Under cover of darkness the movement of the Union cavalry went undetected, but the Buford's regiments did not arrive in their positions until about midnight. Buford's troopers did not have an agreeable night, since no cook fires were allowed and few got

¹⁸*Ibid.*, vol. 51, 1:1047. In various sources Beverly's Ford is also called Beverly Ford.

¹⁹Henry B. McClellan, *The Life and Campaigns of Major General J. E. B. Stuart* (Boston and New York: 1885; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: The Blue and Gray Press, 1993), 261-263; Neese, 169-170; William W. Blackford, *War Years with Jeb Stuart*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945; reprint, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 212-213.

much sleep. Between 0200 and 0300 the various units mounted up, and t quietly began to move toward the Ford.²⁰

The Organization of the Right Wing

Buford's or the Right Wing of the Cavalry Corps consisted of about half of Pleasonton's total cavalry strength even though the Wing only contained one of the Corps' three cavalry divisions. The addition of Buford' own Reserve Brigade, which was almost the same size as a division, added significantly to the number of troopers under Buford's command. Because of the ad hoc nature of the 'wing' structure that Pleasonton had set up for this operation, many commanders were leading units other than their own. Within the First Division, which officially Pleasonton still commanded, Colonel Benjamin F. "Grimes" Davis had been moved up to temporarily command the Division as well as his own 1st Brigade. Davis had been appointed as the Colonel of the 8th New York Cavalry in June 1862, and was famous for his daring escape from Harper's Ferry during the Antietam Campaign. Although he was a Southerner, Davis had remained loyal to the Union. In addition, he was a West Pointer who believed in firm discipline and military etiquette; he was described by one of his men as "a proud tyrannical devil." Davis was apparently respected by many but evidently hated by others.²¹

²⁰Committee on Regimental History, *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry (Second Ira Harris Guard)* (Worcester, NY: Blanchard Press, 1908), 127; Samuel L. Gracey, *Annals of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry* (Philadelphia: E. H. Butler, 1868), 157.

²¹Boatner, 224, 227; *Official Records*, vol. 19, 1:583-584; Stephen Z. Starr, *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War*, 3 vols. (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 1:167, 378.

On paper, John Buford continued to command the Reserve Brigade; however, his absence allowed Major Charles J. Whiting of the 2nd US Cavalry to move up to command the Regulars. Whiting, as a Captain, had gained some recognition while leading a battalion of the 5th US Cavalry at Gaines' Mill during the Seven Days' Battles. While covering the retreat of Porter's Corps, Whiting and his 250 men had charged a Confederate infantry line and suffered over sixty percent casualties. Whiting was captured after the attack, but was later exchanged. He commanded the 1st Brigade of Pleasonton's cavalry division during the Antietam Campaign, but after the opening phases of the Gettysburg Campaign, Whiting was sent to Maine to command a recruiting unit. This ultimately allowed Captain Wesley Merritt to advance to the command of the Reserve Brigade.²²

Although, the organization of the Reserve Brigade remained relatively unchanged for the upcoming operation, Davis and Buford task organized the First Division to strengthen the 1st Brigade (Figure 15). Ten of the twenty-six companies in Devin's 2nd Brigade were placed under Davis' control to reinforce the 1st Brigade. The 3rd (West) Virginia and 9th New York, only a total of six companies strong, were grouped with the four companies of the 1st Brigade's 3rd Indiana, forming a composite, near-full-strength regiment. Two squadrons from the 6th New York were also placed

²² *Official Records*, vol. 11, 2:41-47; vol. 19, 1:180; vol. 29, 2:322-323; series 2, vol. 4:302-303. Later in 1863, Whiting was dismissed from the Army for disloyalty and for using "contemptuous and disrespectful words against the President of the United States." George Price, *Across the Continent with the Fifth Cavalry* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1883).

under the temporary control of the 1st Brigade and would act as an advance guard.²³

Of the infantry support Buford received, most of the regiments contained seasoned veterans who could contribute effectively to any Union combat operations (Figure 16). This support consisted of five regiments under Brigadier General Adelbert Ames, who would eventually command a brigade in O. O. Howard's XI Corps at Gettysburg. Ames had graduated from West Point in 1861, and saw combat at First Manassas where he won the Congressional Medal of Honor. Before his promotion to brigade command, Ames had commanded the famous 20th Maine Infantry. Ironically, the least effective regiment in Ames' ad hoc command was from his own Corps; this was the 33rd Massachusetts. Like most of the units in the hard-luck XI Corps, this unit did not have a good reputation after running from Jackson's flanking attack at Chancellorsville. Fortunately, the remaining four regiments, from the III and XII Corps, were of

²³ *Official Records*, vol. 27, 1:168-170, 906, 1047; *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry*, 23; J. I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (Topeka, KA: Capper, 1939), 70. Reports of Brigadier General John Buford, Wing Commander; Major Charles J. Whiting, acting Reserve Brigade Commander; Captain Richard S. C. Lord, Commander of the 1st US Cavalry; Captain Wesley Merritt, Commander of the 2nd US Cavalry; Captain James E. Harrison, Commander of the 5th US Cavalry; Captain George C. Cram, Commander of the 6th US Cavalry; Major Henry C. Wheelan, Commander of 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry; Lieutenant Samuel S. Elder, Commander of Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery; Colonel Thomas C. Devin, Commander of the 1st Cavalry Division; and Colonel Josiah H. Kellogg, Commander of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division all pertaining to the Battle of Brandy Station; Joseph Hooker Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, CA; see Appendix C for transcripts of these reports. Although in the *Official Records* Major Wheelan's name is spelled Whelan, he signed his report on Brandy Station with two 'e's. The total strength for the First Division, listed in Figure 15, is based on Buford's and Kellogg's reports. This total is 69 more than the 2,061 number listed in Pleasonton's report in the *Official Records*; this may be because Pleasonton did not include the strength of Vincent's Battery.

much better quality. The 86th New York, in particular, was considered one of the best regiments in the Army.²⁴

The *Official Records* indicate that these regiments deployed a total of 1,500 men; however, this figure was probably slightly high. It is likely that this figure derived from the fact that Hooker's Headquarters had ordered the three different Corps to each send 500 soldiers. The 30 June 1863, regimental returns for these regiments indicates that, as of that date, they had a total of over 1,800 men present for duty. However, the forced marches necessary to get these units to the area near Beverly's Ford by 8 June caused many stragglers to fall out. For example, the 2nd Massachusetts went into battle at Brandy Station with 312 soldiers, but this figure is only approximately eighty percent of its 30 June reported return of 397. The loss in personnel because of the forced marches was not the only problem facing Buford's infantry. The fact that these regiments were detailed from three different Corps was one of their primary weaknesses. With only two days notice to prepare for operations with the Cavalry Corps, these regiments had not had time to train together. It would have been better if a standing brigade or division had been detailed for this infantry support mission. Apparently, Hooker learned from this experience; later in the month he provided a complete division to support Pleasanton during the fighting in the Loudoun Valley.²⁵

²⁴*Official Records*, 1043; 3:15-17; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 5-6; Scott Bowden, *Armies of the American Civil War Research Series, Volume 2: Armies at Gettysburg* (Arlington, TX: Empire Games Press, 1988), 20, 23-24.

²⁵*Official Records*, 1:906, 1043-1044; John W. Busey and David G. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, NJ: Longstreet House, 1986), 50, 84, 93; Adin B. Underwood, *The Three Years' Service of the Thirty-Third Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, 1862-1865* (Boston: A. Williams and Company, Publishers, 1881), 106; Daniel Oakey,

In addition to the cavalry and infantry of Buford's command, three artillery batteries supported the Right Wing's efforts. The First Division, Reserve Brigade, and Ames' infantry were each supported by one battery. This artillery was some of the best in the Union Army; all of the batteries were from Regular US Artillery Regiments, and each was a Horse Battery. Federal horse artillery units were more mobile than their foot battery counterparts, and each was usually equipped with the 3-inch Ordnance Rifle. This gun had good accuracy and range, but did not have the hitting power of the larger smooth-bore cannons (such as the 12-pounder "Napoleon").²⁶

The Confederate Cavalry At Brandy Station

Stuart's cavalry had taken up positions along the southwest side of the Rappahannock River after the grand review on 8 June. On the night of 8 June, Jenkins' Brigade and one of Major R. F. Beckham's horse artillery batteries remained in the Valley. However, five of the six brigades of the Cavalry Division were in the Culpeper area (Figure 17). Fitz Lee's Brigade, under the temporary command of Colonel Thomas T. Munford, was on picket

History of the Second Massachusetts Regiment of Infantry, Beverly Ford (Boston: George H. Ellis, Printer, 1884), 2-4. The 1,461 number in Figure 16 is based on eighty percent of the 30 June regimental returns. The exception to this is for the 2nd Massachusetts which was the only infantry regiment to record its actual strength for the battle on 9 June. The eighty percent figure is based on the 2nd Massachusetts' drop from 397 (on 30 June) to 312 (on 9 June) ($312/397=79\%$).

²⁶*Official Records*, 168-170; Devin's Brandy Station report; L. Van Loan Naisawald, *Grape and Canister, The Story of the Field Artillery of the Army of the Potomac, 1861-1865* (Oxford University Press, 1960; reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., no date noted), 179; Scott Bowden, *Armies of the American Civil War Research Series, Volume 1: Armies at First Manassas and Introduction to Combat Arms* (Arlington, TX: Empire Games Press, 1988), 16-18.

duty on the north side of the Hazel River. The Carolinian's of Beverly Robertson's Brigade were on the southern flank of Stuart's forces watching Kelly's Ford. Of immediate concern to Buford were the three brigades of Wade Hampton, William E. "Grumble" Jones (the Laurel Brigade which had fought Buford ten months earlier near Lewis Ford), and William H. F. "Rooney" Lee, plus Major Robert F. Beckham's Horse Artillery Battalion. These units were all within several miles of Beverly's Ford. Once his forces were concentrated, Major General James Stuart would be able to field about 9,000 cavalrymen and twenty artillery pieces (Figure 18). Until these forces were united, however, they were vulnerable to defeat in detail. Beckham's cannons were especially exposed, since they had made camp north of Jones' Brigade in a position *closer* to the Rappahannock. As one Confederate trooper explained, although Stuart's position was not tactically sound, "On this occasion, there [was] no information or apprehension of an attack."²⁷

²⁷The organization of the Cavalry Division remained basically unchanged during the Gettysburg Campaign. *Official Records*, 2:687, 712-713, 772; McClellan, 262; Heros von Borcke and Justus Scheibert, *Die Grosse Reiterschlacht bei Brandy Station* (Berlin: 1893. Translation, Stuart T. Wright and F. D. Bridgewater. *The Great Cavalry Battle at Brandy Station*. Palaemon Press Ltd., 1976; reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., no date noted), 47-48; John E. Divine, *35th Battalion Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1985), 30; Jennings C. Wise, *The Long Arm of Lee or the History of the Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia*, 2 vols. (J. P. Bell Company, 1915; Richmond, VA: Owens Publishing Company, 1988), 578. The Figure 18 strength numbers are based on the May 1863 monthly returns as quoted in McClellan, 293; and Busey and Martin, 194-201; at this time the Division had 9,536 total personnel. The figure of 8,999 is derived by subtracting the 537 artillerymen in Beckham's Battalion (from Wise, 578). The number of cannons is from Busey and Martin, 201. John N. Opie, *A Rebel Cavalryman with Lee, Stuart and Jackson* (Chicago: W. B. Conkey Company, 1899), 147.

The Fight at Beverly's Ford

In the twilight just before dawn, the head of Buford's march formation formed column of twos and entered the deep water of Beverly's Ford. As each pair of troopers crossed the Rappahannock they were ordered to "draw sabers." John Buford had placed the reinforced 1st Brigade of the First Division in the lead. This Brigade, headed by Colonel Davis and his 8th New York, was followed by the 8th Illinois and the Composite Regiment. Major Whiting's Reserve Brigade was the next brigade in the order of march. The Regulars were followed by most of Ames' infantry, while Colonel Devin's depleted 2nd Brigade acted as a rear guard. This was the most vulnerable time for the Federal cavalry. It would take almost two hours for the majority of Buford's Corps size force to make its way across the River. If Stuart's Confederate forces had been able to counterattack the Union cavalry as it straddled the Rappahannock, the Federal forces would have met disaster. Fortunately, it quickly became apparent that, primarily because of excellent Union operational security, Buford's men literally caught some of the Rebel troopers still in their bed rolls.²⁸

Under Buford's orders, four companies of the 6th New York crossed ahead of the rest of the Right Wing. This force acted as an advance guard and attempted to capture any Confederate pickets near the River. They quickly forced the retreat of the vedettes of Captain Bruce Gibson's Company of the 6th Virginia Cavalry from Jones' Brigade. Gibson's picket of about twenty men

²⁸*Official Records*, 1:1043-1044, 1047; Buford's and Devin's Brandy Station reports; Abner Hard, *History of the Eighth Cavalry Regiment, Illinois Volunteers* (Aurora, IL: no publisher noted, 1868), 243; Newel Cheney, *History of the Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Poland Center, NY: Martin Merz and Son, 1901), 95-96; Neese, 170.

made a brief stand before falling back along the Beverly's Ford Road toward the rest of the 6th Virginia. The fight then developed into a race to see which side could more quickly reinforce its forces in contact. Davis moved south with the 8th New York and ordered the 8th Illinois to follow as soon as it had forded. Having been warned by a courier from Gibson, Major Cabell E. Flournoy commanding the 6th Virginia, hastily collected about 150 of his half-dressed men and charged to support his pickets. Jones also ordered the 7th Virginia, which was the grand guard for Flournoy, to move toward the Ford.²⁹

Davis' Union and Jones' Confederate regiments charged into each other in a confusing cavalry melee in which each side would momentarily gain the advantage. Sabers, revolvers, and carbines were all used as the forces fought in the woods just south of the Ford. Ultimately Buford's men forced the two Virginia regiments to fall back toward St. James Church and the Gee House (Figure 19). However, the Rebel retreat was bought for a high price. Colonel Davis was shot and killed at the head of the 8th New York. The acting commander of the 8th Illinois, Captain Alpheus Clark (the more senior officers of the regiment were all absent), was mortally wounded leading a charge to support Davis. In addition, seven other officers of the 1st Brigade were killed or wounded during this initial fight for the woods.³⁰

²⁹*Official Records*, 1:1047, 2:748-749, 754; Luther W. Hopkins, *From Bull Run to Appomattox* (Baltimore, MD: Fleet McGinley Company, 1908), 89-91; Michael P. Musick, *6th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1990), 38; John S. Mosby, *Stuart's Cavalry in the Gettysburg Campaign* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1908), 20-21.

³⁰*Official Records*, 1:1048, 2:757; Neese, 171-172; Hard, 243-245; William N. McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade: Originally the Ashby Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia and Chew's Battery* (Baltimore, MD: Sun Job Printing Office, 1907; Reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., 1987), 134-136.

With so many leaders incapacitated, the First Brigade was temporary without the leadership and guidance it needed. The loss of Davis in particular had a detrimental impact on the alacrity of the Brigade's offensive actions. This was fortunate for Stuart's Confederates, since Beckham's Horse Artillery Battalion would have been overrun and captured if the Federal advance had continued. The charge of the 6th and 7th Virginia Regiments had allowed sufficient time for the Rebel cannons to quickly limber and move further south out of danger.³¹

The Fight Near St. James Church

During the 1st Brigade's initial fight with Jones' forces, John Buford had yet to cross the Rappahannock. When he was informed of Colonel Davis' death Buford immediately moved to the front to ascertain the tactical situation. To control Union forces moving toward St. James Church, he ordered Thomas Devin to turn over command of the 2nd Brigade to Colonel Josiah Kellogg of the 17th Pennsylvania. Devin then assumed control of the 1st Brigade which had already advanced south on the east side of Beverly's Ford Road. Buford then ordered most of the Reserve Brigade to move up on the right flank of Devin's units and clear the woods west of the road. Finally, as the two infantry regiments of Colonel A. Van Horn Ellis' command forded the River, they were directed to follow the 1st and Reserve Brigades to the south. Buford initially retained only one regiment from the Reserve Brigade, the 5th US Cavalry, and one regiment from the 1st Brigade, the 8th Illinois, plus several sections of

³¹*Official Records*, 2:772; Henry Norton, *Deeds of Daring, or, History of the 8th New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Norwich, NY: Chenango Telegraph Printing House, 1889), 65.

artillery to guard his right flank near the Cunningham House. It took until after 0700 hours for all of these units to move into position.³²

As Buford and Devin were getting their forces under control, Stuart ordered Grumble Jones and Wade Hampton to form a defensive line in support of Beckham's artillery near St. James Church. Stuart retained only Hampton's 2nd South Carolina as a division reserve near Fleetwood. To cover the redeployment of their horse artillery, several of Jones' regiments charged Devin's advancing units but were driven back. It was at this time, about 0730, that one of the most heroic but tragic incidents in the battle occurred.³³

As already mentioned, Buford had ordered portions of Major Charles Whiting's Reserve Brigade to clear the woods on the west side of Beverly's Ford Road. In compliance with Buford's orders, Whiting ordered the then five-company strong 6th Pennsylvania to lead the Reserve Brigade's move south. This Regiment (also known as Rush's Lancers since they originally had been armed with that weapon) was followed by the 6th and 2nd US Cavalry (the 1st US was on picket duty and the 5th US was near the Cunningham House). Buford's intent was to have Whiting's units advance to a position on the right of Devin and then deploy. Only when Whiting's, Devin's and Ames' forces were in position would the Union troops initiate a coordinated attack to the south

³²Official Records, 1:1047; Buford's, Devin's and Harrison's Brandy Station reports; Charles H. Weygant, *History of the One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Regiment, N. Y. S. V.* (Newburgh, NY: Journal Printing House, 1877), 145.

³³Official Records, 2:680,721,749.

toward St. James Church. Unfortunately this combined attack did not take place.³⁴

Both Buford and Whiting remained within about one-half mile of the ford to direct the advance of the Union forces. Thus, the control of the Reserve Brigade's advance toward St. James Church was controlled by Major Robert Morris, the commander of the 6th Pennsylvania. As the Pennsylvanians neared the open field north of the Church, Morris immediately formed column of squadrons and charged the Confederate units further to the south. Coming up behind and to the left, the 6th US had time to deploy and followed the Lancers in their attack. Reminiscent of the charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade at the Battle of Balaklava, these two regiments made a gallant attack but suffered large numbers of casualties for little result. Although the two regiments managed to ride through the Confederate guns, they were immediately charged by the supporting cavalry of Jones's Brigade and driven back to the tree line to the north and east. Over sixty percent of the troopers of the 6th Pennsylvania who entered the charge did not return. After the attack, the courageous survivors regrouped and moved back to the north to rejoin the rest of the Reserve Brigade. Since Morris was later captured and died in Libby Prison, he did not record why he launched this uncoordinated attack. It is possible that because Jones' units were so near his own Morris felt it necessary to drive them back immediately. Fortunately, the

³⁴See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Lord, and Wheelan. The 6th Pennsylvania had only given up their lances several weeks prior to the Battle of Brandy Station. The unit found them impractical in the many woods and forest of Virginia. During this part of the battle the 6th Pennsylvania was short seven companies—these missing units were on picket duty or detached service.

attack did have the small benefit of covering Devin's right flank until Ames' infantry could come up to relieve the Reserve Brigade's regiments.³⁵

Thomas Devin certainly needed the extra support. Until reinforced by the regiments of the Reserve Brigade and Ames' infantry, the 1st Brigade had to stand alone against the 4,000 Confederate cavalymen and artillerists near St. James Church. When the 8th Illinois was pulled to guard the right flank, Devin's effective strength was cut to only about 1,000 troopers. Although the earlier charges by Jones' regiments had been driven back, Hampton attempted to turn the 1st Brigade's left flank. Devin countered this move by continuing to extend his dismounted skirmish line in an arch along the north side of Hubbard's Run.³⁶

Unfortunately, Hampton's moves were not Devin's only worry; he also had to contend with continued pressure from Beckham's horse artillery and Jones' Brigade to his front and right. Squadron after squadron had to be dismounted and deployed into the battle line, leaving only a few mounted companies behind the line in support. Fortunately, General Ames' infantry regiments continued to advance into position on Devin's right flank, thus attracting some of Jones' and Beckham's attention. At about 0930 dismounted troopers of Hampton's Brigade had advanced almost into the 1st Brigade's

³⁵See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Cram, and Wheelan; George Baylor, *Bull Run to Bull Run; or, Four Years in the Army of Northern Virginia* (Richmond: R. F. Johnson, 1900), 143; Gracey, 159-160; McClellan, 268. Wheelan indicated in his report that his Regiment had already returned and reformed from this charge by about 0800 hours, so the actual attack probably occurred at approximately 0730.

³⁶*Official Records*, 1:1047-1048, 2:721; See Devin's Brandy Station report. The figure of 4,000 for the Confederate strength near St. James Church does not include Breasted's Battery or the 7th Virginia and 2nd South Carolina Regiments.

positions. At this point Devin ordered two mounted companies from the 9th New York to charge into the advancing Rebels; the impetus of this attack temporarily drove the Southerners back and stabilized the front.³⁷

The Fight Near Cunningham House

Shortly after he dispatched Devin to take over the 1st Brigade, Buford had to contend with a new threat. At this point in the battle, Stuart only had Jones and Hampton in action. Therefore, Stuart sent orders to both Rooney Lee and Munford (who was in temporary command of Fitzhugh Lee's regiments) to move their brigade's toward Beverly's Ford. Munford misunderstood Stuart's directions and did not enter the battle until late in the day. However, Rooney Lee's Virginians and Carolinians were soon of major concern to Buford.³⁸

On the night of 8 June, these Southerners camped west and northwest of Fleetwood. News of the Union attack reached Lee sometime before 0700 just as his regiments were preparing to move to picket duty along the Rappahannock. Although four of Beckham's artillery batteries were near St. James Church, one section of 3-inch Ordnance Rifles from Breathed's Battery was supporting Lee's Brigade. Between 0700 and 0730, responding to Stuart's orders, Lee's regiments galloped toward Beverly's Ford along the ridge line north of Ruffin's Run. If this new Rebel advance could push past Buford's units near the Cunningham House and interdict the Ford, the Union forces

³⁷*Official Records*, 1:1043-1044, 1047-1048, 2:749; Underwood, 107-108; Weygant, 145-152; See Devin's Brandy Station report; Cheney, 96.

³⁸*Official Records*, 680.

south of the Rappahannock would be cut off. Hampton's, Jones', and Lee's Brigades could then crush Buford's men in an enveloping attack.³⁹

Recognizing this danger, Buford took immediate steps to reinforce his defensive line just west of Beverly's Ford. As discussed, Buford had detached the 5th US and 8th Illinois to cover the right flank. As the extent of the Confederate threat became apparent, Buford ordered the 2nd US back from its move toward St. James Church. Colonel Kellogg was also instructed to move the two regiments of the 2nd Brigade up as well. In addition, two companies from Colonel Aldin Flood's infantry command, which was moving south to support Devin's position, were detached to reinforce Buford's right flank. These forces were also provided with artillery support from Elder's Battery and sections of Vincent's and Graham's Batteries.⁴⁰

As Buford was deploying these units, several squadrons of Rooney Lee's Brigade were able to charge within three-quarters of a mile of Beverly's Ford. As an initial response, Buford ordered Captain James Harrison's 5th US Cavalry forward. The regiment, on this day only three squadrons strong, deployed two companies as dismounted skirmishers and advanced them to a stonewall on the hill near the Cunningham House. The other two squadrons remained formed and mounted in support. Fortunately, Harrison's troopers

³⁹*Ibid.*, 737, 772-773; Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War, 1861-65*, 5 vols. (Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1901; reprint, Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1991), 2:89-90; Busey and Martin, 201.

⁴⁰See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Merritt, Harrison, Elder, Devin, and Kellogg; *Official Records*, 1:822, 1043-1044, 1047.

were able to arrest Lee's advance, but the Rebel cavalymen only fell back to a stronger defensive position near the Green House.⁴¹

For the next several hours, Buford made repeated attempts to dislodge Lee's Brigade but with little success. The Confederate Commander had deployed sharpshooters along several stone walls which ran on three sides of his position. Behind the skirmishers and higher up Green House Hill, two 3-inch rifled cannons of Breathed's Battery provided support. Rooney Lee also maintained supporting mounted squadrons near the artillery. Several of Buford's regiments made determined advances from both the south and from the east against the Confederate position, but Lee's soldiers frustrated all attempts. At one point the 6th Pennsylvania managed to reach the stone wall, but were driven back by a charge of the 2nd North Carolina. During the course of these assaults, the skirmishers of each side were engaged in a constant firefight. Many of the cavalymen on each side expended all of their ammunition, but with little apparent effect.⁴²

It is understandable why Buford was unable to make much progress against Lee. The Federal horsemen were attempting to defeat a defending force which was almost as large as the attackers and which occupied ideal defensive terrain. Buford was, however, determined to get past Lee. When his deliberate, but conventional, assaults had failed, Buford decided to attempt a more indirect approach. He ordered dismounted troopers of the 8th Illinois

⁴¹See Brandy Station reports of Buford and Harrison.

⁴²Richard L. T. Beale, *History of the Ninth Virginia Cavalry, in the War Between the States* (Richmond, VA: B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1899), 67-68; G. W. Beale, *A Lieutenant of Cavalry in Lee's Army* (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1908), 86-87; Clark, 2:90-91; See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Wheelan, Merritt, and Cram.

and 2nd US Cavalry Regiments to infiltrate around the flanks of the Confederate position. These cavalymen were joined by one company from both the 2nd Massachusetts and 3rd Wisconsin Infantry Regiments. These few dozen riflemen were the only infantry support available to Buford; the rest were farther to the left between Devin's and Buford's positions. Although the cavalry could not turn the Rebel position, the small infantry force was successful and forced the dismounted enemy troops to retreat. Coincidentally, as Buford's troops finally began to make some progress, a new development hastened Lee's withdrawal. Buford later related in his after-action report that, "while [near the Green House, General David] Gregg's guns were heard and the enemy began moving."⁴³

The Left Wing Drives on Fleetwood

It was after 1100 before General David Gregg's Third Division finally entered the battle against the Rebel cavalymen. Gregg's crossing had been delayed when Alfred Duffie's Second Division had become lost moving up to cross at Kelly's Ford. As Duffie led the Left Wing across the Rappahannock, the remaining elements of Gregg's command had to wait, with some frustration, for their tardy comrades. All of Gregg's units did not cross until after 0900. By

⁴³*Official Records*, 1:822, 1043; Hard, 244-245; Oakey, 10-12; See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Wheelan, Merritt, and Cram. The total number of Confederate troops near the Green House was over 2,000. Lee's Brigade only had about 1,550 men, but he had been reinforced by the 7th Virginia from Jones' Brigade and the one section from Breathed's Battery. Buford probably had 300 to 400 more troops than Lee, since he could count on the 2nd and Reserve Brigades. He also had the 8th Illinois, but this unit's presence was offset by the absence of the 1st US (which was on picket duty). In addition, the 6th Pennsylvania and 6th US had each lost heavily in the previous fight near St. James Church. See notes 23 and 27 for sources on troop strengths. Each of the ten companies of the 2nd Massachusetts only averaged about thirty men, so the total for the two companies was probably around sixty; *Official Records*, 1:1043.

then, Buford's Wing had been engaged for over four hours. At this point Gregg compounded Duffie's error by not having his Wing march directly to the "sound of guns." Although the shortest route to help Buford was covered only by the two regiments of Robertson's Brigade, Gregg decided to fix this Southern force with his infantry and then march around by a more circuitous road (Figure 17). Gregg further cut the combat power of his force by dispatching Duffie's 1,900 men toward Stevensburg. When Gregg's Third Division was finally able to launch its attack against Stuart's flank and rear, it was almost 1200. Even though this move was made by only a part of Gregg's force, it quickly allowed dramatic gains to be made by the Right Wing.⁴⁴

In front of St. James Church, the 1st Brigade was preparing to commit its last reserves in a mounted charge to counter another advance by Wade Hampton's forces; in this case the Jeff Davis Legion. To Devin's surprise, instead of attacking, Hampton's Brigade disengaged and moved off toward Brandy Station. Hampton's departure was soon followed by most of Jones' regiments and the artillery. Although at the time Devin was not certain why the enemy had departed, Hampton's and Jones' regiments were moving to counter Gregg's attack. Only the Laurel Brigade's 11th and 7th Virginia Regiments remained to oppose an advance by Devin and Ames. Over the next several hours, both the 1st Brigade and the infantry made a cautious advance and occupied the woods around the Gee House and St. James Church.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Gary W. Gallagher, "Brandy Station: The Civil War's Bloodiest Arena of Mounted Combat," *Blue and Gray*, Vol. VIII, Issue 1 (October 1990): 20-22.

⁴⁵*Official Records*, 822, 1043, 1047-1048, 2:721, 732, 749; See Brandy Station report of Devin.

By about 1500 hours, General Pleasonton established his headquarters near the Gee House, and General Gregg rode up from the left and joined the Cavalry Corps Commander. After reporting on his Wing's battle with Jones and Hampton, Gregg informed Pleasonton that large numbers of Rebel infantry were moving toward Brandy Station from Culpeper. In view of this, Pleasonton immediately ordered the Cavalry Corps to withdraw back across the Rappahannock. The Left Wing immediately started toward Norman's Ford below the Rappahannock railroad bridge. Devin and Ames also started back, but their units moved toward Beverly's Ford. Since he was not in contact with Buford, Pleasonton dispatched Captain Frederick Newhall of his staff to order the rest of the Right Wing to also retire.⁴⁶

Buford's Final Attack

It is ironic that as Captain Newhall departed with Pleasonton's new orders, Buford was then driving into the flank of Stuart's forces. Earlier, as Rooney Lee's units had retreated along Yew Ridge, Buford had closely pursued. Buford indicated in his report that, as "Gregg's cannonading becoming more distinct and furious, I resolved to go to him if possible." To protect his northern flank while he advanced, Buford left the 2nd Brigade near Cunningham House. Buford also posted the 5th US Cavalry, with a section of Graham's Battery in support, to watch the area near the Green House. He then

⁴⁶*Official Records*, 1:951, 1045; F. C. Newhall, "The Battle of Beverly Ford," In *Annals of the War, Written by Leading Participants North and South*, Edited by Alexander K. McClure (Philadelphia: The Times Publishing Company, 1879): 141-142; See Brandy Station report of Devin.

pushed southwest with the remaining three regiments of the Reserve Brigade, which by this time was down to about 650 troopers.⁴⁷

By about 1530 Stuart's entire Division had pulled back to a defensive line which ran the length of Fleetwood Ridge and up onto the south end of Yew Ridge (Figure 20). Rooney Lee's Regiments had moved into position to defend the north end of Stuart's line; these units were the ones Buford and the Reserve Brigade would soon attack. As Buford advanced to the top of Yew Ridge, he could see all the way to Brandy Station. This high ground was also above Fleetwood Hill, and therefore dominated the lower area to the south.⁴⁸

Buford's appearance on the Confederate's flank was of immediate concern to Rooney Lee. He realized that a flank attack by the Reserve Brigade, combined with a coordinated assault by the Federal forces near St. James Church and south of Brandy Station, could lead to a major defeat for Stuart's Division. Lee did not know that most of the Union forces had already been ordered to withdraw. Without delay, Lee joined Colonel Richard Beale's 9th Virginia Cavalry, which was one of the units closest to Buford, and ordered it to charge. There was not sufficient time or distance for Beale's troopers to properly deploy, so they hit the battle line of the 6th Pennsylvania while stacked up in column of platoons. The narrow Confederate column easily

⁴⁷See 's Brandy Station reports of Buford, Harrison, and Kellogg. The strength figure for the 6th Pennsylvania, 2nd US, and 6th US is based on Merritt's Brandy Station report; W. H. Carter, *From Yorktown to Santiago with the Sixth U.S. Cavalry* (Baltimore, MD: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1900), 87; and "Official List of Killed, Wounded and Missing of the 6th Regiment Pennsylvania Cavalry in the Battle of Beverly Ford, June 9th, 1863," Joseph Hooker Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, CA.

⁴⁸See Buford's Brandy Station Report; Clark, 2:91; *Official Records*, 2:682.

penetrated the Union line, but was in turn enveloped on each flank. As Buford recalled, "out flew the sabers and most handsomely were they used."⁴⁹

As the Pennsylvania Lancers were punishing the 9th Virginia, Wesley Merritt's 2nd US Cavalry had managed to move through the woods to the west of Rooney Lee's position. This Regiment now charged forward into the flank of the 13th Virginia, which was moving up to support Beale's hard-pressed squadrons. The old 2nd Dragoons and 6th Pennsylvania were now, as one Confederate observer noted, "driving the Ninth and Thirteenth Virginia in considerable confusion before them." It was during these melees, while trying to rally his men, that Rooney Lee went down with a severe wound.

The 6th Pennsylvania and 2nd US were soon recalled and reformed behind the 6th US Cavalry Regiment, which Buford had maintained in reserve. At this point, Colonel Solomon Williams led his 2nd North Carolina Regiment in a charge against the 6th US, but a volley from the Regulars checked the Carolinians and killed their brave commander. The 2nd and 5th US also had to respond to a new threat. Three regiments of Fitzhugh Lee's Brigade finally returned to the fight by hitting Buford's right flank northwest of the Green House. Artillery and carbine fire were, however, able to keep Munford's less than energetic attack in check.⁵⁰

During the course of the battle, Captain Newhall desperately attempted to find General Buford. After leaving Pleasonton's headquarters,

⁴⁹See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Merritt, and Cram; *Official Records*, 682; G. W. Beale, 95-96; Richard L. T. Beale, 68-69; William L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1909), 13-14; Clark, 2:91-92; Newhall, 143.

⁵⁰See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Cram, Harrison, and Merritt; Clark, 2:92.

Newhall rode to the rear of Buford's position on Yew Ridge where he was unable to find the Right Wing Commander. Newhall continued to ride toward the heavy fighting, although he did not expect to find Buford so far forward. However, this was exactly where Buford was. The Captain was then able to deliver Pleasonton's order to fall back. With Rebel units pressing him from the south and west, and with little immediate available support for the fatigued Reserve Brigade, Buford quickly complied.⁵¹

Buford immediately ordered the Reserve Brigade to start back toward Beverly's Ford. It was apparent that Stuart's forces were in no shape to energetically contend with the withdrawal of Buford's forces. As a contingency, however, Pleasonton ordered Captain Richard Lord's 1st US Cavalry to screen the other Union forces as they moved across the Rappahannock. The 1st US had been on picket duty on the north side of the River for most of the day, and it was the only fresh unit available. Although Buford had ordered Lord to join the rest of the Brigade at 0930, it took some time to gather in the regiment's far-flung elements. Interestingly, Lord deployed his entire unit as mounted skirmishers in an arch within one-half mile of the Ford. However, these precautions were unnecessary; the Federal retrograde was conducted without interference from the Confederate cavalry. By about 1830, most of the Cavalry Corps had crossed to the north side of the River. Buford's Wing, therefore had been in contact with the enemy for almost fourteen hours.⁵²

⁵¹Newhall., 144.

⁵²See Brandy Station reports of Buford, Harrison, and Lord. It was also at this time that Pleasonton belatedly ordered Ames' to have an infantry regiment also cover Buford's disengagement; Newhall, 144.

Buford and his troopers had certainly fought well. The Right Wing had defended alone against the bulk of Stuart's Division for over seven hours. Once the Left Wing's presence had finally been felt, Buford immediately pushed forward energetically and drove on Fleetwood. It is unfortunate that circumstances had conspired to deny a more resounding victory to the Federal cavalymen. Colonel Davis' death early in the battle, Duffie's late arrival at Kelly Ford, and Gregg's less than direct march to attack Stuart's southern flank all contributed to a less than complete victory for the Cavalry Corps. Pleasonton's early withdrawal, in particular, prevented the Federal commander from exploiting Buford's successful flanking attack along Yew Ridge. However, even if neither side could clearly claim a victory at Brandy Station, most observers agree that the battle marked the beginning of a rapid increase in combat efficiency of the Union cavalry in the East. Major Henry B. McClellan of Stuart's staff wrote in hindsight after the war:

Up to [the time of Brandy Station, the Union cavalry were] confessedly inferior to the Southern horsemen, they gained on this day that confidence in themselves and in their commanders which enabled them to contest so fiercely the subsequent battle-fields of June, July, and October.⁵³

John Buford's troopers would soon have their confidence tested as the Army of the Potomac moved to defend the Union against Robert E. Lee's second invasion of the North.

⁵³McClellan, 294.

CHAPTER 4

THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN

The Battles in the Loudoun Valley

At the end of the Battle of Brandy Station Stuart's cavalry remained in the same general area it had occupied in before the battle. The jubilant Federal cavalry moved to the area around Warrenton Junction.¹

Reorganization of the Cavalry Corps

Apparently Pleasonton liked the idea of having only two principal subordinate commanders, because on 11 June, he ordered the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac reorganized into two, instead of three, divisions. David M. Gregg would form the former Second and Third Divisions into the new Second Division. Duffie's Third Division was eliminated under this reorganization. John Buford commanded the new First Division consisting of Pleasonton's old division and the Reserve Brigade (Figure 21). For the first time, Buford was officially a divisional commander. After the death of Benjamin Davis, Colonel William Gamble assumed command of the 1st Brigade of Buford's new division. In addition, Major Samuel H. Starr replaced Whiting in command of the 3rd or Reserve Brigade.²

¹U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 27, part 1:141. Cited hereafter as *Official Records*.

²*Ibid.*, 3:64, 171-172.

The Hunt for the Confederate Infantry

On 13 June 1863, Hooker began moving his forces northward to counter Robert E. Lee's progress in the direction of Maryland and Pennsylvania. To facilitate his command of the Union troops, Hooker formed the Army of the Potomac into wings made up of subordinate corps. Major General John Reynolds, the commander of I Corps, led the right wing with Pleasonton's Cavalry Corps as one of his units. Reynolds quickly became dissatisfied with the quality of the reports he received from Pleasonton. Instead of having his cavalry gain information from direct observation, Pleasonton relied on reports from civilians who had been in Confederate-controlled areas.³ Therefore, Between 13 and 17 June, when both Hooker and Reynolds became increasingly concerned about the lack of information on the location of Lee's infantry, Reynold's reminded Pleasonton that he should be using cavalry to obtain intelligence "by observation." By 17 June, Hooker had become so apprehensive about his lack of information about the enemy that he sent the following order to Pleasonton:

The commanding general relies upon you with your cavalry force to give him information of where the enemy is, his force, and his movements. You have a sufficient cavalry force to do this. Drive in pickets, if necessary, and get us information. It is better that we should lose men than to be without knowledge of the enemy, as we now seem to be.⁴

As the two armies moved north they were separated by two mountain ranges. The Blue Ridge is the dominant range, and forms the eastern side of

³*Ibid.*, 72, 84; Robert F. O'Neill, Jr., "The Fight for the Loudoun Valley--Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville, Virginia: Opening Battles of the Gettysburg Campaign," *Blue and Gray*, Vol. XI, Issue 1 (October 1993): 14.

⁴*Official Records*, 84-85, 172, 177.

the Shenandoah Valley. Fifteen to thirty miles further east are the Bull Run Mountains. This smaller chain of hills runs roughly parallel to the Blue Ridge. The area between the two mountain ranges is the Loudoun Valley. The few passes through these mountains became operationally important over the next few days. Because both the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia were using the mountains to screen their movements, each sides cavalry would have to push through the passes to gain intelligence on the enemy's progress. Loudoun County became, therefore, a major area of contention between the two cavalry forces.

Apparently Hooker's direct orders to seek out any information possible on Lee's location finally goaded Pleasonton into action. He ordered his two divisions to move northward within the Loudoun Valley to Waterford. However, before the Union cavalry could carry out these orders, it would have to move across the Bull Run Mountains. Buford's forces left the Warrenton Junction area between 13 and 15 June and moved through Manassas, Centreville, and on toward Aldie on 17 June. Pleasonton planned to have the majority of his forces use Aldie Gap to cross the Bull Run Mountains.⁵

The Fight at Aldie

Unknown to Pleasonton, Stuart's cavalry was already in Loudoun County (Figure 22). In fact, at the same time the Union cavalry was moving west along the Little River Turnpike, which is the road which runs through

⁵Committee on Regimental History, *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry (Second Ira Harris Guard)* (Worcester, NY: Blanchard Press, 1908), 129; Samuel L. Gracey, *Annals of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry* (Philadelphia: E. H. Butler, 1868), 176-177; Abner Hard, *History of the Eighth Cavalry Regiment, Illinois Volunteers* (Aurora, IL: no publisher noted, 1868), 248-249; *Official Records*, 171,178.

both Aldie and Aldie Gap, Fitzhugh Lee's Brigade under Munford's command was on the same road moving east. In a late afternoon meeting engagement, Judson Kilpatrick's Brigade of the Second Division collided with Munford's men near the town of Aldie. Kilpatrick was the advance guard for the Cavalry Corps. In an intense fight lasting for several hours, Kilpatrick's Brigade was badly handled by Munford's troopers, and only the arrival of Colonel John Gregg's Brigade, also of the Second Division, prevented the complete disintegration of Kilpatrick's unit. Darkness and the arrival of Gregg's Brigade forced Munford to fall back to the west.⁶

During the Second Division's fight at Aldie, the 1st and Reserve Brigades of the First Division were moving toward that town. Devin's 2nd Brigade had been detached and was moving independently toward Thoroughfare Gap. On 18 June, while Devin picketed Thoroughfare Gap, Pleasonton ordered Buford to have Gamble's Brigade conduct a reconnaissance mission toward Snickersville. This was to be in conjunction with a similar mission by John Gregg's Brigade of the Second Division. However, Gregg was to scout toward Middleburg. Both units made good progress in the face of some resistance. Devin, advancing against Munford's Brigade, was able to get within two miles of Snicker's Gap in the Blue Ridge before Confederate resistance and Pleasonton's orders caused him to fall back toward Aldie.⁷

⁶Colonel John I. Gregg and General David M. Gregg were cousins, O'Neill, 46. *Official Records*, 1:907, 952-953, 975, Henry B. McClellan, *The Life and Campaigns of Major General J. E. B. Stuart* (Boston and New York: 1885; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: The Blue and Gray Press, 1993), 296-303; O'Neill, 14-21.

⁷*Official Records*, 142, 907-909, 1029; 3:193; *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry*, 129-130; Hard, 250; Henry Norton, *Deeds of Daring, or, History of the 8th New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Norwich, NY: Chenango Telegraph Printing House, 1889), 67; O'Neill, 21.

The Battle of Middleburg

Although Stuart may have given some thought to holding the passes through the Bull Run Mountains, after the clash at Aldie he decided to embrace the tactic of delaying any Federal advance from positions near Middleburg. Stuart was also able to gain valuable intelligence on the dispositions of the Army of the Potomac from documents captured by John Mosby. These documents showed that Pleasonton had extensive infantry support to call on in the Aldie area. Since Stuart only had three of his brigades near Middleburg, he was probably wise to adopt a course of action of delay. Jones' and Hampton's Brigades had remained in the vicinity of Brandy Station to guard the Rappahannock River line. Rooney Lee's Brigade, now under Colonel J. R. Chambliss in Lee's absence, along with Robertson's North Carolina Regiments were near Middleburg. Munford remained further to the northwest along the road to Union and Snickersville (Figure 18).⁸

Hooker was not satisfied with Pleasonton's attempts on 18 June to gain information on Lee's movements. At 2000 hours, on the same day, Hooker sent his cavalry commander the explicit statement that "your orders are to find out where the enemy is, if you have to lose men to do it." With these orders in hand, Pleasonton instructed his two divisional commanders to move toward the passes in the Blue Ridge at first light on 19 June. David Gregg was to move on Middleburg, and if he made good progress he was to proceed through Upperville to Ashby's Gap. Buford was to operate on Gregg's northern flank and attempt to move through Union to Snicker's Gap. He commanded only the First and Reserve Brigades, since Devin with the 2nd Brigade

⁸McClellan, 296, 306; *Official Records*, 2:687-689.

remained near Thoroughfare Gap. Hopefully, the Confederate infantry would be spotted from the passes.⁹

In compliance with Pleasonton's orders, on the morning of 19 June, Gregg moved against Middleburg with Kilpatrick's and Colonel Gregg's Brigades. Stuart had Robertson's and Chambliss' Brigades in strong defensive positions west of the town while the bulk of Munford's units were further north in front of Union. Initially, Buford followed Gregg as the Second Division advanced through Middleburg. At the town, Buford turned north and crossed Goose Creek against some minor Confederate resistance. He then headed toward New Lisbon. On Gregg's front the Second Division had quickly become decisively engaged with the two Rebel brigades near Middleburg. As Buford neared New Lisbon he received a dispatch from Pleasonton ordering the Reserve Brigade back to support Gregg. Pleasonton apparently decided that the battle with Stuart's cavalry was more important than any advance by Buford toward the Blue Ridge. If Pleasonton had thought that pressing on toward the passes was his primary mission, he could have had Gregg make limited attacks to fix Stuart's cavalry in front of the Second Division while Buford pressed on.¹⁰

The departure of the Reserve Brigade left Buford with only his 1st Brigade, but the advance on New Lisbon was continued. Once in the village, the Union cavalry was attacked by Munford's 5th Virginia Cavalry Regiment and by the 7th Virginia from Jones' Brigade. 'Grumble' Jones' regiments were

⁹*Ibid.*, 3:195, 1:909-910.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 910, 953-954; Edward G. Longacre, *The Cavalry at Gettysburg* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1986), 121-124; Wilbur S. Nye, *Here Come the Rebels* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1965; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1988), 189-194; O'Neill, 46-47.

just arriving in the Loudoun Valley from their old positions along the Rappahannock. The initial attacks by these two Virginia regiments were easily repulsed; however, Buford now had a decision to make. He could press on toward Union in the face of both Jones' and Munford's Brigades, or by holding at New Lisbon, Buford could maintain the attention of two of the four brigades available to Stuart. This would allow the bulk of the Union cavalry to mass against the Confederate units near Middleburg. Buford decided on the later course of action and suspended his movement toward the Blue Ridge. This was the more prudent move since Buford's position at New Lisbon was already in advance of Gregg's. Any further move to the west would risk being flanked or cut off by Confederate cavalry coming up from the south. The Second Division and the Reserve Brigade did make some progress in pushing the two Confederate brigades they were opposing further to the west, but darkness forced a halt to operations. Buford and the 1st Brigade then had to withdraw back to Middleburg.¹¹

After the day's fight, Pleasonton sent Hooker a message which indicated that "my troops have fought beautifully to-day." Major General Butterfield, Hooker's chief of staff, responded with the sarcastic,

The general is rejoiced to hear that you are doing so well. He is also very anxious to know if any of the enemy's infantry columns are moving in any direction, and in which direction they are moving.

Pleasonton seemed to remain ignorant of what Hooker wanted him to do; that is, find Lee's infantry. The destruction of Stuart's cavalry was of secondary concern.¹²

¹¹*Official Records*, 2:759; Longacre, 124-125; Nye, 195-196. Nye incorrectly has the fight near New Lisbon taking place on 20 June.

¹²*Official Records*, 3:210-211.

The Battle of Upperville

Heavy rains prevented any major combat from taking place on 20 June 1863, but some skirmishing did occur. The inactivity allowed Pleasonton to reinforce his Corps. In the afternoon of 20 June, Pleasonton asked Hooker to provide him with several brigades of infantry so the Cavalry Corps could take the offensive:

I would . . . respectfully request that the general commanding permit me to take my whole corps to-morrow morning, and throw it at once upon Stuart's whole force, and cripple it up.¹³

Hooker responded to Pleasonton's request by ordering the First Division of the V Corps to support the cavalry. This division contained three infantry brigades, one of which was Colonel Strong Vincent's 3rd Brigade. Within this unit was the famous 20th Maine Infantry Regiment which would make the heroic stand on Little Round Top at Gettysburg.¹⁴

It is clear from Pleasonton's request that he had placed the destruction of Stuart's cavalry in the forefront of his planning. At a time when his higher commander remained in desperate need of information about Lee's army, Pleasonton remained obsessed with the idea of a decisive battle with Stuart. Pleasonton had obviously forgotten what his former West Point instructor Dennis Mahan, had to say about gaining intelligence about the enemy:

There are no more important duties, which an officer may be called upon to perform, than those of collecting and arranging the information

¹³*Ibid.*, 1:911.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 179, 911.

upon which either the general, or daily operations of a campaign must be based.¹⁵

Pleasanton's lack of concern about reconnaissance would have a direct impact on the upcoming battle.

Pleasanton's plan of attack for 21 June 1863 called for the Second Division to conduct a feint west of Middleburg. Buford and the First Division would make the main effort on Gregg's northern (or right) flank along a route similar to the one of 19 June (Figure 22). Pleasanton was apparently using the same scheme of maneuver he had used on 19 June when Buford had flanked the Confederate forces at Middleburg. Unfortunately, there were several problems with this plan. First, although Buford's was the main effort, Pleasanton did not provide him with any infantry support. In fact, Pleasanton only used Vincent's Brigade to support Gregg; he left the other two infantry brigades in reserve near Middleburg. In addition, instead of using 20 June to allow Buford to plan and organize his forces for the attack, Pleasanton did not notify Buford of the operation until two or three hours before the First Division was to move. As a consequence, Buford did not have time to feed his men or horses, conduct any reconnaissance, or give detailed orders to his subordinate commanders. The lack of time for scouting prior to the attack would turn out to be a significant omission. Also, heavy rains on 20 June had made cross-country movement difficult or impossible in some areas, and as could be expected, detailed information on the enemy situation was not available. As he had done at Brandy Station, the Commander of the Cavalry

¹⁵Dennis H. Mahan, *An Elementary Treatise on Advanced-Guard, Out-Post, and Detachment Service of Troops, and the Manner of Posting and Handling Them in Presence of an Enemy* (New edition, New York: John Wiley, 1861), 105.

Corps failed to take into account that Stuart could also move his forces or be reinforced.¹⁶

The remainder of Jones' Brigade joined Stuart on the evening of 19 June, while Hampton's Brigade arrived the following day. Stuart deployed Hampton and Robertson along the Ashby's Gap Turnpike just west of Middleburg. Chambliss and Jones were posted in front of Union. Finally, Munford's Brigade was even further north near Snicker's Gap. Unlike on 19 June, where Buford's attack was impeded by two enemy regiments, in this attack he would face two Confederate brigades.¹⁷

Pleasanton launched the attack on the morning of 21 June by sending Gregg, with Vincent's infantry, up the Ashby's Gap Turnpike against Robertson and Hampton. Gregg's forces were able to gradually force these Confederate units to fall back toward Upperville. The troopers of the First Division left Aldie around 0500 hours and were in position at Middleburg at approximately 0730. Buford initially followed Gregg's Division into the town and then turned north toward the ford across Goose Creek. Once the First Division neared the ford, Buford turned his force to the southwest along the south side of Goose Creek. His intention was to hit the left (or northern) flank of the two Rebel brigades along Ashby's Gap Turnpike. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient room south of the Creek to allow Buford to turn the Confederate flank. Buford then had to countermarch back to the ford across Goose Creek.¹⁸

¹⁶*Official Records*, 913, 920, 954.

¹⁷McClellan, 307.

¹⁸*Official Records*, 920-921, 932; Newel Cheney, *History of the Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Poland Center, NY: Martin Merz and

Buford was in position to start across Goose Creek by about 1100 hours, but pickets from the 9th and 11th Virginia and 2nd North Carolina Cavalry Regiments had to be pushed back before the First Division could cross. These Confederates were from Chambliss' and Jones' Brigades which were operating in front of Union and New Lisbon. William Gamble's Brigade was leading the First Division across Goose Creek. He dismounted two companies of the 3rd Indiana and deployed them as skirmishers to drive in the enemy's pickets. Once this was successful, the First Division started up the road for New Lisbon and Union.¹⁹

As the 1st Brigade attacked to the northwest, with the 2nd Brigade in support, Buford sent the Reserve Brigade across Goose Creek at Millville. Buford had hoped to have the Regulars hit the flank of the Rebel's original position along the Ashby's Gap Turnpike. However, General Gregg had already forced the Confederates he was facing to fall back as far as the point where Goose Creek crosses the Turnpike near Rector's Cross Roads. It was apparent to Buford that he was not going to find any assailable flank as he moved toward New Lisbon. Having already spent an inordinate amount of time getting across Goose Creek, Buford made the decision not to recall the Reserve Brigade. Instead he ordered Major Starr of the 6th US, who was in temporary command of the Brigade, to move down the Pike to support Gregg's advance. Buford would become the supporting attack as the Second Division moved west along the Ashby's Gap Turnpike.²⁰

Son, 1901), 98; William N. Pickerill, *History of the Third Indiana Cavalry* (Indianapolis, ID: Aetna Printing, 1865), 79.

¹⁹Hard, 250-251; *Official Records*, 932.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 921; O'Neill, 54.

At about this time General Stuart realized that a drive by Buford along the north side of Goose Creek could cut his command in two. He, therefore, ordered Chambliss and Jones to begin to withdraw. After disengaging from Buford's forces these brigades were to move west and link up with Hampton and Robertson near Upperville. Both Rebel brigades left rear guards to continue to delay Buford's remaining brigades. Jones used the sharpshooters of the 11th and 12th Virginia; Chambliss detailed one of his regiments, the 9th Virginia. These Confederate cavalymen delayed Buford for much of the afternoon. They would hold a position only long enough to cause William Gamble's 1st Brigade, which was leading the First Division, to form line of battle and unlimber the one section of Union artillery. As soon as Gamble was deployed, the Confederate rear guard would fall back again. Gamble had to stop and deploy three different times.²¹

Buford continued his laborious advance to the west until he reached Willisville (Figure 23). At that point, he turned to the southwest and followed the north bank of Panther Skin Creek. As the head of the First Division's column neared the Kinchelow House, Buford could see Gregg's Division engaging Hampton's and Robertson's Brigades. He was determined to support the Second Division's attack but found the terrain too difficult to maneuver across. As Buford was studying the situation, the trains of Jones' and Chambliss' Brigades and the Ashby Virginia Horse Artillery Battery (Chew's Horse Artillery Battery) came into view moving south toward Upperville along the Trappe Road. Buford ordered Gamble's troops forward to intercept.²²

²¹*Official Records*, 2:691,750-751,1:921,932-933.

²²George W. Beale, *A Lieutenant of Cavalry in Lee's Army* (Boston, MA: The Gorham Press, 1908), 104; *Official Records*, 1,27,1:921.

The main body of Chambliss' and Jones' Brigades had been moving west as ordered by Stuart; however, the route they were taking was not as direct as the one used by Buford. The First Division had a chance to cut off the Confederate units before they could reach Ashby's Gap. Gamble formed the 8th Illinois in line and had them charge across the open field south of the "Sunken Road." To cover their advance, he deployed the 3rd Indiana and 12th Illinois as skirmishers. As the Union troopers moved forward, the head of Jones' Brigade was nearing the junction of the Trappe and Sunken Roads. Buford may not have known it at the time, but he was familiar with these particular Confederate cavalymen. Jones's unit was the famous "Laurel" Brigade which had first been commanded by Turner Ashby and then Beverly Robertson. It was the same unit which had routed Buford's command at Lewis Ford the previous summer.²³

As the 8th Illinois charged to the west, Chambliss' Brigade continued moving south along the Trappe Road. The Illinois cavalymen were able to advance against the flank of the 2nd North Carolina and 10th Virginia Regiments. After halting to deliver a mounted volley with their Sharps carbines, the Westerners charged into a close-range melee with Chambliss' units. At the same time, Chew's Battery unlimbered along the Sunken Road behind a stone wall and started to fire double canister into the flanks of the Union troopers. The 1st Brigade troopers turned on this new threat and discharged several volleys into the artillerists with their carbines and Colt revolvers, but not before the fire from the 12-pounder Blakely Rifles and howitzers cut down many Federal troopers. At least forty-five dead horses

²³*Ibid.*, 932-933; Hard, 251-252.

were counted in front of the battery's position, and the horses of both Gamble and the commander of the 8th Illinois were killed. It is likely that the majority of the 1st Brigade's thirty-nine killed and wounded cavalymen also fell here. Chew's Battery would probably have been captured, but Buford's troops could not get over the wall which separated the two sides. However, Captain Chew was forced to order his battery to fall back to the west side of the Trappe Road.²⁴

To cover Chew's Battery as it limbered, Colonel Jones ordered first the 12th, then the 11th, and finally elements of the 7th Virginia Regiments to charge Gamble's forces. Union carbines and pistols were fired with deadly effect against this piecemeal commitment of Confederate troops. However, this mass of Rebel horsemen held Gamble long enough for the hard-pressed Southerners to retreat through Ashby's Gap.²⁵

During the Upperville battles, John Buford and his command had clearly settled the score with "Ashby's" cavalry. Concerning the fight along Trappe Road, one member of Jones's Brigade recorded that "in this fight we were decidedly worsted by the enemy."²⁶ George Neese of Chew's Battery also

²⁴*Official Records*, 171; Richard L. T. Beale, *History of the Ninth Virginia Cavalry, in the War Between the States* (Richmond, VA: B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1899), 74; Ken Baumann, *Arming the Suckers, 1861-1865; A Compilation of Illinois Civil War Weapons* (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1989), 51-52; George M. Neese, *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (New York and Washington: Neale Publishing Co., 1911; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1988), 182-183; William N. McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade: Originally the Ashby Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia and Chew's Battery* (Baltimore, MD: Sun Job Printing Office, 1907; Reprint, Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., 1987), 150.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 149-152.

²⁶John N. Opie, *A Rebel Cavalryman with Lee, Stuart and Jackson* (Chicago: W. B. Conkey Company, 1899), 162.

commented on the First Division's attack along Trappe Road. Early in the battle he thought his battery would certainly be captured. Neese paid tribute to Buford's men by saying, "They were certainly the bravest and boldest Yanks that ever fought us on any field."²⁷

True to his habit for always seeking out any information on the enemy, Buford had one last mission to carry out before sunset on 21 June. Although infantry of Longstreet's Corps held Ashby's Gap, Buford sent patrols up to the top of the Blue Ridge. From this vantage point they were able to see McLaws' Division in its camp below. Pleasonton passed this information to Hooker the next day.²⁸

The Battle of Gettysburg

On 22 June, Pleasonton ordered the Cavalry Corps to give up the ground for which it had fought the previous day and fall back to Aldie. The Corps remained near Aldie until 26 June, when it moved to Leesburg. On 27 June, the Corps separated and the First Division crossed the Potomac at Edward's Ferry and moved to Jefferson, Maryland. Buford's advance to Middletown on 28 June, and his moves through Boonsborough, Cavetown, Monterey Springs, and Fairfield on 29 June, screened the left flank of the Army of the Potomac as it advanced north into Pennsylvania.²⁹

²⁷Neese, 182-183.

²⁸*Official Records*, 1:913; John S. Mosby, *Stuart's Cavalry in the Gettysburg Campaign* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1908), 72.

²⁹*Official Records*, 143-144, 913-914, 926, 3:337, 338, 349.

Reorganization of the Cavalry Corps

As Buford moved his troops into Pennsylvania on 29 June, a further major reorganization of the cavalry within the Army of the Potomac was taking place. On 28 June, Major General Julius Stahel's cavalry division, which had been part of the forces defending the Capital, was transferred to Pleasonton's Corps. The two brigades of this unit formed the new Third Division with Judson Kilpatrick as its commander. Two former captains were jumped to brigadier general to command the Division's brigades—George A. Custer and Elon J. Farnsworth. Custer would become well known, but Farnsworth would be killed leading a cavalry charge against Confederate infantry at Gettysburg. It is interesting to note that before his promotion Farnsworth had been a captain in Gamble's 8th Illinois. Captain Wesley Merritt of the Reserve Brigade's 2nd US Cavalry was also jumped to brigadier general. Buford placed Merritt in command of his former brigade in place of Major Samuel Starr.³⁰

The Move Toward Gettysburg

On 27 June 1863, Hooker directed his chief of staff to send the following order to Pleasonton:

Direct that the cavalry be sent well to the advance of Frederick, in the direction of Gettysburg and Emmitsburg, and see what they can of the movements of the enemy.³¹

Pleasonton selected his most capable reconnaissance officer, John Buford, to carry out Hooker's orders and to screen the flank of the Army nearest Lee's

³⁰*Ibid.*, 144, 166-167, 3:373, 376.

³¹*Ibid.*, 349.

forces. On 29 June, the 1st and 2nd Brigades of the First Division and one artillery battery were directed to proceed to Gettysburg by way of Emmitsburg. This same order deprived Buford of the Reserve Brigade which was sent to Mechanicsville to guard the South Mountain passes.³²

Buford, with Gamble's and Devin's Brigades and Calef's Artillery Battery, entered Gettysburg at 1100 hours on 30 June 1863. Although he reported his "men and horses are flagged out," he immediately sent out scouting parties to locate any Confederate forces in the area (Figure 24). Buford dispatched patrols in the direction of Chambersburg and Cashtown, Mummasburg, Carlisle, Harrisburg, and York.³³

By the evening of 30 June, Buford's patrols had returned and he had had time to analyze the collected information. At 2240 hours he sent the following report to Pleasonton:

I have the honor to state the following facts: A. P. Hill's corps, composed of Anderson, Heth, and Pender, is massed back of Cashtown, 9 miles from this place. His pickets, composed of infantry and artillery, are in sight of mine. There is a road from Cashtown running through Mummasburg and Hunterstown on to York pike at Oxford, which is terribly infested with roving detachments of cavalry. Rumor says Ewell is coming over the mountains from Carlisle. One of his escort was captured to-day near Heidlersburg. He says Rodes, commanding a division of Ewell's, has already crossed the mountains from Carlisle.³⁴

Just before writing Pleasonton, Buford had sent a more detailed report to his wing commander, Major General John Reynolds. Reynolds' command, which

³²*Ibid.*, 400, 926.

³³*Ibid.*, 1:923.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 924. The large numbers of Rebel cavalry reported by Buford were elements of Jenkin's Brigade and the 35th Virginia Battalion from Jones' Brigade. These units had been supporting Ewell's advance during his advance into Pennsylvania; Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), 655.

consisted of his own I Corps and the XI and III Corps, was south of Buford near Emmitsburg and Taneytown. Throughout the day Buford had advised Reynolds of "all that I know." In addition to the information in the 2230 hours dispatch to Pleasonton, Buford informed the I Corps commander that, "Longstreet, from all I can learn, is still behind Hill." For the first time in the Gettysburg campaign, a Union cavalry commander had provided detailed and accurate intelligence on the locations of Lee's infantry units. As Stephen Starr indicates in his history of the Union Cavalry, "This was cavalry scouting and reporting at their best, a model of precision and accuracy."³⁵

As his forces neared Gettysburg, Buford clearly felt that gaining intelligence information on the enemy was his primary task. However, with the bulk of Lee's Army within close proximity of Buford's position, he must have realized that his forces would soon have to engage the enemy. Already, on two occasions the First Division had had brief fights with Confederate infantry. The day before arriving in Gettysburg, Gamble's troops had encountered two Confederate regiments near Fairfield. After a brief skirmish, Buford's troops continued with their primary mission of pushing on to Gettysburg. Then, shortly after Buford's troops had arrived in Gettysburg on 30 June, they detected Confederate infantry advancing from the direction of Cashtown. These troops were from the four North Carolina regiments of James Pettigrew's Brigade of Heth's Division. They had advanced on Gettysburg

³⁵*Ibid.*, 923; Stephen Z. Starr, *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War*, 3 vols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 1:423.

looking for shoes, but quickly withdrew rather than bring on an engagement.³⁶

The First Division at Gettysburg

Many of Buford's troops did not know that circumstances were transpiring which would result in more intense combat for the Federal cavalymen. Prior to 28 June 1863, Lee's Army had steadily marched north into Pennsylvania. Elements of Ewell's Corps even reached as far as the banks of the Susquehanna River and threatened the state capital of Harrisburg. Apparently, Lee had originally planned to have his remaining two Corps follow Ewell's advance. However, late on 28 June, Longstreet's famous spy brought information to Lee that, not only did the Army of the Potomac have a new commander, but that Army was now north of the Potomac River. With his units spread in an arc from Chambersburg to almost Harrisburg, Lee realized the vulnerability of his scattered forces.³⁷

Therefore, late on 28 June, Lee ordered the II Corps to move back along the Cumberland Valley to join the rest of the Army near Chambersburg. However, during the morning of 29 June, he changed his mind and sent a second order instructing Ewell to move toward Heidlersburg on the east side of South Mountain. This new order came too late to affect Major General Edward Johnson's Division, which had already started down the Valley Pike for Shippensburg. However, the other two divisions of Ewell's Corps (Early and Rodes) changed direction and proceeded toward Heidlersburg. As Ewell was

³⁶*Official Records*, 914, 926, 2:344, 607, 637; Henry Heth, "Letter from Major-General Henry Heth, of A.P. Hill's Corps, A.N.V.," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 4, number 4 (October 1877): 157; Hard, 255-256.

³⁷Coddington, 180-181.

making his moves, Lee also directed A. P. Hill's Corps to move east across South Mountain toward Cashtown. The significance of these moves was that by 30 June, large numbers of Confederate infantry were positioned just north and west of Gettysburg.³⁸

Popular tradition has it that, at about 2200 hours on 30 June, Buford met with Colonel Devin to discuss the situation facing the First Division. Some sources indicate that Buford stated "that [Lee's] concentration at [Gettysburg] was certain, [and] that the battle would be fought at that point." The combative Tom Devin then remarked that his men "would take care of" any Confederate advance during the next twenty-four hours. Buford was not so sure and indicated that they would have to "fight like the devil to hold" until Reynolds and the infantry came up in support.³⁹

To monitor any movement of the enemy in the direction of Gettysburg, Buford ordered both Devin and Gamble to establish a picket line to the west and north. When the 1st Brigade arrived in Gettysburg it established its camp just outside of town, west of the Lutheran Theological Seminary. The 2nd Brigade was a few hundred yards to the northeast across the Chambersburg Pike. These dispositions dictated that Gamble's troopers would watch A. P. Hill's Confederates to the west. Devin would then cover the routes leading into town from the north--the roads Ewell's forces would have to use in any advance. This lengthy picket line, stretching for over seven miles, was manned and supported by the approximately 3,000 troopers available to Buford

³⁸*Ibid.*, 188-191.

³⁹*Sixth New York Cavalry*, 136; Henry P. Moyer, *History of the 17th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry* (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Printing, 1911), 60.

(Figure 25). These men steadfastly maintained the line throughout the night of 30 June and 1 July.⁴⁰

At 0600 hours on 1 July 1863, Private Thomas Kelley and Sergeant Levi Shafer of "E" Company went on duty at the 8th Illinois Cavalry's vedette post number one. This advance picket was located almost three miles west of the Lutheran Seminary near the bridge over Marsh Creek on the Chambersburg Pike. About ten minutes after occupying their post, the two Union cavalymen noted a large cloud of dust forming about three miles further west. A sizable formation was obviously marching east on the Pike from the direction of Cashtown. By about 0700 hours the head of the approaching column came into sight, and a Rebel flag was distinguishable at its front.⁴¹

The soldiers the two Illinois cavalymen had spotted were from James Archer's Confederate Brigade which was leading the advance of Heth's Division of the III Corps. These veteran troops had left Cashtown in march column along the Chambersburg Pike at about 0500 hours. To the rear of Archer's troops was Joe Davis' Mississippi Brigade and then the two remaining infantry brigades of the division. As Heth's infantry marched from Cashtown, his normal artillery battalion had remained in the rear. However, Colonel Lindsay Walker, the commander of the III Corps' artillery reserve, ordered

⁴⁰*Sixth New York Cavalry*, 136-137; Moyer, 60; John L. Beveridge, "The First Gun at Gettysburg," *Military Essays and Recollections, Papers Read Before the Commandery of the State of Illinois, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*, 5 vols. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company, 1894), 2:89. The organization of the First Division is based on John W. Busey and David G. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, NJ: Longstreet House, 1986), 99, 101-103, 110.

⁴¹Ezra B. Fuller, "Who Fired the First Shot at the Battle of Gettysburg," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* 24(1913): 793.

Major William Pegram to follow behind Heth's Division with his reserve artillery battalion (Figure 26).⁴²

Private Kelley and Sergeant Shafer were soon joined by their commanding officer, Lieutenant Marcellus Jones. The three men continued to monitor the progress of Heth's troops, and by approximately 0730 the head of the enemy column was within a few hundred yards of the Federal position. At this point Jones took Sergeant Shafer's .52 caliber Sharps carbine and walked over to rest it on a nearby rail fence. "[Jones] took deliberate aim," related Private Kelley, "and fired at the mounted officer at the head of the column." The first shot of the Battle of Gettysburg had been fired.⁴³

After this first encounter, the 1st Brigade's pickets moved to the high ground immediately to the east of Marsh Creek. Heth ordered his units to continue to advance up the Pike but in a more cautious manner, since he was unsure of the Union forces to his front. To screen the Division's advance, Heth instructed both Davis and Archer to deploy several companies in a skirmish

⁴²Official Records, 637, 648-649, 652, 677; E. T. Boland, "Beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg," *Confederate Veteran* 14 (June, 1906): 308; James L. Morrison, Jr., ed., *The Memoirs of Henry Heth* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1974), 173; Glenn Tucker, *High Tide at Gettysburg: The Campaign in Pennsylvania* (Indianapolis, 1958; reprint, New York: William S. Konecky Associates, Inc., no date noted), 104-105. The organization of Heth's Division is based on Busey and Martin, 173-177, 193.

⁴³Beveridge, 91-92; Fuller, 794; Ken Baumann, *Arming the Suckers, 1861-1865; A Compilation of Illinois Civil War Weapons* (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1989), 52. Buford's cavalymen were armed with a variety of carbines, but the Sharps was the most numerous and popular. The Burnside, Merrill, Smith, and Gallagher were also used by some of companies within the First Division. Contrary to popular tradition, none of Buford's men were equipped with the Spencer repeating carbine. The Union Army did not receive the first delivery of Spencer carbines until October 1863 (although a small number of Spencer Rifles were in use earlier in the year). Busey and Martin, 205-206; John D. McAulay, *Carbines of the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Union City, TN: Pioneer Press, 1981), 8-11.

line. Archer deployed the entire 5th Alabama Battalion and three companies from the 13th Alabama Regiment on the south side of the Pike. To act as support, the remaining companies of the 13th Alabama formed the standard two-rank battle line behind the Brigade's skirmishers. Davis' Brigade took similar measures to the north of the Pike. Consequently, Heth's advance had three lines of soldiers on each side of the Chambersburg Pike, but the majority of the Division remained in column along the road.⁴⁴

With the Confederate sharpshooters advancing against them, Buford's pickets gradually fell back to the east. Availing themselves of the available cover--trees, fences, buildings, or folds in the ground--to stop and snipe at the pursuing Rebels. Although Heth's infantry continued to slowly advance, the Federal pickets gained time for Buford to take further steps to hinder the Southern advance.⁴⁵

Fortunately for the Union troopers, the terrain being contested was suitable to the defense. As the Confederate infantry marched toward Gettysburg they encountered numerous fence lines, woods, orchards, and streams which acted as obstacles to a rapid advance (Figure 27). One of the first major obstacles to an eastward advance was Herr Ridge. This ridge line runs north and south and is a little over one mile west of the Lutheran Seminary. It is crossed by the Hagerstown (or Fairfield) Road at its southern end and by the Chambersburg Pike on its northern extreme. West of Gettysburg, only Oak Hill is higher than this ridge. Two further ridge lines, McPherson Ridge and then Seminary Ridge, must be crossed before reaching

⁴⁴Boland, 308; Beveridge, 92.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*; Hard, 256.

the town. These are . In the valley between Herr and McPherson Ridges is another prominent terrain feature, Willoughby's Run. This creek is fordable, but it and the woods along its banks prevent rapid movement.⁴⁶

At approximately 0800, reports of Heth's advance reached Major John Beveridge, the commanding officer of the 8th Illinois. Beveridge was in the Brigade's main camp near the Seminary. "Boots and saddles" was sounded, then "To horse," and the Brigade was soon ready to mount. At about this time both Buford and Gamble arrived from the First Division Headquarters in Gettysburg. The 1st Brigade commander immediately formed his unit and moved west along the Pike. To support the hard-pressed pickets, Gamble had three squadrons form a skirmish line along Herr Ridge. The rest of the Brigade, and Calef's Horse Artillery Battery, formed a defensive line along McPherson Ridge.⁴⁷

The stage was now set for the historic meeting between Buford's and Heth's forces. Unfortunately, the story of what happened on the morning of 1 July 1863 has become much romanticized. Many modern readers' knowledge of what transpired on the first day at Gettysburg is based on the novelization of the battle written by Michael Shaara. This is distressing, since much of the story presented in *Killer Angels* is inaccurate, at least that which deals with Buford. This thesis is not an attempt to refute Shaara's work; however, based

⁴⁶The map on which Figure 27 is based is found in the *Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, plate 95, 1.

⁴⁷*Official Records*, 1:927, 934, 1030-1031; Beveridge, 91; John H. Calef, "Gettysburg Notes: The Opening Gun," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 40 (1907): 47-48.

on a careful analysis of the available sources, it presents a more historical description of the events.⁴⁸

By approximately 0900, Gamble's pickets and skirmishers had been pushed off Herr Ridge. Thus far the Union troopers had yet to make a determined stand; however, their delaying tactics had certainly slowed Heth's advance. In fact, it had taken Heth over one and one-half hours to cover the two miles between Marsh Creek and Herr Ridge. By this time "it became evident," recorded General Heth, "that there were [Union] infantry, cavalry, and artillery in and around the town."⁴⁹

The Confederate commander was incorrect in reporting that there was infantry to his front, since Major General John Reynolds' units were still an hour off. The I Corps' leader had departed for Gettysburg at the head of Brigadier General James Wadsworth's First Division, I Corps at 0800. Wadsworth's units had bivouacked about five miles southwest of Gettysburg along the Emmitsburg Road. It would take until 1000 hours for these infantrymen to march into positions to support Buford's cavalry.⁵⁰

Although the Federal I Corps' infantry would not move into position until mid-morning, Reynold's and his staff met Buford on McPherson Ridge along the Chambersburg Pike at about 0930. Reynolds had been notified by Buford earlier in the morning of the movement of Heth's forces. The courier delivering this message had met the I Corps commander while Reynolds and Wadsworth were advancing toward Gettysburg on the Emmitsburg Road.

⁴⁸Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1974), 86-96.

⁴⁹*Official Records*, 2:637; Beveridge, 93.

⁵⁰*Official Records*, 1:244-245, 265-267, 273, 278.

Reynolds then hastened forward in advance of his corps to confer with Buford on the tactical situation and the lay of the land. Quickly determining that Buford's outnumbered cavalymen could not delay the Confederate advance for long, Reynolds rushed back to guide Wadsworth's troops into position.⁵¹

Just before the meeting between the two Union Generals, further to the west on Herr Ridge Henry Heth was making plans of his own. Because he was uncertain of the threat to his front and fearing a possible ambush, Heth decided to halt his advance while Major William Pegram moved two of his artillery batteries into position to support the Confederate infantry. Pegram initially ordered the section of Marye's Battery equipped with 3-inch Ordnance Rifles to unlimber. These long-range guns then shelled the woods on the north side of the Pike along Seminary Ridge. These two guns were then joined by the six "Napoleons" which made up the remainder of Marye's Battery and all of McGraw's artillery. Heth ordered Pegram to continue to shell possible

⁵¹Calef, 47; Coddington, 262-263, 682. There is some question about where Reynolds found Buford. Popular tradition holds that they met at the Lutheran Seminary; however, Coddington lays out a convincing argument against this. He points out that two of Reynolds' staff mention or imply that the rendezvous took place on McPherson Ridge. In addition, Calef also specifically records the Ridge as the meeting place.

There is also some dispute on the time of the rendezvous. Coddington's judgment is that it occurred after 1000 hours. However, both Wadsworth and Doubleday indicate that Reynolds was killed at 1015. It seems improbable that Reynolds could have departed McPherson Ridge, ridden back down the Emmitsburg Road to collect Wadsworth's units, and then marched with them back to the Ridge all in fifteen minutes. Calef indicates that Buford and Reynolds were talking as his battery went into action. Since this occurred before 0930 hours, it seems more likely that the meeting took place about this time. Buford's 1010 hours dispatch to General Meade confuses the issue. In it he indicates that "Reynolds is advancing, and is within three miles." Coddington feels that this shows that Reynolds had not yet met with Buford. However, it could also indicate that the conference had already taken place, and Reynolds had departed with a promise to hurry his infantry forward. Buford could not have known how far south of Gettysburg the infantry were, only that they were within three miles. *Official Records*, 245, 266, 924; Calef, 47; Coddington, 263, 682-683.

Union positions along McPherson and Seminary Ridges for the next half-hour (until roughly 0930). Under cover of this Confederate artillery bombardment, James Archer marched his brigade column to the south of the Chambersburg Pike and formed line of battle perpendicular to the road. This deployment was probably completed by 0930. Joe Davis' Brigade, mirroring Archer's deployment, was arrayed in line to the north of the Pike. However, because these Mississippians had been following Archer's column, it took until 1030 for Davis to march forward and get his units into position.⁵²

Shortly after getting his battle line formed, and before Davis was in position, Archer ordered his units down the eastern slope of Herr Ridge toward Willoughby's Run. As the Tennessee and Alabama troops started to cross the Run, "[Gamble's] cavalry began to get stubborn." At this point, Archer's skirmishers could no longer push Gamble's men back on their own. Therefore, these sharpshooters waited for the main battle line to advance to their support. Archer's reinforced line of battle then started up the west side of McPherson Ridge gradually pushing Gamble's men toward Gettysburg. It had taken about thirty minutes, or until approximately 1000 hours, for the Rebel infantry to cover the three-quarters of a mile between Herr and McPherson Ridges. Unfortunately for the Rebel infantry, this was just enough time for Reynold's Federal units to arrive in support. Archer's units soon found more than just Buford's cavalry to their front.⁵³

⁵²*Official Records*, 2:637, 646, 648-649; Boland, 308; *The Memoirs of Henry Heth*, 173; Tucker, 105; Heth, *Southern Historical Society Papers*: 158.

⁵³*Official Records*, 646; Boland, 308; W. H. Bird, *Stories of the Civil War* (Columbiana, AL: no publisher or date noted), 7.

After departing McPherson Ridge earlier in the day, Reynolds had found his First Division marching up the Emmitsburg Road. To bring these troops into action more quickly, he ordered them to leave the road about one mile south of Gettysburg and move in a direct line toward Buford's position. Wadsworth's column, led by Brigadier General Lysander Cutler's 2nd Brigade, started to relieve Buford's cavalry at about 1000 hours. Cutler's regiments were followed by Hall's Artillery Battery and then Brigadier General Solomon Meredith's 1st or "Iron Brigade." Cutler quickly moved his units to the north. Three of his regiments were positioned along Seminary Ridge on the north side of the Pike. The remainder formed a battle line along McPherson Ridge near the McPherson Farm. Hall's Battery moved up to relieve Calef's two sections along the Pike. Finally, Meredith's "Black Hats" moved into position between the left flank unit of the 2nd Brigade and the Hagerstown Road.⁵⁴

The arrival of the Union infantry could not have been more opportune. Gamble's units had just begun to fall back to Seminary Ridge when Reynold's and his men arrived. "Just at the time we came up," recorded Colonel William Robinson of the Seventh Wisconsin Infantry, "a brigade of the enemy's infantry was advancing upon [Buford's] position." If the Federal infantry had arrived any later, the Union cavalry would have been forced to abandon the delaying tactics they had been using, and Buford would have had to order a final stand along Seminary Ridge. Fortunately this did not occur.

⁵⁴*Official Records*, 1:244-245, 265-267, 274-275, 278-279, 281-282, 359, 1031; Warren W. Hassler, Jr., *Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg* (Birmingham, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1970; reprint, Gettysburg, PA: Stan Clark Military Books, 1991), 38-39; Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York: The Century Co., 1887; repr., Secaucus, NJ: Castle, no date noted), 3:284.

After being relieved by the infantry, Gamble's troopers screened the Union left flank before moving south along the Emmitsburg Road late in the day.⁵⁵

Thus far, almost all of the fighting had occurred south of Chambersburg Pike. This resulted in Devin's Brigade only being slightly engaged. The simple explanation for this was that Davis' Confederate Brigade, on the north side of the Pike, was not able to start its main attack until after Cutler's infantry had already moved into position along Seminary Ridge. In addition, the 2nd Brigade had earlier maintained its position on the flank of Gamble's units as they withdrew to Seminary Ridge. Although Devin's skirmish line had clashed with some of Davis' sharpshooters, the fighting had not been extensive. However, the 2nd Brigade troopers were not through fighting.

Having been informed of Ewell's steady advance from the north, Devin quickly moved east to reinforce his pickets along the York, Carlisle, and Harrisburg Roads. While Buford and the 1st Brigade contested a new attack by A. P. Hill's Corps against the Union left flank, Devin conducted an effective delaying action on the Federal right. Like Buford and Gamble earlier in the day, Devin gained time for the Union infantry to advance to counter the Confederate attack. In this case Major General O. O. Howard's XI Corps moved up into defensive positions north of Gettysburg and relieved Devin's cavalymen. Later in the afternoon, Devin withdrew through Gettysburg and joined Buford on the extreme left along the Emmitsburg Road.⁵⁶

⁵⁵*Official Records*, 278, 927, 934

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 938-939.

Buford and the First Cavalry Division spent the night of 1 July along the Emmitsburg Road south of the famous Peach Orchard. As he had done the previous night, Buford dispatched pickets to screen the Federal forces. On 2 July, this picket line became engaged with some of Longstreet's skirmishers, but Daniel Sickles' III Corps soon came up and relieved Buford's forces. After receiving orders from Alfred Pleasonton, the First Division moved by way of Taneytown to Westminster to guard the Army's trains.⁵⁷

Significance of Buford's Actions at Gettysburg

Although his performance on the first day at Gettysburg may not have been as dramatic as some romanticists have portrayed, Buford nevertheless contributed in significant ways to the ultimate Union victory. Buford's systematic collection and distribution of intelligence information on the enemy and terrain and his competent conduct of the delaying actions on 1 July were not sensational or heroic. However, his actions created the conditions which ultimately allowed Union forces to establish their positions along Cemetery Ridge. It was from these strong defenses that the Army of the Potomac was able to fight so successfully on 2 and 3 July.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 914, 927-928.

CHAPTER 5

BUFORD'S CAREER AFTER GETTYSBURG

The Battle of Williamsport

With the end of the Battle of Gettysburg, the Army of Northern Virginia made preparations for a retreat across the Potomac River into West Virginia. The cavalry of both sides were active in the retreat and pursuit over the next several days. Early on Independence Day Pleasonton ordered Buford, then in Westminster with Devin's and Gamble's brigades, into motion. Buford had hoped to use 4 July to refit and shoe his horses, but this was not to be. On 5 July 1863, the entire First Division arrived near Frederick; the Reserve Brigade having come down to join with the 1st and 2nd Brigades. Buford spent the rest of the day resupplying, and on the morning of 6 July, he ordered his command to march toward Williamsport on the Potomac River.¹

Williamsport and Falling Waters were of great operational significance, since Lee planned to use them as his main crossing sites over the Potomac. Brigadier General John D. Imboden's Confederate Cavalry Command had already arrived at Williamsport on the afternoon of 5 July, along with the hundreds of wagons which made up the trains of Lee's Army. Unfortunately for the Confederates, heavy rains had caused the ford at Williamsport to

¹U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 27, part 1:928, 939, 943. Cited hereafter as *Official Records*.

become unusable. In addition, an earlier Federal raid had destroyed the pontoon bridge at Falling Waters. Imboden had no choice but to establish a defensive position and wait for the crossing sites to become usable.²

Imboden's defensive position was, however, a strong one. In addition to the two regiments and one battery of his own command, he had been reinforced with six batteries of artillery and had formed two ad hoc infantry regiments from teamsters and walking wounded (Figure 28). Imboden was further reinforced by two infantry regiments from Early's Division. These last two units had escorted an ordnance train from Winchester, Virginia, and had not taken part in the Battle of Gettysburg. The Confederate forces could, therefore, field approximately 3,500 infantry and cavalry and twenty-three artillery pieces.³

As Buford moved through Boonsborough toward Williamsport on 6 July, he encountered Brigadier General Judson Kilpatrick riding in from the direction of Hagerstown (Figure 29). Kilpatrick's Third Cavalry Division, reinforced by the 2nd Brigade of the Second Cavalry Division, had moved through Boonsborough ahead of Buford's forces. Buford now assumed

²Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, editors, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vol. (New York: The Century Co., 1887; repr., Secaucus, NJ: Castle, no date noted), 3:425. Cited hereafter as *Battles and Leaders*.

³*Official Records*, 2:323; *Battles and Leaders*, 3:426-427; Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War, 1861-65*, 5 vols. (Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1901; reprint, Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1991), 3:270-271; John W. Busey and David G. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, NJ: Longstreet House, 1986), 148, 178, 200-201; Jubal A. Early, *Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early, CSA, Autobiographical Sketch and Narrative of the War Between the States* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1912; Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1989), 282; Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), 554, 814-815.

command of both divisions and ordered Kilpatrick to take his forces and attack toward Hagerstown. Concurrently, Buford would take the First Division and move against Williamsport. For the next several days Buford would have six of the eight brigades of the Cavalry Corps under his command.⁴

By about 1700 hours on 6 July, the First Cavalry Division had reached St. James College about four miles southeast of Williamsport. At this point Buford's command encountered Imboden's pickets and immediately attacked. Buford deployed the division into line with the Reserve Brigade on the right, supported by Graham's Horse Artillery Battery. The 1st Brigade was on the left with the four 3-inch Ordnance rifles of Calef's Battery in support. Devin and the 2nd Brigade were in reserve behind Gamble. By this point in the campaign the First Division probably had less than 3,600 troopers present for duty, and the horse artillery could deploy no more than ten supporting cannons.⁵

Although the Federal offensive drove within one-half mile of the Confederate wagons, Buford's men could not sustain their attack. It is surprising that the First Division was able to do this well, since Imboden's defenders could deploy about the same number of men. Also, the Southern artillery strength was more than twice what Calef and Graham could bring to bear. Toward sundown Buford learned that a large enemy force was moving

⁴*Official Records* , 1:928,993-995.

⁵*Ibid.*, 1:928, 930, 935; Busey and Martin (99, 110) estimate that the First Division had 4,073 personnel at Gettysburg. Subtracting 484 casualties, for the period from 1 to 3 July, leaves Buford with 3,589 troopers. The First Division probably had less than this figure on 6 July, since some stragglers would have fallen out in the hard march to Williamsport. Gamble indicates in his report that Calef's battery (Tidball's former unit) was down to four guns by this time.

through Hagerstown toward Williamsport. He, therefore, ordered Kilpatrick to halt his attack in the direction of Hagerstown and to link up with the First Division's right flank. It was hoped that a combined attack by both Kilpatrick's and Buford's divisions could overwhelm Imboden's forces before Confederate reinforcements could influence the battle. Consequently, Kilpatrick dispatched the brigades of George Custer and Pennock Huey to reinforce Buford's attack, leaving Nathaniel Richmond's Brigade (Elon Farnsworth's former unit) to delay the Rebel force moving from Hagerstown. Unfortunately, before this combined attack could have any effect, Richmond's units were forced to retreat toward Boonsborough. This exposed Buford's right flank and rear, forcing him to order the Union forces to cease their attack. At about 1900, Devin's Brigade was ordered forward to relieve Merritt's and Gamble's fatigued units and to cover the withdrawal of the First Division to Jones' Crossroads.⁶

The Battle of Boonsborough

The majority of First Division troopers would get little rest on 7 July. During most of the day Devin's Brigade fought a determined rear guard action along the Williamsport to Boonsborough Road. By this time Stuart had moved the cavalry brigade of Brigadier General Albert G. Jenkins into position to continue the attack against Buford. This brigade had been on detached service and had only recently rejoined Stuart's Division. In addition, Brigadier General William Woffard's infantry brigade was placed in support of the cavalry. These riflemen were from McLaw's Division of I Corps and were under the temporary command of Stuart. Delaying from position to position,

⁶*Official Records* , 1:928,935,939-940,995,1005-1006.

Devin sufficiently slowed the Confederates to allow the First Division to get across Antietam Creek.⁷

As Devin's fight was going on to the east, Buford ordered the Reserve Brigade to determine the nature of the threat to the Federal northern flank. Merritt dispatched the 6th US Cavalry on a reconnaissance toward Funkstown along the Hagerstown to Boonsborough Road. In the late afternoon, on the outskirts of Funkstown, the Regulars hit the picket line of the 7th Virginia Cavalry of Jones' Brigade. Although the 6th US was initially forced back in some confusion, the Regiment eventually routed the Rebel horsemen with the help of the 1st US Cavalry. The Union troopers only broke off their attack after the 11th Virginia Cavalry Regiment came up in support of their sister unit.⁸

During the night of 7 July, Buford ensured that the men of the First and Third Cavalry Divisions remained alert to any new Confederate attack. Lack of sleep, hunger, and a steady rain made for a miserable night along the Federal defensive line in front of Boonsborough. It became apparent, however, that Buford's apprehension about a new Rebel attack was appropriate. At about 0500 hours on 8 July, Stuart launched a two-pronged drive on the Federal defenders. Stuart ordered Jenkins' Brigade to continue to

⁷*Ibid.*, 940, 2:338, 346, 703; Newel Cheney, *History of the Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Poland Center, NY: Martin Merz and Son, 1901), 118-120; Committee on Regimental History, *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry (Second Ira Harris Guard)* (Worcester, MA: Blanchard Press, 1908), 146-147. Jenkin's Brigade consisted of the 14th, 16th, and 17th Virginia Cavalry Regiments, and the 34th and 36th Virginia Cavalry Battalions; while Wofford's Georgia Brigade could deploy the 16th, 18th, and 24th Infantry Regiments, and Cobb's and Phillips' Legions.

⁸*Official Records*, 1:948-949, 2:754, 760-761; Richard L. Armstrong, *7th Virginia Cavalry* (Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1993), 57.

attack from Williamsport toward Boonsborough. To guard his rear, Stuart had Robertson's Brigade screen to the north of Hagerstown. The remaining four Confederate cavalry brigades then advanced from Funkstown with the Laurel Brigade leading.⁹

To counter this new threat, Buford deployed the First Division into a battle line about one and one-half miles from Boonsborough. Kilpatrick's Division was placed in reserve behind the First Division. Within Buford's division, Gamble's 1st Brigade was arrayed on high ground to the right of the Hagerstown Road. The 1st Brigade commander deployed the majority of his brigade as dismounted skirmishers. Calef's Battery was directed to unlimber behind the center of Gamble's line, while a mounted reserve was retained in the rear. The Reserve Brigade, formed on Gamble's left, also oriented toward the north. Finally, Devin's troops were placed to the left of Merritt's regiments, but facing west to counter any force moving from the direction of Williamsport. Unlike Gamble, Devin initially dismounted only two squadrons as skirmishers.¹⁰

For most of the day, Stuart's attacks made little impression on Buford's defensive line. However, the First Division's brigade commanders had to rotate companies into the skirmish line as ammunition supplies were expended. By mid-afternoon, elements of Kilpatrick's Division were ordered forward to relieve Devin's and Merritt's men. Up to this point in the battle, the Union

⁹*Official Records*, 1: 929, 2:703, 761, 765; Samuel L. Gracey, *Annals of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry* (Philadelphia, PA: E. H. Butler, 1868), 186.

¹⁰*Official Records*, 1:935, 940-941, 1033; Edward G. Longacre, *The Cavalry at Gettysburg* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1986), 260.

forces had only reacted to Stuart's actions. Buford decided it was now time to take the initiative and counterattack. Devin's command was moved from the left flank and massed behind and in support of the 1st Brigade. Custer's Brigade, from the Third Division, was on Gamble's left flank. With this concentrated force, Buford then attacked to the north into Stuart's fatigued units. In a move uncharacteristic of most division commanders, Buford rode up and joined the 8th Illinois in the forward skirmish line. William Gamble commented on his commander's actions in his report:

My brigade . . . was ordered to drive the enemy out of the woods in front, which was accomplished rapidly under a heavy fire of shell and musketry, General Buford in person leading the advance line of skirmishers; drove the enemy 3 miles.¹¹

With their Division Commander inspiring them in their advance, the troopers of the First Division drove Stuart back toward Beaver Creek. One soldier from the 8th Illinois recorded,

The men had run so fast that they were completely tired out, but were pleased to see General Buford shake his fat sides, as he attempted to keep up with them. He said "these boys beat anything in the world on a foot skirmish."¹²

Buford's personnel bravery was an example to his men, but they were also able to see the humor of the situation.

¹¹*Official Records*, 1:929,935-936,940-941,997-1001,1007,1010-1011, 1015-1016,1020,1033; *History of the Sixth New York Cavalry*, 147; Henry Norton, *Deeds of Daring, or, History of the 8th New York Volunteer Cavalry* (Norwich, NY: Chenango Telegraph Printing House, 1889), 70-71; Gracey, 187; Cheney, 120; George M. Neese, *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery* (New York and Washington: Neale Publishing Co., 1911; reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1988), 196-197.

¹²Abner Hard, *History of the Eighth Cavalry Regiment, Illinois Volunteers* (Aurora, IL: no publisher noted, 1868), 263.

Stuart indicates in his report on this engagement that he was not forced back, but decided to withdraw. He states that he had information that the Federals had been "heavily reinforced." Of course, Buford had not received any reinforcements. It is likely Stuart incorrectly interpreted Buford's effective concentration of available combat power against the Confederate eastern flank with the arrival of new Union troops. Darkness brought the fighting to an end and both sides moved back to camp for the night, each side keeping a strong picket line toward the enemy.¹³

The Battle Near Falling Waters

For the next several days Buford successfully engaged in a series of skirmishes and battles with Stuart's cavalry. The First Cavalry Division was acting as an advance guard for the infantrymen of the Army of the Potomac who were moving west out of the South Mountain passes. Conversely, Stuart was attempting to screen the defensive preparations of the Confederate infantry around Williamsport and Falling Waters. The First Division had a particularly good day on 10 July, when they drove Stuart all the way to Funkstown, being forced back only after infantry units of Longstreet's Corps reinforced the Rebel cavalry. On that day, Buford deployed the entire division in line astride the Hagerstown to Boonsborough Road. The now normal tactic of deploying a dismounted skirmish line, supported by artillery and mounted troops, was continued.¹⁴

¹³*Official Records* , 2:703-704.

¹⁴*Official Records* , 1:929,936,941-942,2:704-705.

Finally, on 13 July, Lee's engineers had been able to construct a pontoon bridge across the Potomac at Falling Waters. The River had also subsided enough to be fordable at Williamsport. Consequently, on the night of 13 July, the majority of the Army of Northern Virginia withdrew into West Virginia. On the morning of 14 July, both the First and Third Divisions advanced on the Confederate rearguard in front of Falling Waters. By this time only Pender's and Heth's Divisions from A. P. Hill's Corps had not been able to cross. Buford attempted to cut the Rebel infantry off by making a flanking move to seize the pontoon bridge, while Kilpatrick's units were to fix the enemy with a frontal attack. Unfortunately, Kilpatrick started his offensive before Buford was in position and most of the Rebel infantry were able to get across the Potomac. Both Union Cavalry Divisions were, however, able to capture several hundred Confederate infantry and some equipment.¹⁵

The largely successful crossing of Lee's army brought the Gettysburg Campaign to an end. Over the next several days, Rebel and Union forces moved into their old positions along the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers. By 27 July 1863, Buford and his First Division were back on picket duty along the Rappahannock between Sulphur Springs and Kelly's Ford.¹⁶

The Last Campaigns

For the next two months a period of comparative calm set in as the opposing armies watched each other along the Rappahannock line. Buford and the rest of the Cavalry Corps were more active than the infantry,

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 1:929, 936, 942, 990.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 930.

undertaking raids or reconnaissance missions in early August and late September. During the inconclusive Bristoe Campaign, in October 1863, Buford saw his last period of combat action. From 10 to 19 October, in conjunction with Kilpatrick's forces, Buford opposed the Confederate cavalry at the Second Battle of Brandy Station and successfully covered the withdrawal of the Army behind Bull Run. In each of these actions, Buford displayed his usual competence.¹⁷

In November 1863, in the unsanitary field conditions along the Rappahannock, John Buford contracted Typhoid Fever and requested to be relieved from duty. He went to Washington, D.C., to the home of his former commander and friend, George Stoneman. Unfortunately, Buford's health continued to deteriorate, and on 16 December 1863, the same day President Lincoln signed and sent him his commission as Major General of Volunteers, Buford died from complications caused by the Typhoid Fever.¹⁸

The nation mourned the death of one of its best soldiers. Praise for Buford came from many sources. For example, the *New York Times* praised Buford as the best cavalymen in the Union Army. As tragic as Buford's death

¹⁷*Ibid.*, vol. 29, 1:347-351; Henry B. McClellan, *The Life and Campaigns of Major General J. E. B. Stuart* (Boston and New York: 1885; reprint, Secaucus, NJ: The Blue and Gray Press, 1993), 376-381.

¹⁸Frank B. Borries, Jr., "General John Buford, Civil War Union Cavalryman" (Masters of Arts Thesis, University of Kentucky, 1960), 61-62; Mark M. Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary*, Revised Edition (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1988), 97; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 53; James H. Wilson, "Major-General John Buford," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* vol. 8, number 30 (September 1895): 182.

was, however, much of what he believed lived on in the accomplishments of his subordinates; officers that Buford had trained and mentored.¹⁹

Devin and Merritt in particular continued to play important roles within the Army of the Potomac. Since he was the senior brigade commander when Buford left the First Division, Wesley Merritt moved up to lead the division. He was steadily promoted within the Cavalry Corps, and by the end of the war was a major general of volunteers and Philip Sheridan's second in command. He had the honor of being one of the three Federal commissioners to receive the Confederate's formal surrender. After the war, Merritt became the colonel of the 5th US Cavalry, and in 1895 he was promoted to the substantive rank of major general in the Regular Army. Merritt's last combat assignment was during the Spanish-American War where he commanded the US forces investing Manila . He did not retire from active duty until June 1900, exactly thirty-seven years after he had lead the 2nd US Cavalry at Brandy Station.²⁰

Thomas Devin, like Merritt would ultimately take over command of the First Division. He led Buford's former unit in the final cavalry operations of the war during the Appomattox Campaign. At the end of the conflict, Devin was brevetted Major General of Volunteers for his gallant and meritorious service. In the years after the war, Buford's former 2nd Brigade commander became the colonel of the 3rd US Cavalry. Devin died on active duty in 1878.²¹

¹⁹*The New York Times*, 17 December 1863.

²⁰Warner, 321-322.

²¹*Ibid.*, 123-124.

CHAPTER 6

DRAGOON OR CAVALRYMAN

John Buford's accomplishments during the Civil War can be looked at in many ways. His entire makeup; personal characteristics such as his courage, steadfastness and perseverance; and his military proficiency helped make him one of the most effective cavalry commanders in the Army of the Potomac. Unfortunately, instead of looking at this broad picture, some historians have concentrated on only isolated aspects of Buford's career; areas such as his use of dismounted cavalry tactics or his significance during a particular battle. However, as this thesis has shown, this is too narrow a focus.

Certainly, Buford saw the importance of the close fight. Contrary to his traditional image, in which he is portrayed as using dismounted skirmish tactics to the exclusion of other forms of combat, Buford was quite comfortable leading a mounted saber charge. His actions at Lewis Ford, during the Second Manassas Campaign, and at Brandy Station bring this out. Probably the most dramatic example of Buford's willingness to fight his units as mounted cavalry occurred at Gettysburg. Late in the afternoon on 1 July, as Buford was covering the Union left flank, General Howard ordered the First Cavalry Division to move to support General Doubleday's Corps. The staff officer delivering Howard's instructions to Buford recorded the following details:

Buford rose in his stirrups upon his tiptoes and exclaimed: "What does [Howard] think I can do against those long lines of the enemy [infantry] out there?" "I don't know anything about that, General; those are General Howard's orders." "Very well," said he, "I will see what I can do," and, like

the true soldier that he was, he moved his command out in plain view of the enemy and formed for the charge. The enemy [infantry], seeing the movement, formed squares in echelon, which delayed them and materially aided in the escape of the First Corps.¹

Considering most people only remember Buford's early-morning dismounted delaying tactics, this later episode is illuminating. Clearly, Buford used a variety of cavalry tactics, allowing the circumstances of the particular situation to dictate the precise method of fighting to be employed.

In contrast to his more traditional tactics on the battlefield, Buford's methods at the operational level were unique. Time and again he realized his superiors' operational need for accurate and timely intelligence. The current US Army field manual on cavalry operations (FM 17-95) states,

The fundamental roles of cavalry are to perform reconnaissance and provide security in close operations. Doing so, cavalry facilitates the . . . commander's ability to maneuver [units]; concentrate superior combat power; and apply it against the enemy at a decisive time and place. Cavalry clarifies, in part, the friction of battle.²

In these roles Buford stood out as the best Union cavalryman of the Civil War. Whether he was providing information to Pope, Hooker, or Reynolds, Buford understood the paramount importance of determining where enemy forces were located and then getting the information to his commander. Buford was steadfast in reporting accurate and succinct intelligence. In this regard he was unique among Union cavalry commanders.

It is interesting to speculate on how Buford's effectiveness as a senior cavalry leader might have impacted the campaigns of 1864 and 1865.

¹Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York: The Century Co., 1887; repr., Secaucus, NJ: Castle, no date noted), 3:285.

²U. S. Army, *FM 17-95, Cavalry Operations* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1991), 1-1.

Undoubtedly he would have gone on to command the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac or a similar organization in one of the Union armies in the western theater. In October 1863, General William Rosecrans pleaded with Henry Halleck for an "able" cavalry commander and requested Buford by name.³ But what Buford might have accomplished is only speculation and to a certain extent detracts from what he did achieve. Probably one of the best tributes to Buford came from his first commander. After the war, John Pope wrote,

Buford's coolness, his fine judgment, and his splendid courage were known of all men who had to do with him; but besides, and in addition to these high qualities, he acquired in a few months, through his presence and manner, an influence over men as remarkable as it was useful. His quiet dignity, covering a fiery spirit and a military sagacity as far-reaching as it was accurate, made him in the short period of his active service one of the most respected and trusted officers in the service.⁴

Military leaders of today could not go wrong in emulating John Buford's example.

³U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, vol. 30, part 4:9.

⁴*Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 2:491.

CHAPTER 7

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

Readers should consult the chapter endnotes or the bibliography for complete information on all of the sources pertinent to this thesis. However, the following are some general suggestions for looking at the career of John Buford in more depth. Unfortunately, there is not a comprehensive biography of Buford; although, Frank Borries' thesis, "General John Buford, A Civil War Union Cavalryman," provides a chronological narrative of his life. Three articles provide insight into John Buford's importance. Readers interested in a contrasting position to the ones set out in this thesis, particularly concerning Buford's role in the development of dismounted tactics, should consult Fletcher Pratt's, "John Buford, Man on Horseback." James Wilson's "Major-General John Buford," is a laudatory oration delivered during the dedication of the Buford Memorial at Gettysburg. Conversely, Russell F. Weigley's article, "John Buford, A Personality Profile," maintains that Buford's reputation was not commensurate with his achievements.

Several studies of a general or reference nature were consulted for this thesis. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* contains an essential collection of reports, orders, and correspondence relating to John Buford. Although they do not have official status, the *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (edited by Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel) and *Annals of the War, Written by Leading*

Participants North and South (edited by Alexander McClure) contain some important articles by key players in the War. Stephen Starr's magisterial *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War* is fundamental for background information on the history and development of the Federal cavalry. Several general reference documents were also important in researching this thesis, including Mark Boatner's *The Civil War Dictionary* and Ezra Warner's *Generals in Gray* and *Generals in Blue*.

In addition to the important primary source material in the *Official Records*, this thesis also relied on many unit histories. The quality of these vary considerably. Some contain only brief narrations of the unit's actions, possibly supplemented by unit rosters; the unit histories within The Virginia Regimental Histories Series, published by H. E. Howard, Inc., are examples. Other regimental or company/battery histories contain much more detail concerning the unit's participation in particularly battles, and therefore, are more useful. On the Confederate side, examples include Richard Beale's *History of the Ninth Virginia Cavalry, in the War Between the States*; Luther Hopkins' *From Bull Run to Appomattox*; George Neese's *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery*; and John Opie's *A Rebel Cavalryman with Lee, Stuart and Jackson*. Some of the better regimental histories on the Union side include Louis Boudrye's *Historic Records of the Fifth New York Cavalry, First Ira Harris Guard*; Newel Cheney's *History of the Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteer Cavalry*; Samuel Gracey's *Annals of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry*; Abner Hard's *History of the Eighth Cavalry Regiment, Illinois Volunteers*; and Henry Moyer's *History of the 17th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry*. Postwar compilations of histories of regiments have been produced by several state governments. Some of the more beneficial are *Histories of the Several*

Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War, 1861-65 (edited by Walter Clark), and *Vermont in the Civil War, A History of the Part Taken by the Vermont Soldiers and Sailors in the War for the Union, 1861-65* (edited by George Benedic). The four-volume *Pennsylvania at Gettysburg* also falls in this category, since it contains brief histories of each of the Pennsylvania units at Gettysburg.

Several brigade or higher level histories, written by members of the units, include William McDonald's valuable *A History of the Laurel Brigade: Originally the Ashby Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia and Chew's Battery* and William Blackford's *War Years with Jeb Stuart* which is a political-military study of the Confederate cavalry. Henry McClellan's *The Life and Campaigns of Major General J.E.B. Stuart* is mainly a biography of Stuart, but it also contains many informative personnel observations by McClellan.

Finally, several modern treatments of the various battles and campaigns in which John Buford participated are useful. Brief but informative articles on the cavalry engagements before Gettysburg include Robert O'Neill's "The Fight for the Loudoun Valley--Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville, Virginia: Opening Battles of the Gettysburg Campaign," and Gary Gallagher's "Brandy Station: The Civil War's Bloodiest Arena of Mounted Combat." Although lacking the depth of other studies, Gallagher's work is the most balanced and accurate treatment of Buford's role in the Battle of Brandy Station. Broader and more authoritative studies on the Second Manassas and Gettysburg Campaigns include John Hennessy's comprehensive and well documented *Return to Bull Run, the Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas* and Edwin Coddington's monumental *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command*. Edward Longacre's *The Cavalry at Gettysburg* is an exceptional

tactical commentary on the mounted operations during the course of the Gettysburg Campaign. The only weakness in this study is Longacre's inaccurate treatment of Buford at Brandy Station. Wilbur Nye's less detailed and documented but colorfully written *Here Come the Rebels* also covers the cavalry battles before Gettysburg. Fairfax Downey's largely undocumented *Clash of Cavalry, The Battle of Brandy Station*, also concerns Brandy Station.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Battalion: A military organization made up of several companies (usually three to seven). Union cavalry regiments had three subordinate battalions each with two squadrons of two companies. Battalions did not exist in Confederate cavalry regiments, but the Confederacy did have a few independent battalions within their cavalry brigades. A major or lieutenant colonel usually commanded a battalion.

Battery: A military organizational term used by the artillery to denote a company-size unit. Most batteries contained four or six artillery pieces. The battery could be broken down into two gun sections. A lieutenant or captain usually commanded a battery.

Blakely Rifle (12-pounder): A muzzle-loading rifled artillery gun that equipped several Confederate horse artillery batteries. It fired ammunition of similar size to the 10-pounder Parrott and 3-inch Ordnance Rifle. The Blakely was lighter than the 3-inch Ordnance Rifle (the weight of the tube was only 800 pounds); however, this light weight caused it to jump badly when fired.

Brigade: A military organization made up of two or more regiments. Union cavalry brigades were usually numbered within their division, while Confederate brigades were known by the name of their commander or former commander. A colonel or brigadier general usually commanded a brigade.

Canister: One of four main types of artillery ammunition used during the Civil War. It was used at close range (less than 500 yards) and consisted of a tin can (the canister) which was filled with cast-iron or lead shot (average weight was about one-half pound) packed in sawdust. As the cannon was fired the canister ruptured, turning the artillery piece into a giant shotgun. See solid shot, shell, and spherical case.

Carbine: Along with the pistol, the carbine was the standard firearm of most cavalryman. It was shorter and easier to handle than a rifle-musket (a Sharps carbine was thirty-nine inches long compared to the fifty-six inch Model 1861 Springfield rifled musket) and weighed less (seven and three-quarters pounds for a Sharps, while a Springfield was about nine pounds). Rate of fire was high, since the majority were breech-loaders. However, the short barrel and relatively weak powder load of the carbine gave it only fair accuracy. There were numerous makes and

models, but the most popular were the Sharps, Burnside, Smith, and Spencer (a repeater).

Company: A military organization that was the basic building block for the cavalry regiment. A regiment would have between eight and twelve companies. These companies were usually lettered in alphabetical order, with the letter 'J' omitted. Union cavalry companies were authorized 95 personnel, but like their Confederate counterparts, they usually had less than half this number. A lieutenant or captain usually commanded a company. At times, cavalry companies were also called troops (the U. S. Army officially designated cavalry companies as troops in 1883).

Corps: A military organization made up of two or more divisions. Each army would usually have one cavalry corps which would be commanded by a major general.

Division: A military organization made up of two or more brigades. Union cavalry divisions were usually numbered within their corps, while Confederate divisions were known by the names of their commander or former commander. A brigadier or major general usually commanded a division.

Grape Shot: A type of artillery ammunition which was similar to canister (which see).

Howitzer: A type of artillery piece that had a much shorter barrel than an artillery gun. This allowed a larger round to be fired from a smaller gun tube (the M1841 24-pounder howitzer's barrel weighed 400 pounds less than the barrel of the M1841 12-pounder gun). However, the shorter barrel caused a dramatic decrease in maximum range.

Legion: Originally, a military organization made up of companies of infantry, cavalry and artillery (equivalent to a modern combined arms task force). Most legions were organized by the Confederacy in the first months of the war, but they did not serve as one command. For example, Cobb's Legion (from Georgia) had one artillery battery, one infantry battalion (seven companies), and one cavalry battalion (six companies). The cavalry battalion was part of Hampton's Brigade during 1863.

Ordnance Rifle: A muzzle-loading rifled artillery gun, also known as the Rodman Rifle or 3-inch Ordnance Gun, which equipped most Union (and many Confederate) horse artillery batteries. It fired the same ammunition as the 10-pounder Parrott. Both guns had the advantage of long range (about 4,000 yards), but did not have the firepower of smoothbores. For example, their canister round was equivalent to only a 3-pounder smoothbore. Another advantage, which made it ideal for horse artillery batteries, was that the Ordnance Rifle was lighter than most artillery pieces. The weight of the tube was 820 pounds compared to a gun tube weight of 1,227 pounds for the famous 12-pounder M1857 Napoleon.

Parrot (10-pounder): A muzzle-loading rifled artillery gun that equipped some Union and Confederate horse artillery batteries. It fired the same ammunition as the 3-inch Ordnance Rifle (although early Parrots had 2.9-inch bores and had to be converted). The Parrot's gun tube weighed 899 pounds. The 10-pounder was the smallest Parrot; seacoast artillery versions were as large as 300-pounders. See Ordnance Rifle.

Percussion Caps: A small metal cap containing fulminating powder placed over the nipple of a percussion lock on a pistol, carbine, musket, or rifle-musket. The hammer of the firearm falls on the cap causing a flash that ignites the powder charge. The percussion lock replaced the flintlock in the 1840s. Percussion locks were replaced by firearms that used a firing pin to ignite the primer in a metallic cartridge. These new cartridges contained bullet, primer, and propellant powder all in one self-contained unit. The Spencer and Henry repeaters were the principal firearms to use metal cartridges during the Civil War.

Picket: See vedettes.

Platoon: A subordinate military organization of a company. There were two platoons in a cavalry company.

Regiment: A military organization made up of several companies (usually eight to twelve). Most Union cavalry regiments had twelve subordinate companies, while Confederate cavalry regiments usually had ten companies. A colonel usually commanded a regiment.

Section: A military organizational term used by the artillery to denote a part of a battery. Most batteries contained four or six artillery pieces. The battery could be broken down into two gun sections. A lieutenant usually commanded a section.

Sharpshooters: Although there were two US Regiments of Sharpshooters (under Colonel Hiram Berdan) who were infantry, cavalry sharpshooters were select individuals who were armed with carbines or rifles and who usually operated as skirmishers. Confederate cavalry regiments usually had two companies who were armed and trained as sharpshooters. In many cases both Union and Rebel sharpshooters would fight dismounted as skirmishers in advance of, or on the flanks of, their regiment. Many Confederate cavalry sharpshooter units were armed with standard infantry rifle-muskets while Union sharpshooters used the standard breech-loading carbines. Union cavalry regiments normally did not have designated sharpshooters, since everyone usually had a carbine. In many cases the terms sharpshooter and skirmisher were used interchangeably. See skirmisher.

Shell: One of four main types of artillery ammunition used during the Civil War. It consisted of a cast-iron spherical (for smoothbores) or oblong (for rifles) shell filled with a bursting charge of blackpowder. Civil War shells were not very effective because of poor fuses and small bursting charges (which did not properly fragment the outer metal 'shell'). See canister, solid shot, and spherical case.

Skirmisher or skirmish line: A cavalry regiment normally operated in close order, in distinct files and columns, with individual troopers riding 'stirrup to stirrup.' However, it was not uncommon to have two or more companies from the regiment form a skirmish line from about 300 to 500 yards in front of the main body. These cavalymen operated in open order, taking advantage of the terrain, with as much as from 5 to 10 yards between individuals. By attracting enemy fire and harassing his ranks with carbine or rifle fire, skirmishers could screen their regiment. Cavalry skirmishers operated both mounted and dismounted. See Sharpshooters.

Solid Shot: One of four main types of artillery ammunition used during the Civil War. It was a simple cast-iron spherical (for smoothbores) or oblong (for rifles) piece of metal and contained no explosive. Shot had the best range and accuracy of the different artillery ammunition types, and it was normally used against massed troops or for battering. See canister, shell, and spherical case.

Spherical case: Also known as shrapnel or case shot, it was one of four main types of artillery ammunition used during the Civil War. It consisted of a thin cast-iron spherical (for smoothbores) or oblong (for rifles) shell filled with musket balls and a bursting charge. The number of balls varied with the size of the cannon; for example, a 12-pounder contained 78 balls while a 6-pounder only had 38 bullets. Civil War spherical case was not very effective because of poor fuses. See canister, shell, and solid shot.

Squadron: A military organization made up of two cavalry companies.

Troop: See Company.

Vedettes: One part of the outpost system used to guard an army. The customary setup for an outpost was to have approximately one half the units strength form a grand guard. This centrally located guard would feed several smaller outlying picket points. The pickets would, in turn, throw out individual soldiers known as vedettes. Early in the war Union commanders usually used their cavalry units for outpost work. Conversely, the Confederates normally used their infantry for this duty, preferring to keep their horseman concentrated for action.

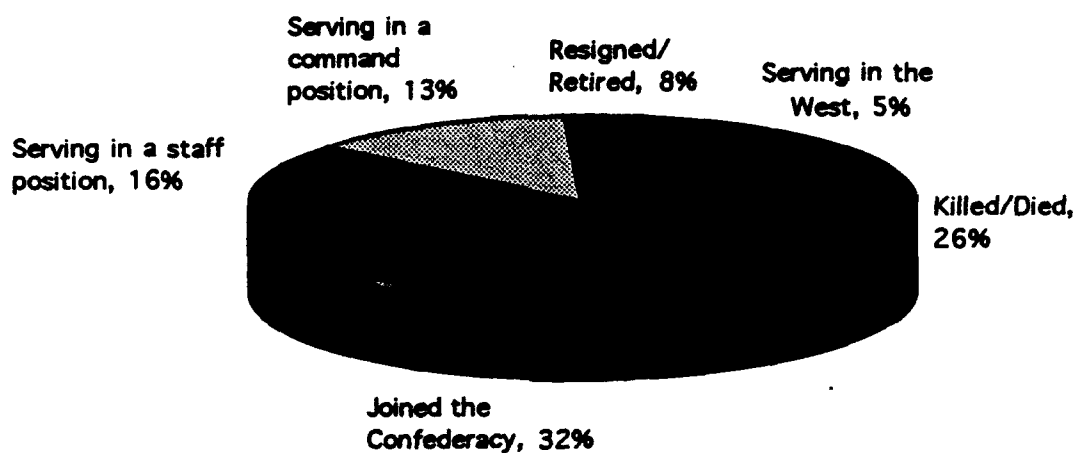
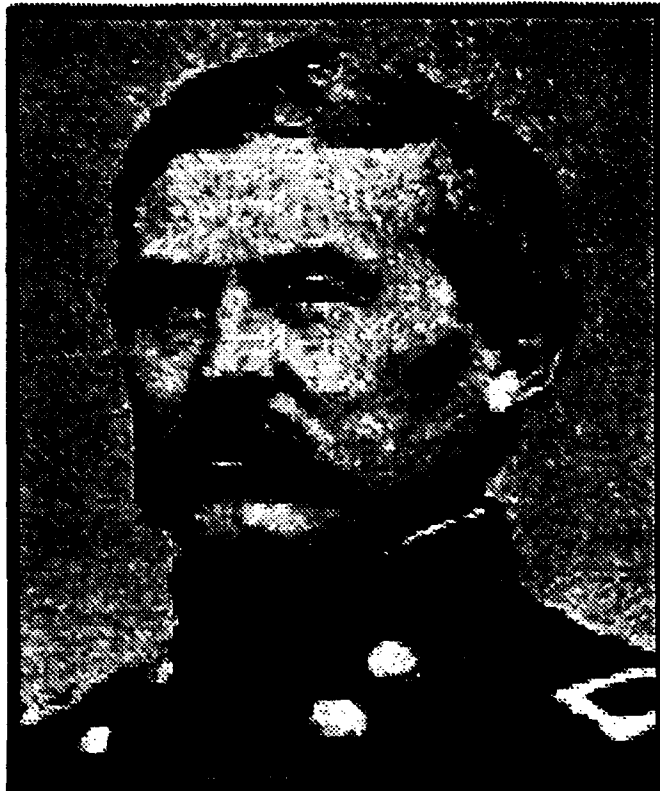


Figure 1. Disposition of members of the United States Military Academy Class of 1848 at the beginning of the Civil War



National Archives

Figure 2. Brigadier General John Buford

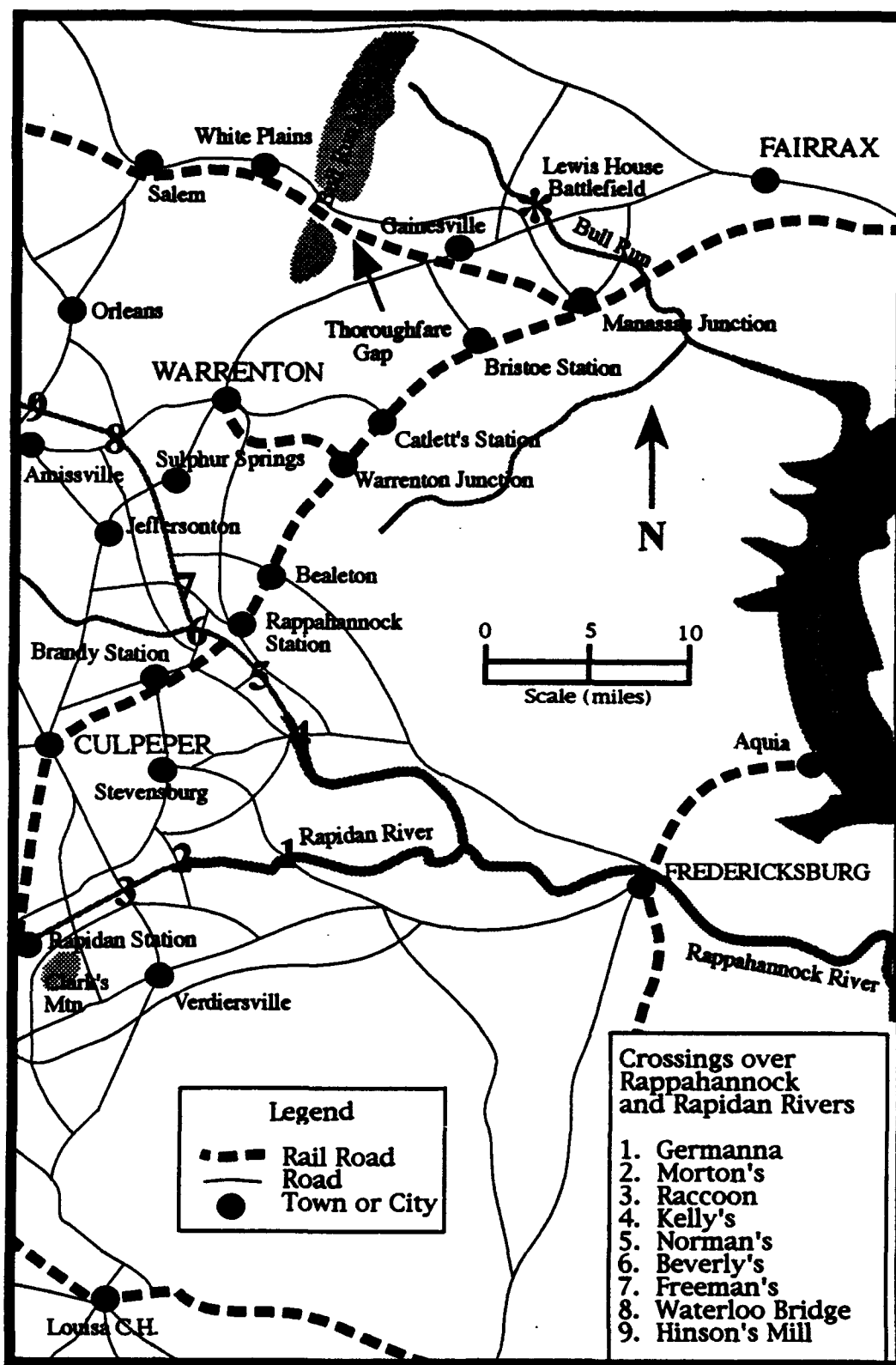


Figure 3. Area of operations for the Bull Run and Chancellorsville campaigns

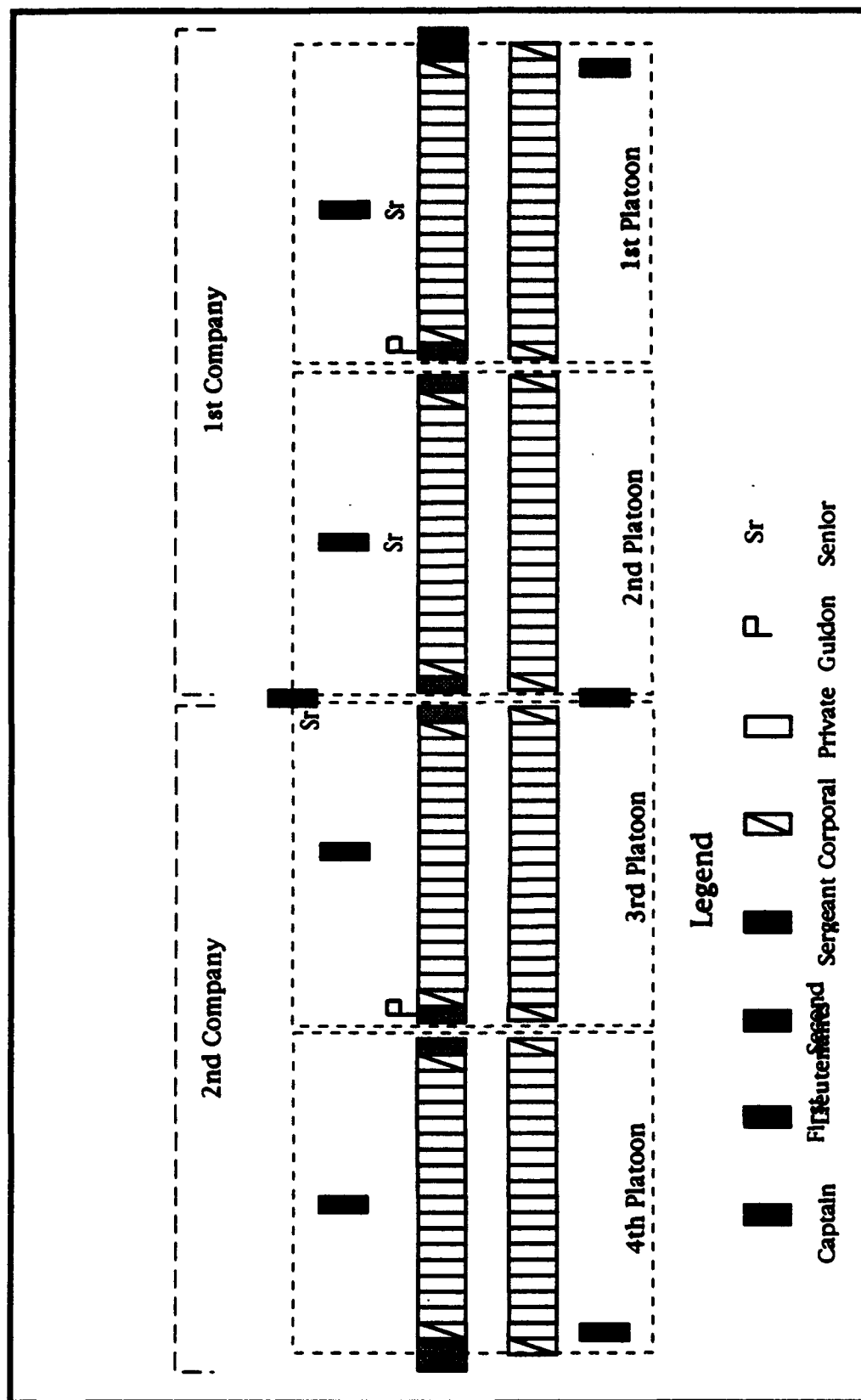


Figure 4. Cavalry squadron deployed in line

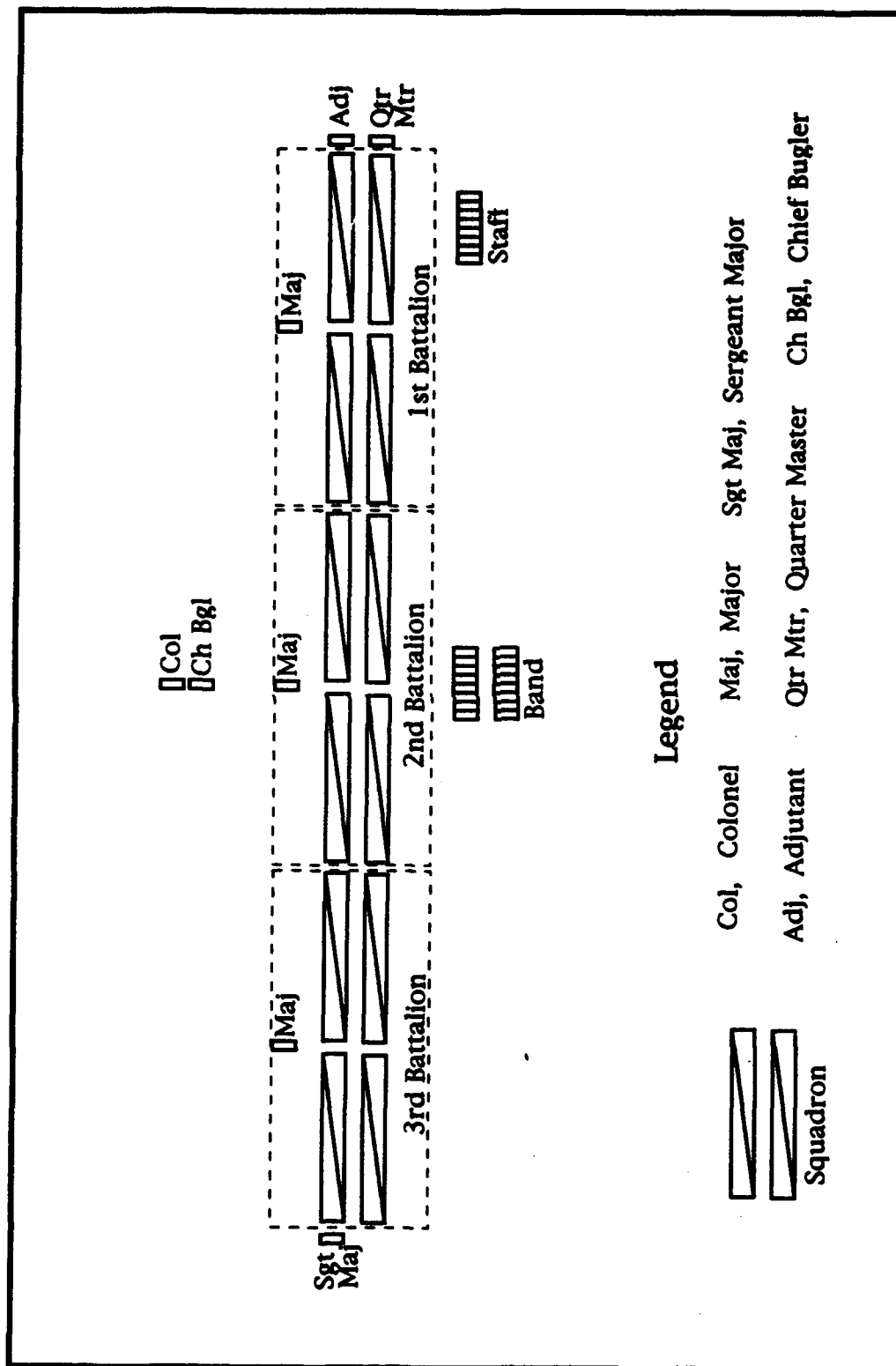


Figure 5. Cavalry regiment deployed in line

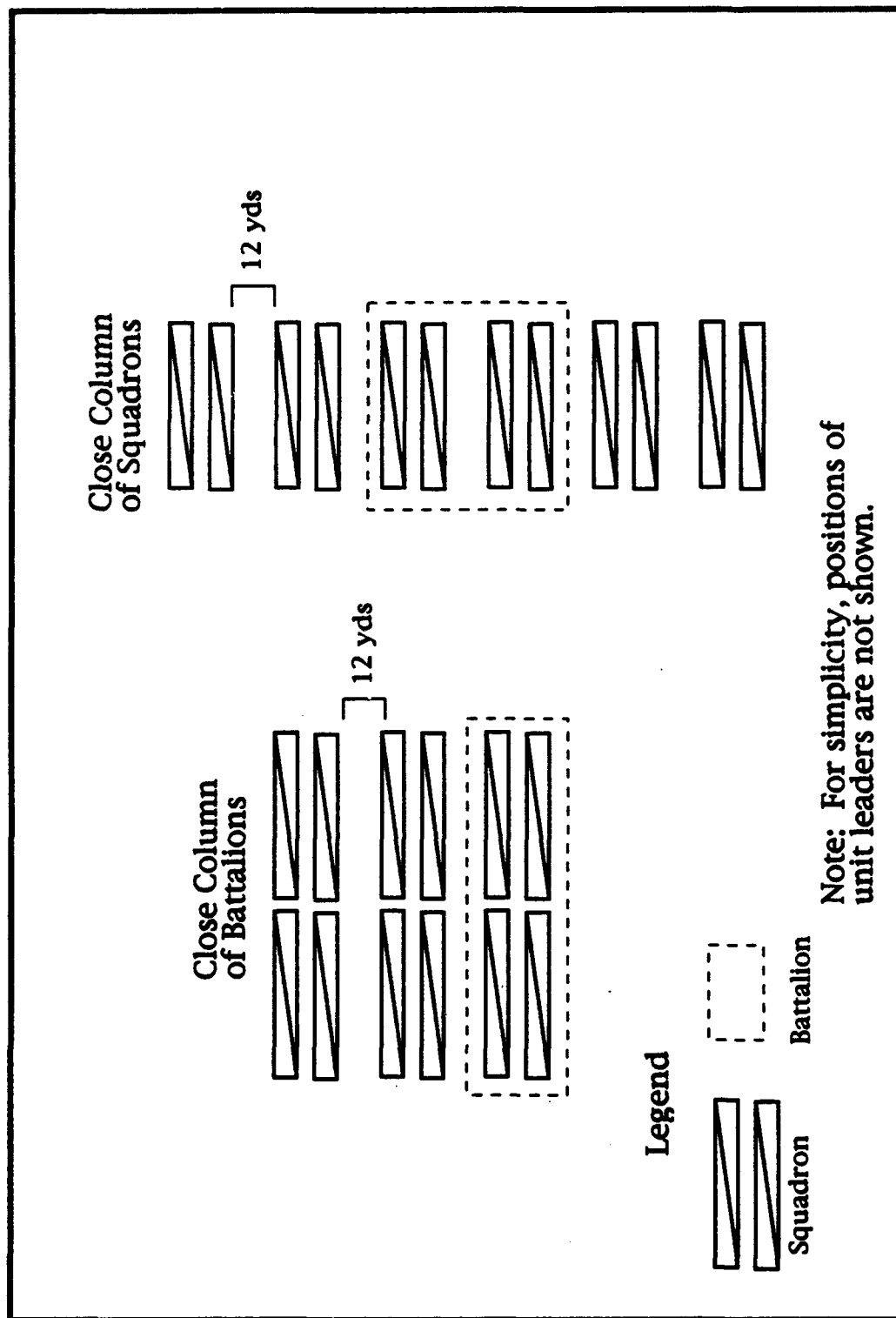


Figure 6. Some regimentsal formations

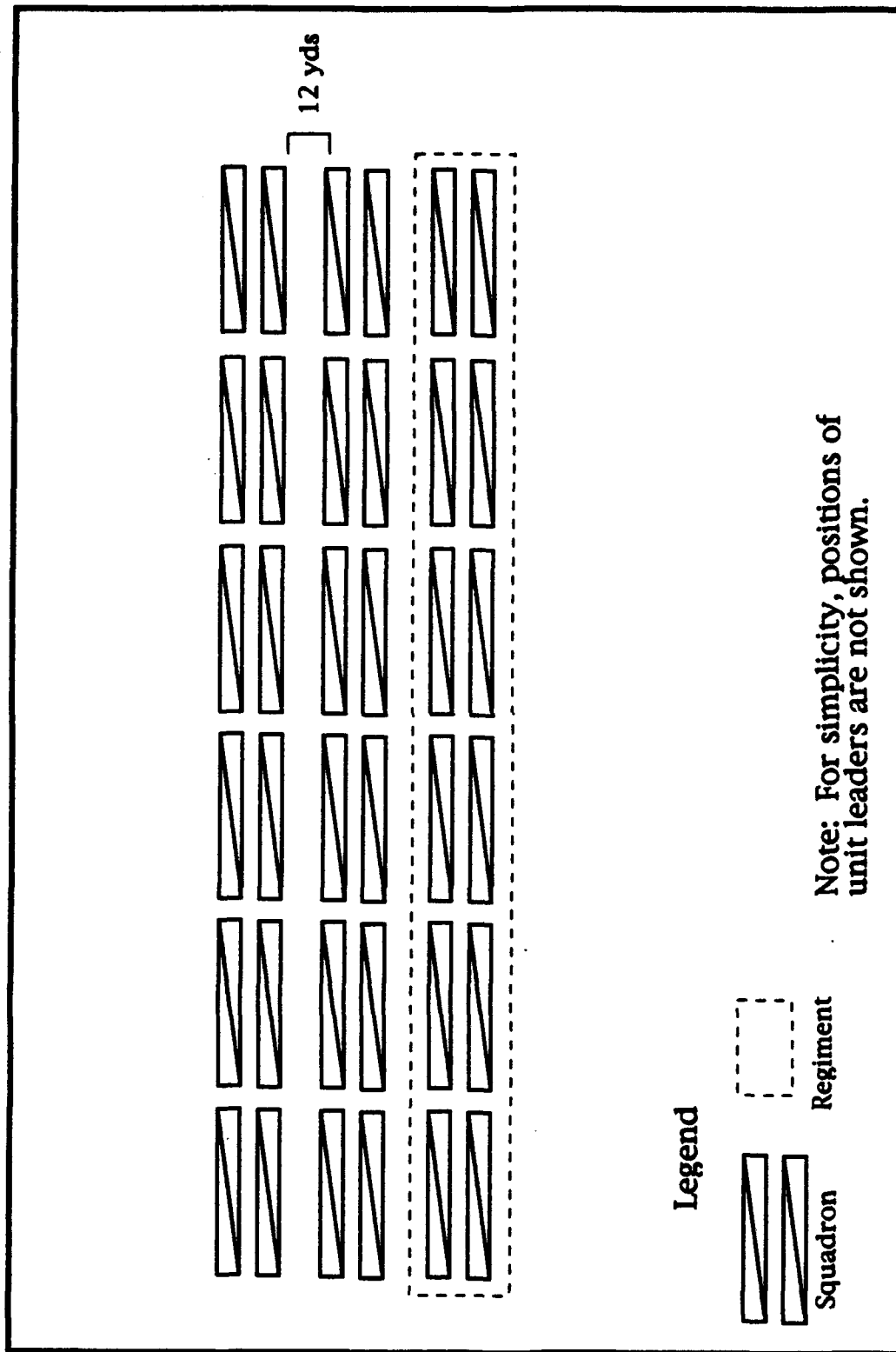


Figure 7. Cavalry brigade in close column of regiments

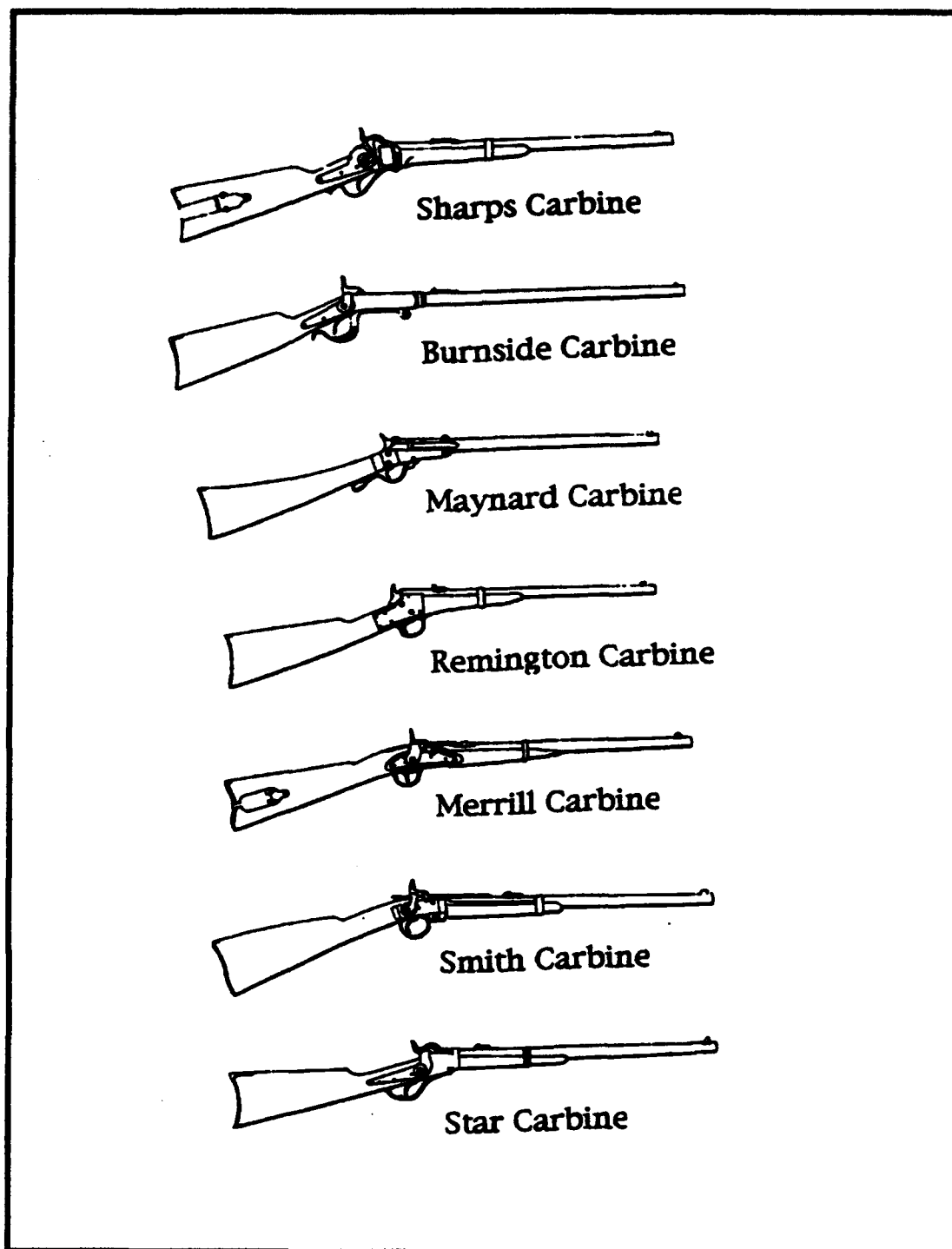


Figure 8. Cavalry firearms of the Civil War

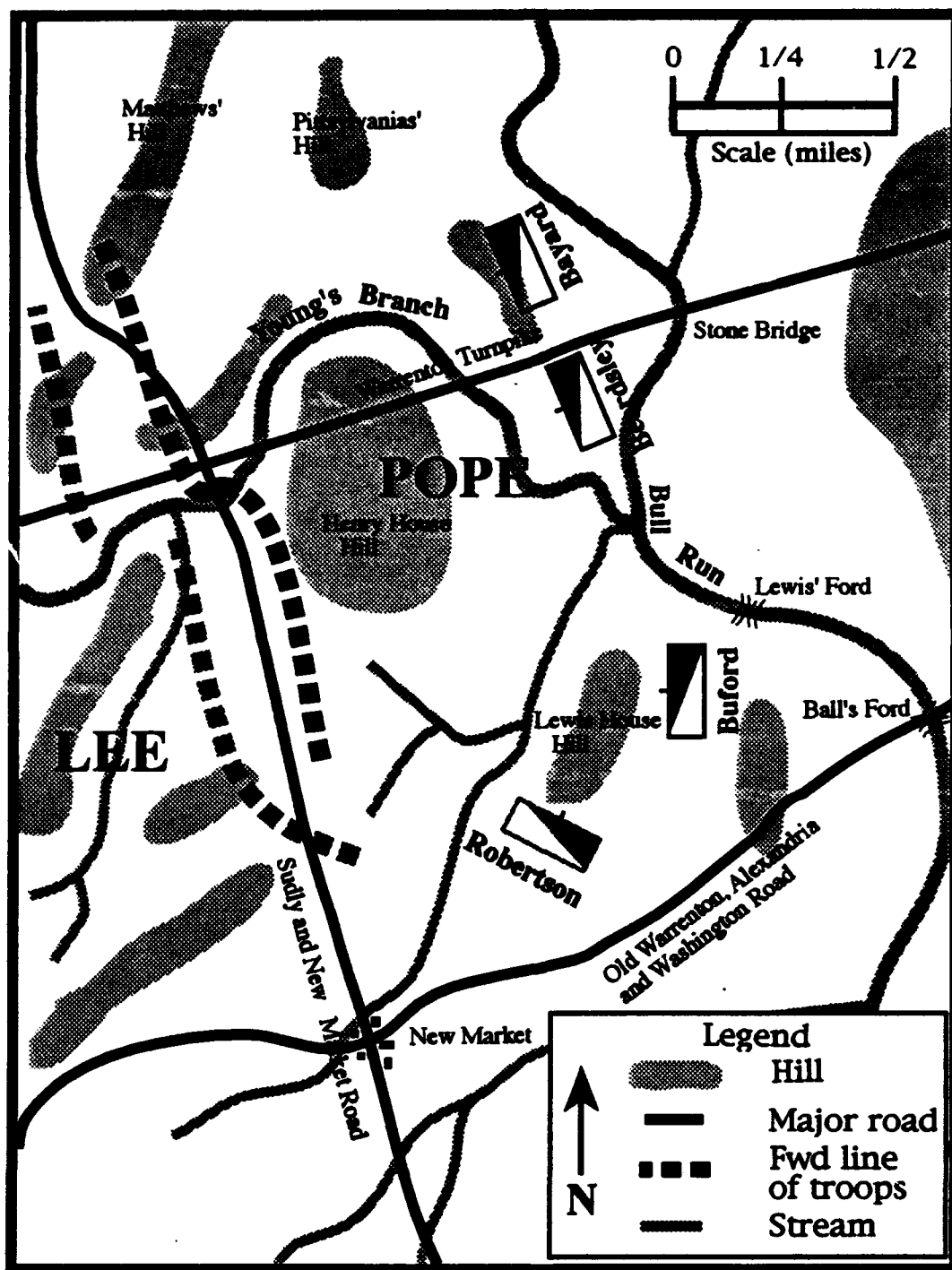


Figure 9. Bull Run Battlefield, 1630 hours, 30 August 1862

Cavalry Brigade, Second Army Corps, Army of Virginia

Brigadier General John Buford

1st Michigan, 12 companies,

Col. Thornton F. Brodhead 510

1st (West) Virginia, 6 companies,

Lieutenant Colonel Nathaniel P. Richmond 100

4th New York*, 12 companies,

Lieutenant Colonel Ferries Nazer 130

5th New York, 12 companies, Colonel Othneil De Forest,

detached as orderlies/escorts and not at battle.

1st Vermont, 8 companies,

Colonel Charles H. Tompkins, not at battle.

***This regiment was temporarily under Buford's command. It normally operated with the Cavalry Brigade of the First Army Corps, Army of Virginia.**

Note: The number of companies within the regiment, commanding officer of the regiment, and approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. The strength figure is for 30 August 1862.

Figure 10. Organization and estimated strength of Buford's Cavalry Brigade at Second Bull Run, 30 August 1862

**Robertson's Brigade, Cavalry Division, Army of Northern
Virginia**

Brigadier General Beverly H. Robertson

2nd Virginia, 10 companies, Colonel Thomas T. Munford	200
6th Virginia, 10 companies, Colonel Thomas S. Flournoy	150
7th Virginia, 3+ companies, Colonel William E. (Grumble) Jones*	80
12th Virginia, 6 Companies,** Colonel Asher W. Harman	125
17th Virginia Battalion, 6 Companies, Major William. Patrick, detached from brigade and not at battle.	
Chew's Horse Artillery Battery, Captain R. Preston Chew, detached from brigade and not at battle.	

*Colonel Jones was not present during the battle near Lewis House. Captain Samuel B. Myers commanded the Regiment during the action.

**Companies A, C, D, E, F, and H. The other companies were on detached service.

Note: The number of companies within the regiment, commanding officer of the regiment, and approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. The strength figure is for 30 August 1862.

Figure 11. Organization and Estimated Strength of Robertson's Cavalry Brigade at Second Bull Run, 30 August 1862

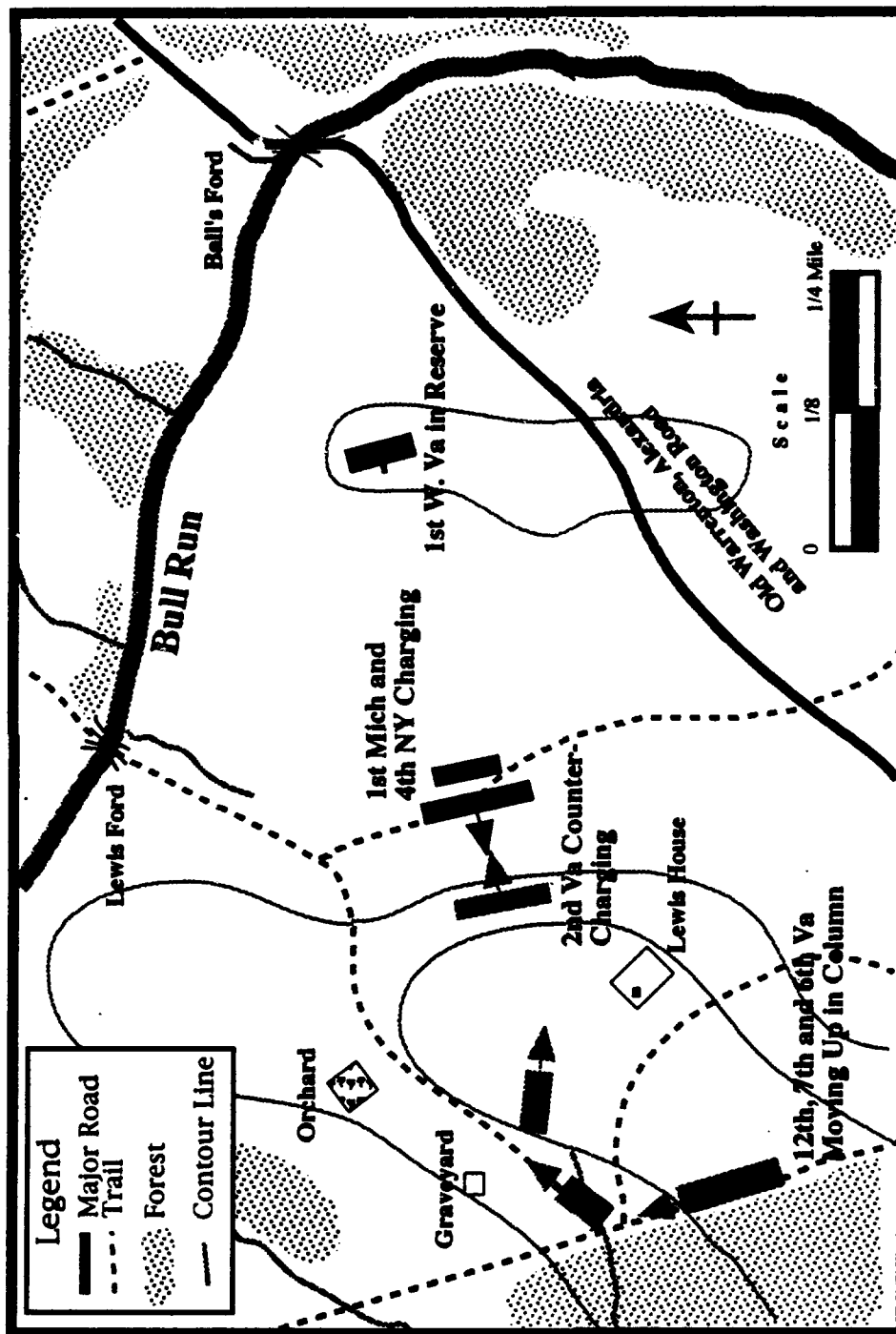


Figure 12. Combat Near Lewis House (Phase I),
Battle of Second Bull Run, 30 August 1862

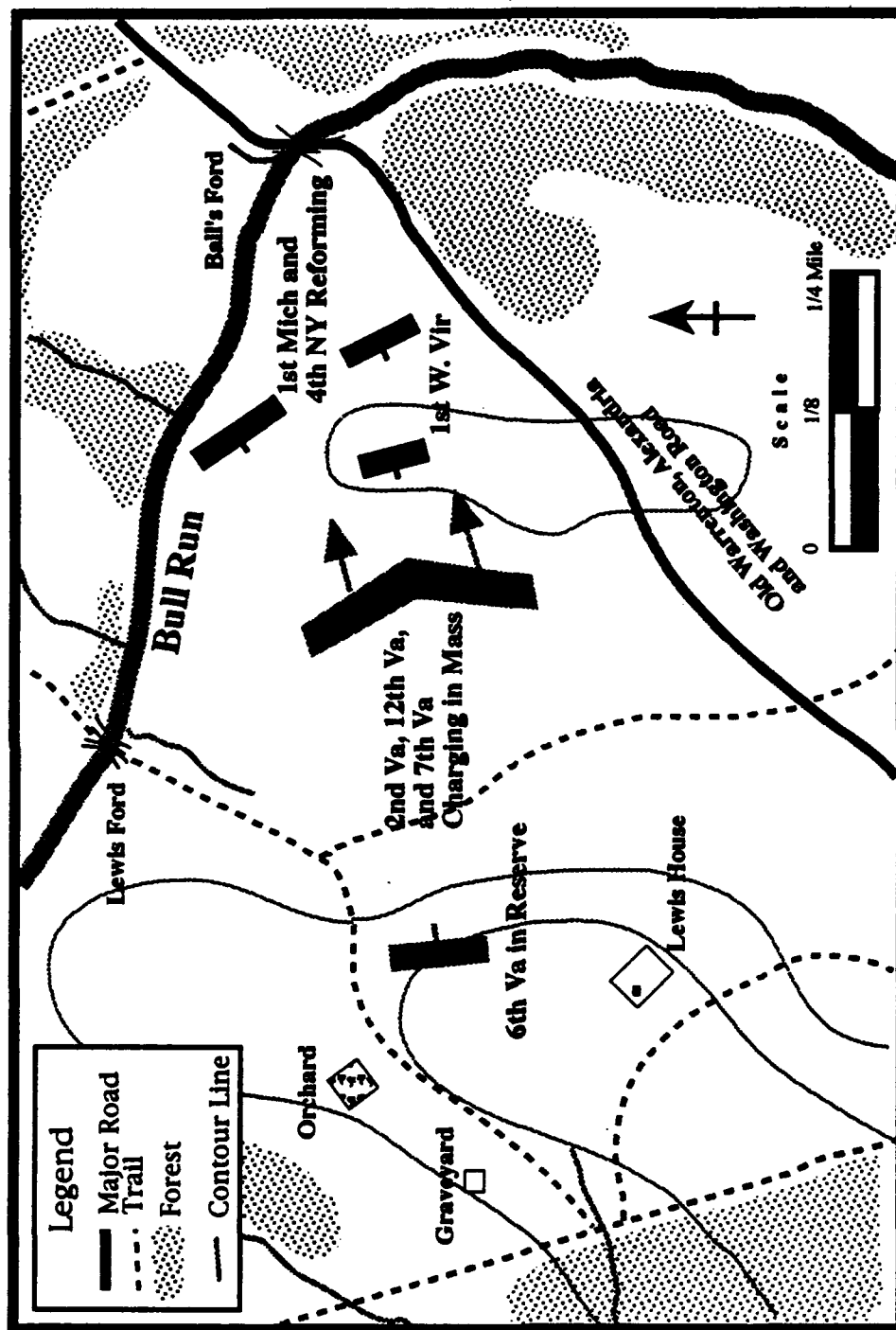


Figure 13. Combat near Lewis House (Phase II),
Battle of Second Bull Run, 30 August 1862.

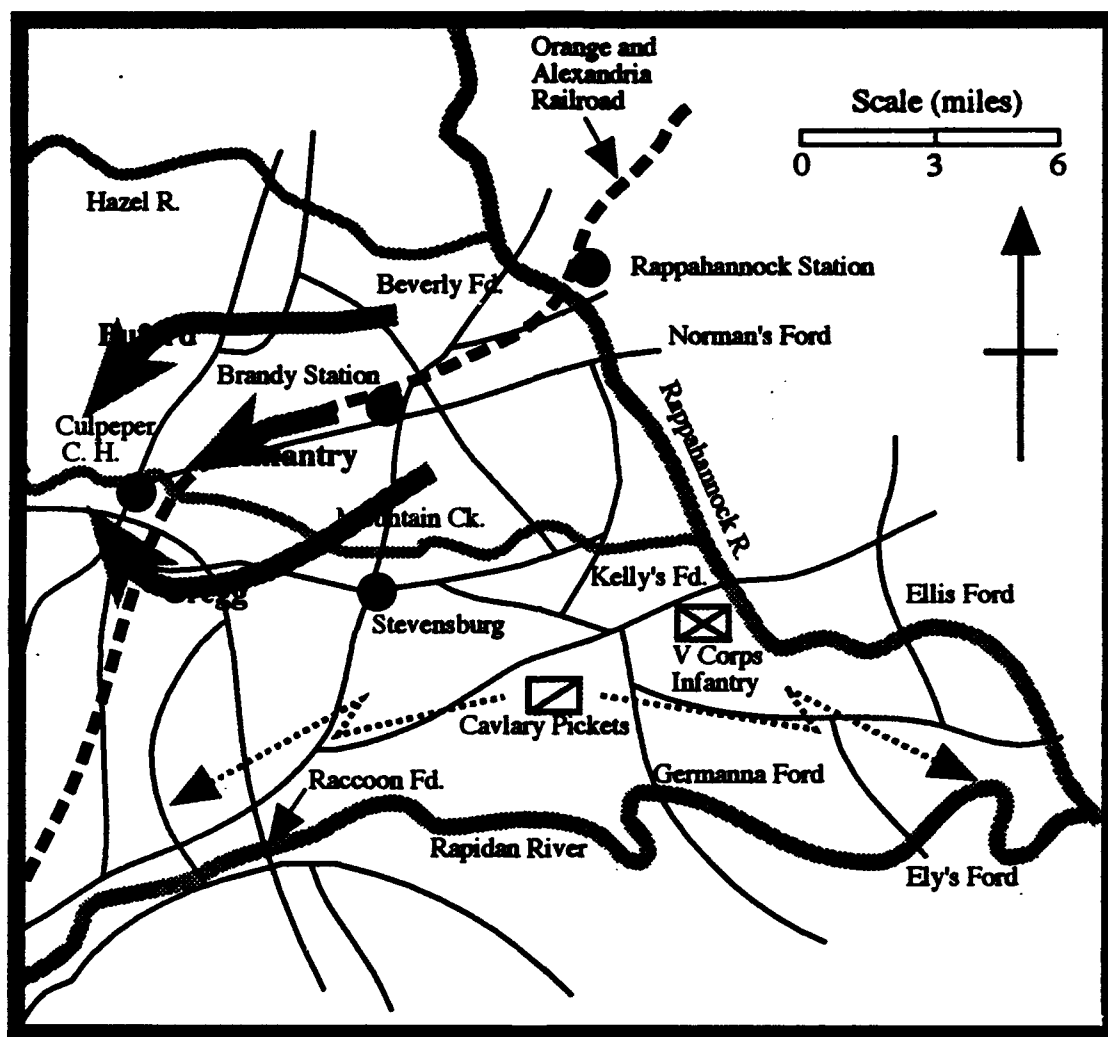


Figure 14. Pleasonton's plan of operation, 9 June 1863

Right Wing, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac
Brigadier General John Buford

First Division, Brigadier General Alfred Pleasonton*

1st Brigade, Colonel Benjamin F. Davis
6th New York, 4 companies, advance guard
8th Illinois
8th New York
Composite Regiment
3rd Indiana, 4 companies
9th New York, 4 companies
3rd (West) Virginia, 2 companies
2nd US Artillery Regiment, Horse Batteries B and L (Vincent's Battery),
2 sections**
Total strength of 1st Brigade, First Division: Cavalry, 1534; Artillery,
four 3-inch Ordnance Rifles.

2nd Brigade, Colonel Thomas C. Devin, Colonel Josiah H. Kellogg
6th New York, 4 companies
17th Pennsylvania
2nd US Artillery Regiment, Horse Batteries B and L (Vincent's Battery),
1 section**
Total strength of 2nd Brigade, First Division: Cavalry, 596; Artillery,
two 3-inch Ordnance Rifles.

Reserve Brigade, Brigadier General John Buford ***

6th Pennsylvania (Rush's Lancers), initially 5, later 12 companies
1st US Cavalry, on picket duty and not present for most of the battle
2nd US Cavalry, 11 companies
5th US Cavalry, 6 companies
6th US Cavalry, initially 10, later 12 companies
4th US Artillery Regiment, Horse Battery E (Elder's Battery), 2 sections
Total strength of Reserve Brigade: Cavalry, 1857; Artillery, four 3-inch
Ordnance Rifles.

*Because of the absence of Major General Stoneman, Pleasonton had moved up to command the Corps. Davis was, therefore, in temporary command of his brigade and the 1st Division until his death. Devin then assumed command of the Division and Kellogg replaced Devin in command of the 2nd Brigade.

**This was a composite battery with six guns total, not two batteries.

***Major Charles J. Whiting commanded the Brigade in Buford's absence.

Notes: The strength figures are for 9 June 1863. All cavalry regiments have twelve companies and artillery batteries contain three sections unless noted otherwise.

Figure 15. Organization of Buford's cavalry at Brandy Station, 9 June 1863

Infantry Support to Right Wing,
Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac

Brigadier General Adelbert Ames

From III Corps, Colonel A. Van Horn Ellis	
86th New York	248
124th New York	223
From XI Corps, Colonel Adin B. Underwood	
33rd Massachusetts	450
From XII Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Martin Flood	
3rd Wisconsin	228
2nd Massachusetts	312
From Artillery Reserve	
1st US Artillery Regiment, Horse Battery K (Graham's Battery)	
Total strength of Infantry Support: Infantry, 1461; Artillery, six 3-inch Ordnance Rifles.	

Note: The approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. With the exception of the figure for the 2nd Massachusetts, the strength figures are eighty percent of the 30 June 1863 regimental returns. The strength of the 2nd Massachusetts is from that unit's report on Brandy Station. See text for an explanation. All infantry regiments have ten companies, and the artillery battery contains three sections.

Figure 16. Organization of Buford's infantry support at Brandy Station, 9 June 1863

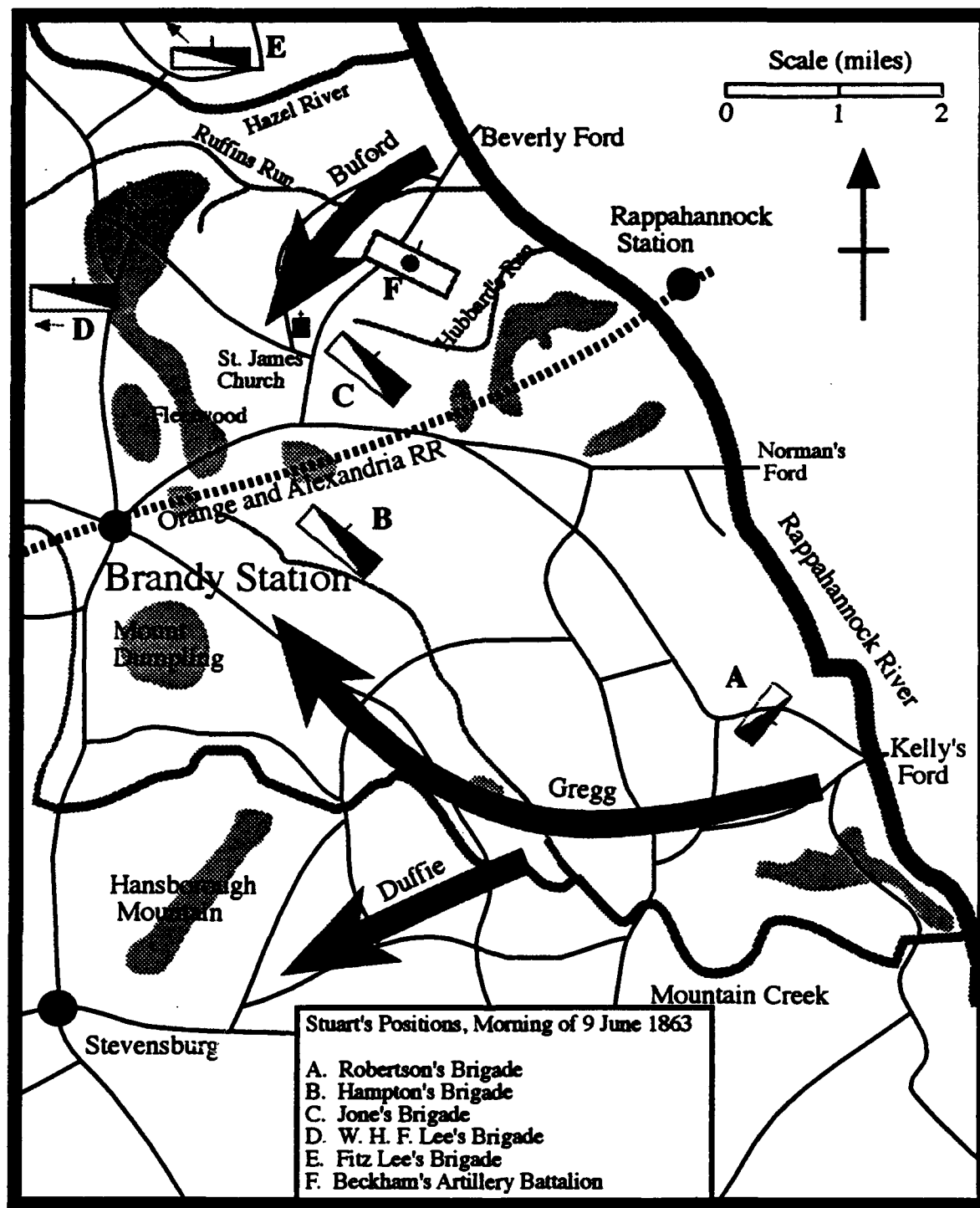


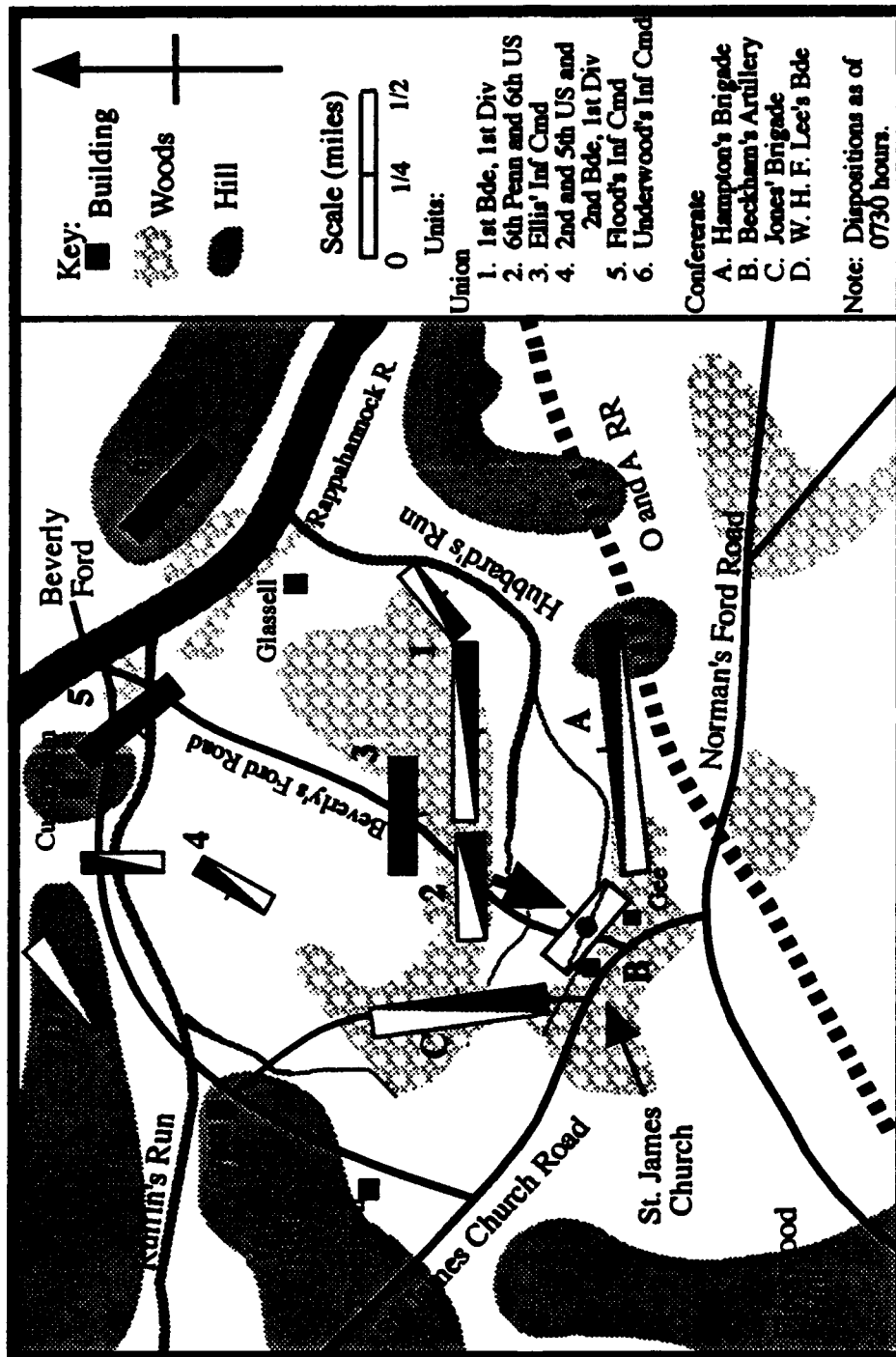
Figure 17. The Battle of Brandy Station, 9 June 1863.

Cavalry Division, Army of Northern Virginia
Major General James E. B. Stuart

<u>Fitzhugh Lee's Brigade (under Colonel T. T. Munford)</u>	1900 men*
1st Virginia	
2nd Virginia	
3rd Virginia	
4th Virginia, detached as Division reserve on 9 June	
5th Virginia, absent on picket duty on 9 June	
<u>W. H. F. "Rooney" Lee's Brigade (later under Col. I. R. Chambliss)</u>	1550 men*
9th Virginia	
10th Virginia	
13th Virginia	
2nd North Carolina	
<u>Wade Hampton's Brigade</u>	2200 men*
1st North Carolina	
1st South Carolina	
2nd South Carolina , was operating against Duffie's Division during the Battle of Brandy Station.	
Cobb's Georgia Legion	
Jeff Davis (Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia) Legion	
Hampton's (Phillips') Georgia Legion	
<u>William E. "Grumble" Jones' Brigade</u>	2250 men*
6th Virginia	
7th Virginia, with W. H. F. Lee for most of 9 June	
11th Virginia	
12th Virginia	
35th Virginia Battalion, detached to II Corps after 9 June 1863	
<u>Beverly H. Robertson's Brigade</u>	1100 men*
4th North Carolina Regiment	
5th North Carolina Regiment	
<u>Horse Artillery Battalion, Major R. F. Beckham</u>	550 men*
Ashby (VA) Horse Artillery (Chew's Battery), with Jone's Brigade at Upperville	
1st Stuart (VA) Horse Artillery (Breathed's Battery), sections with W. H. F. Lee's and Fitz Lee's Brigades on 9 June 1863	
2nd Stuart (VA) Horse Artillery (McGregor's Battery)	
Washington (SC) Horse Artillery (Hart's Battery)	
Lynchburg "Beauregard Rifles" (VA) Horse Artillery (Moorman's Battery)	

Total Numbers of Troops: Cavalry, 9000*; Artillery, 20 guns and howitzers.
***As of 31 May 1863**

Figure 18. Organization of the Cavalry Division, Army of Northern Virginia, at Brandy Station and Upperville, 9 and 21 June 1863



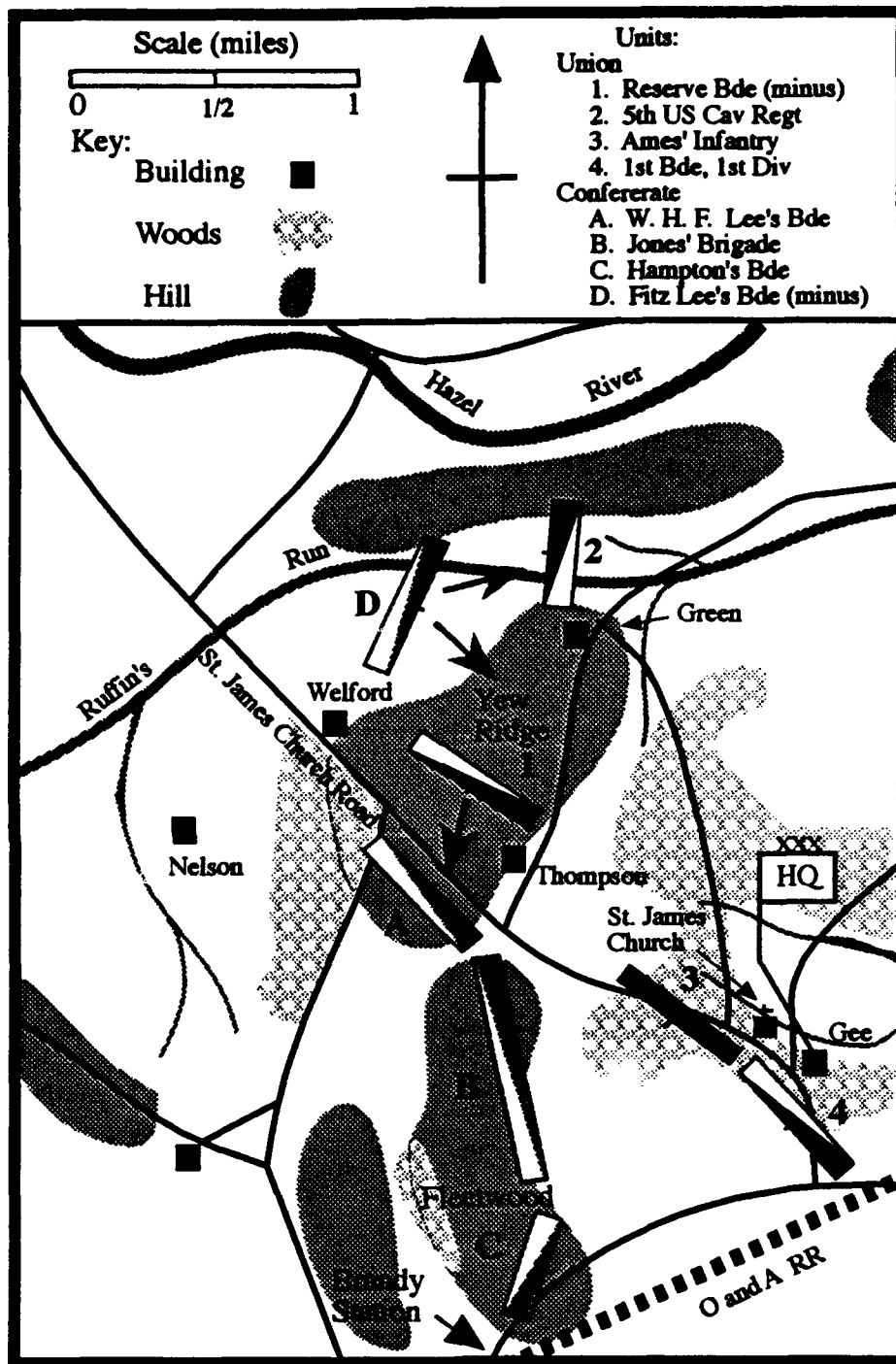


Figure 20. Buford's attack over Yew Ridge, 9 June 1863

First Division, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac

Brigadier General John Buford

1st Brigade, Colonel William Gamble

8th Illinois

12th Illinois, 4 companies

3rd Indiana, 6 companies

8th New York

One section, 1st U.S. Artillery Regiment, Battery K (Horse)

Total strength: Cavalry, 1600; Artillery, two 3-inch Ordnance Rifles

2nd Brigade, Colonel Thomas C. Devin

6th New York, 7 companies

9th New York

17th Pennsylvania

3rd West Virginia, 2 companies

Total strength: Cavalry, 1200

3rd (Reserve) Brigade, Major Samuel H. Starr

1st US Cavalry, on detached service during the battle

2nd U.S. Cavalry

5th U.S. Cavalry

6th U.S. Cavalry

6th Pennsylvania, on detached service during the battle

Two sections, 1st U.S. Artillery Regiment, Battery K (Horse)

Total strength: Cavalry, 1600; Artillery, four 3-inch Ordnance Rifles

**Total Strength of First Division: Cavalry, 4700; Artillery, six 3-inch
Ordnance Rifles.**

**Note: All regiments have 12 companies and each artillery section has two guns
unless noted otherwise.**

Figure 21. Organization of the First Division at Upperville, 21 June 1863

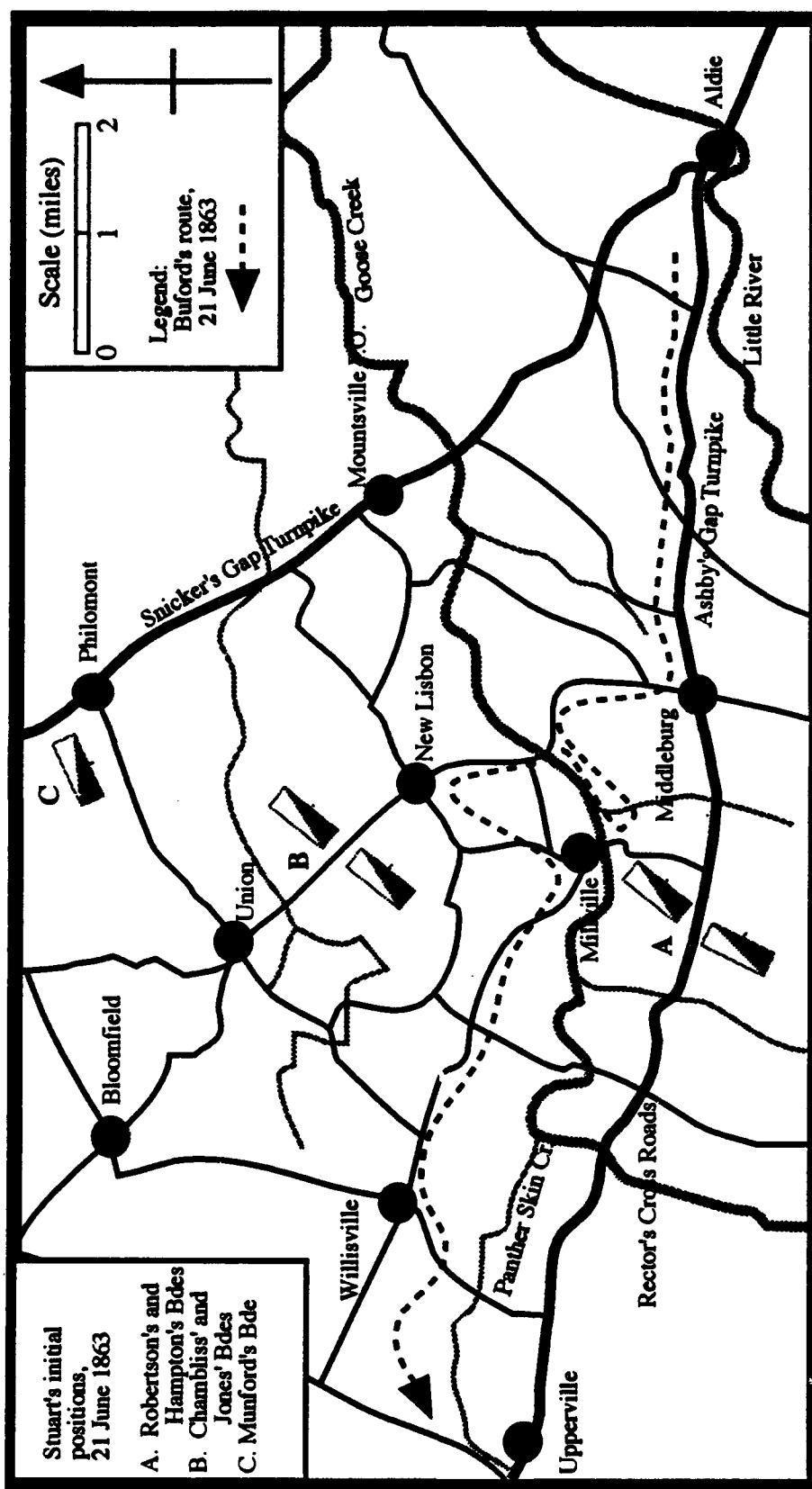


Figure 22. Loudoun Valley near Middleburg, Virginia

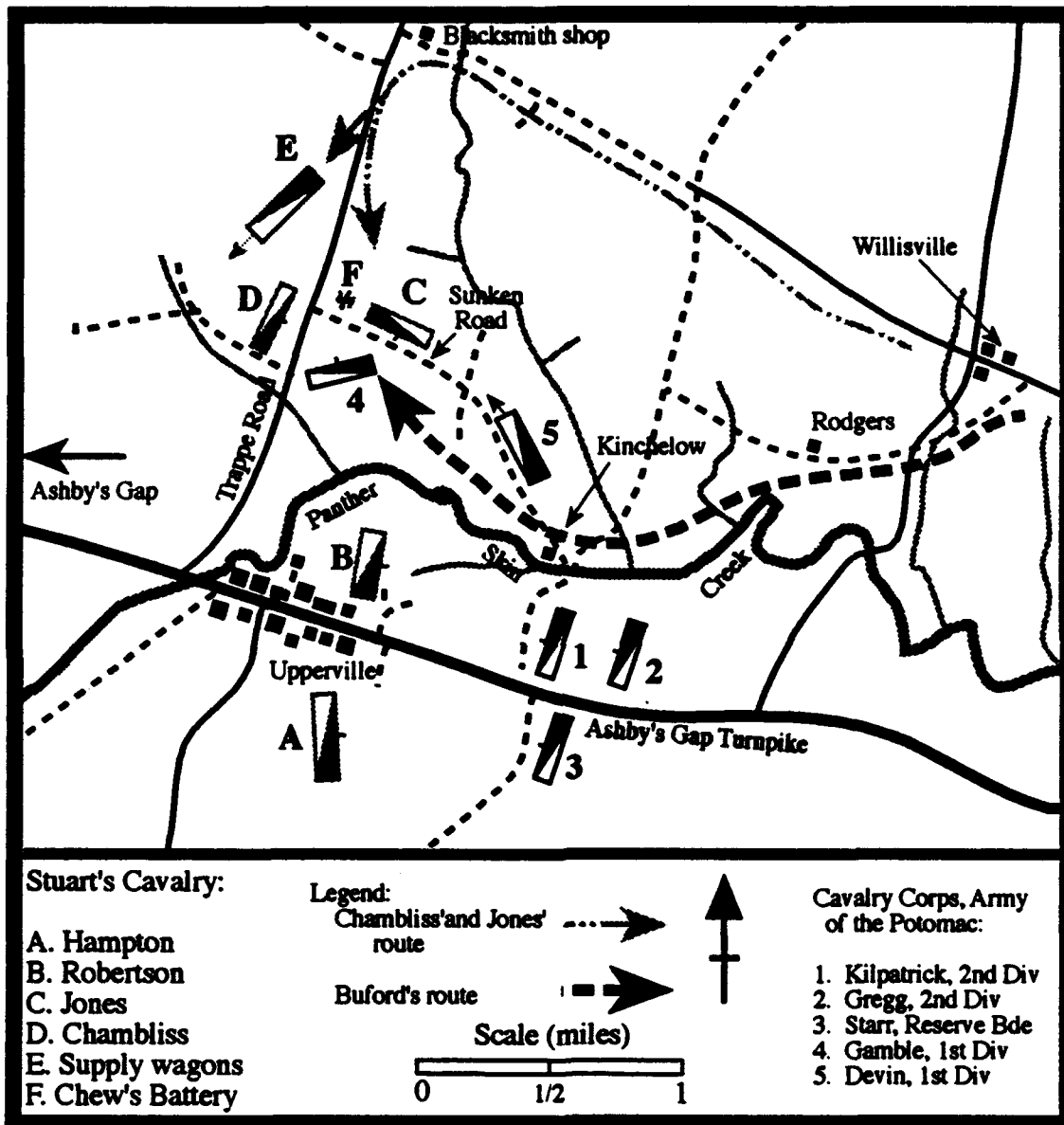


Figure 23. The Trappe Road Fight, 21 June 1863

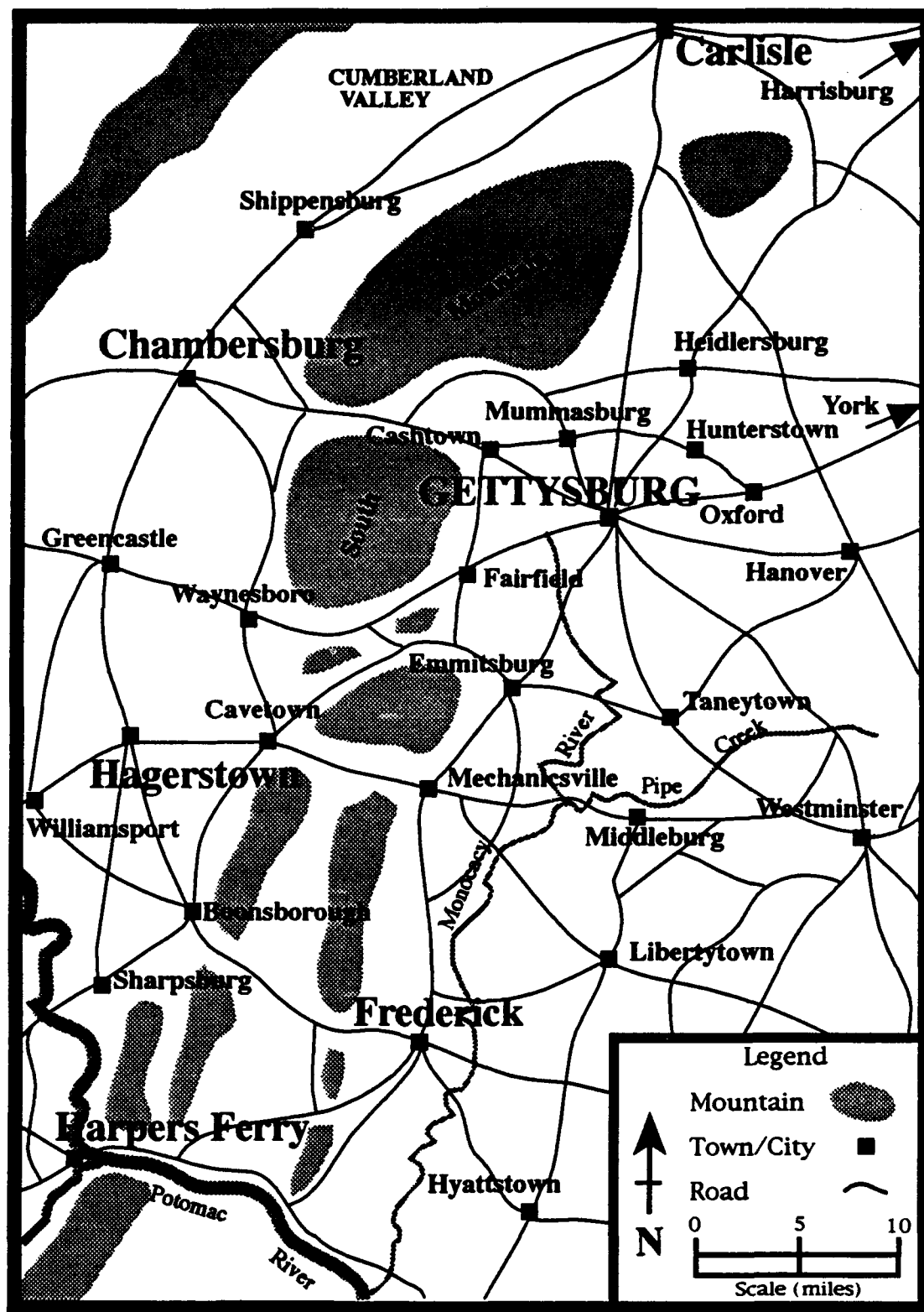


Figure 24. The Gettysburg campaign area

1st Cavalry Division, Cavalry Corps,
Army of the Potomac
Brigadier General John Buford

1st Brigade, Colonel William Gamble

8th Illinois	505
12th Illinois, 4 companies*	251
3rd Indiana, 6 companies*	337
8th New York	623

2nd Brigade, Colonel Thomas Devin

6th New York, 7 companies**	272
9th New York	395
17th Pennsylvania, 10 companies	499
3rd West Virginia, 2 companies	63

Reserve Brigade, Brigadier General Wesley Merritt***

6th Pennsylvania, 10 companies	364
1st U.S. Cavalry, 10 companies	466
2nd U.S. Cavalry	510
5th U.S. Cavalry	578
6th U.S. Cavalry, on detached duty at Corps HQ	

**2nd U.S. Artillery Regiment, Battery A (Horse), six 3-inch Ordnance rifles;
 Captain John H. Calef******

*These two regiments were acting as one unit under the command of Colonel Chapman of the 3rd Indiana.

**One company was detached as a headquarters guard for Colonel Devin.

***The Reserve Brigade was on detached service and was not with Buford on 1 July 1863.

****Attached to the Division from the 2nd Artillery Brigade, Cavalry Corps Reserve (Horse) Artillery.

Note: The approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. The strength figures are for 30 June 1863. All regiments have twelve companies unless noted otherwise.

Figure 25. Organization of Buford's Cavalry Division at Gettysburg, 1 July 1863

Heth's Division, III Corps, Army of Northern Virginia

Major General Henry Heth

First (Pettigrew's) Brigade, Brig. General J. J. Pettigrew	
11th North Carolina	617
26th North Carolina	843
47th North Carolina	567
52nd North Carolina	553
Second (Brockenbrough's) Brigade, Colonel J. M. Brockenbrough	
40th Virginia	308
47th Virginia, 9 companies	135
55th Virginia, 11 companies	281
22nd Virginia Battalion, 6 companies	249
Third (Archer's) Brigade, Brigadier General James J. Archer	
13th Alabama	308
5th Alabama Battalion, 4 companies	135
1st (Provisional) Tennessee	281
7th Tennessee	249
14th Tennessee	220
Fourth (Davis') Brigade, Brigadier General Joseph Davis	
2nd Mississippi, 11 companies	492
11th Mississippi, on detached service and not engaged on 1 July	
42nd Mississippi	575
55th North Carolina	640
Heth's Division Artillery Battalion; at Cashtown, Pennsylvania under III Corps control on the morning of 1 July	
Pegram's III Corps Reserve Artillery Battalion, Major W. J. Pegram	
Pee Dee, South Carolina, Artillery Battery (Zimmermann), four 3-inch Ordnance Rifles	
Fredericksburg, Virginia, Artillery Battery (Marye), two 12-pounder Napoleons and two 3-inch Ordnance Rifles	
Richmond, Virginia, Artillery Battery (Crenshaw), two 12-pounder Napoleons and two 12-pounder howitzers	
Richmond, Letcher Artillery Battery (Brander), two 12-pounder Napoleons and two 10-pounder Parrott rifles	
Richmond, Purcell Artillery Battery (McGraw), four 12-pounder Napoleons.	

Note: The approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. The strength figures are for 1 July 1863. Each regiment has 10 companies unless indicated otherwise. Artillery batteries have two sections.

Figure 26. Organization of Heth's Division at Gettysburg, 1 July 1863

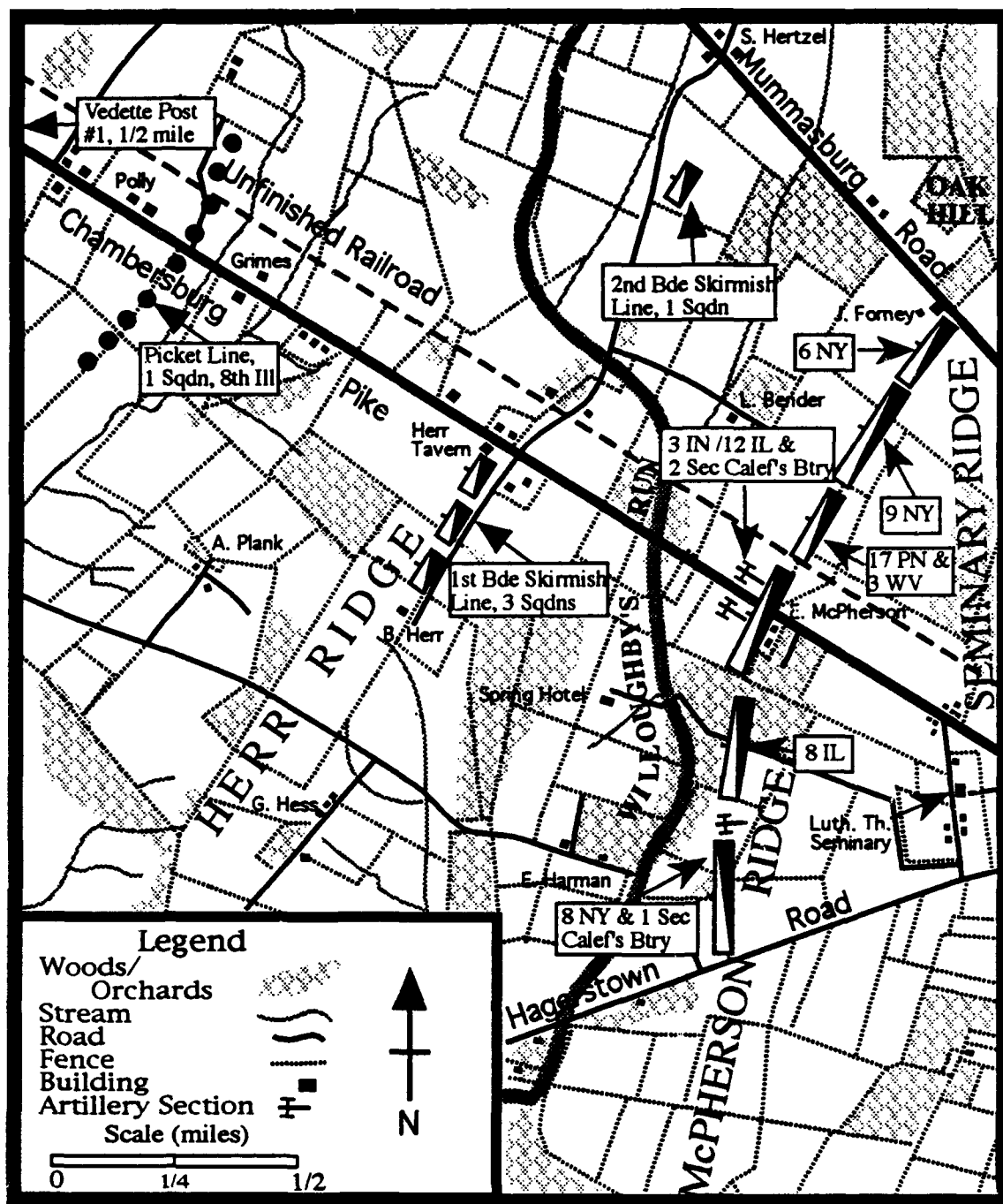


Figure 27. Buford's delaying action west of Gettysburg, 1 July 1863

Imboden's Command, Army of Northern Virginia
Brigadier General John D. Imboden

18th Virginia Cavalry Regiment	915
62nd Virginia Mounted Infantry Regiment, 12 companies	1,095
McNeill's Virginia Partisan Rangers, 1 company	90
Colonel J. L. Black's Infantry Command,* 4 companies	350
Colonel William R. Aylett's Infantry Command,* 4 companies	350
54th North Carolina Infantry Regiment* *	350
58th Virginia Infantry Regiment* *	250

Imboden's Artillery

Staunton, Virginia Horse, Artillery Battery (McClanahan),
six 12-pounder Napoleons
Washington, South Carolina, Horse Artillery Battery (Hart),
three 12-pounder Blakley rifles
Norfolk, Virginia, Artillery Battery (Moore), two 12-pounder
Napoleons, and one 3-inch Ordnance and one
10-pounder Parrott rifles
Washington, Louisiana, Artillery Battalion, 1st Company
(Squire), one 12-pounder Napoleon
Washington, Louisiana, Artillery Battalion, 2nd Company
(Richardson), two 12-pounder Napoleons and one
12-pounder howitzer
Washington, Louisiana, Artillery Battalion, 3rd Company
(Miller), three 12-pounder Napoleons
Washington, Louisiana, Artillery Battalion, 4th Company
(Norcom), two 12-pounder Napoleons and one 12-pdr
howitzer

**Total Strength of Imboden's Command: Cavalry/Mounted Infantry,
2,100; Infantry, 1,400; Artillery, 23 guns and howitzers.**

Notes: The approximate number of soldiers present for duty in each regiment is indicated to the right of the unit. Each regiment has 10 companies unless indicated otherwise.

***These units were ad hoc formations formed from wagoners and wounded personnel.**

****These two units were from Early's Division of II Corps.**

Figure 28. Organization of Imboden's Command at Williamsport, 6 July 1863

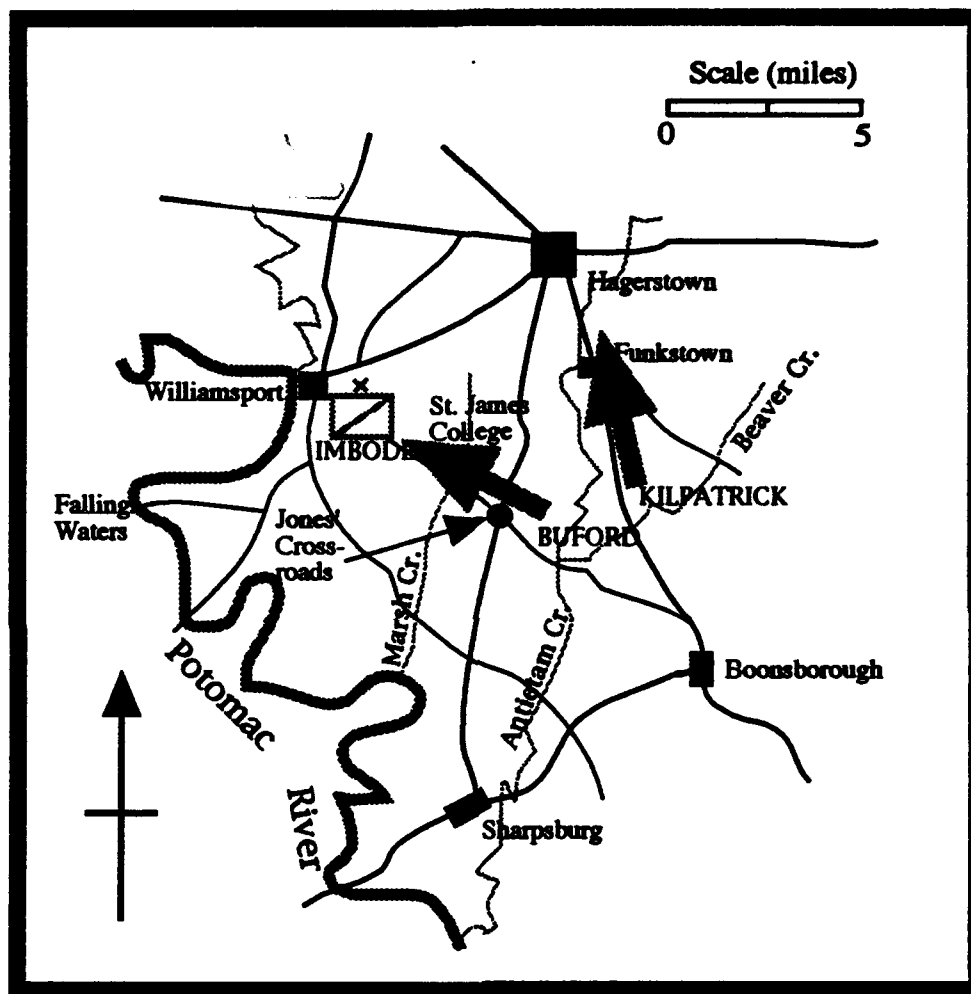


Figure 29. The Battle of Williamsport, 6 July 1863

APPENDIX C

REPORTS OF BUFORD'S COMMAND AT BRANDY STATION

This appendix contains partial transcripts of the reports submitted by John Buford and his subordinates concerning the Battle of Brandy Station, 9 June 1863. For some unknown reason these reports were not included in the *Official Records*. The complete original reports are maintained in the Joseph Hooker Papers at the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, CA. The documents include the following:

Buford's report on the engagement with four enclosures.

- a. Recapitulation of Right Wing losses (not included).
- b. List of casualties by name, regiment., etc (not included).
- c. Reports of the Reserve Brigade.

- 1) Report of Major Charles J. Whiting, acting Reserve
Brigade Commander.
- 2) Report of Captain Richard S. C. Lord, Commander of the
1st US.
- 3) Report of Captain Wesley Merritt, Commander of the 2nd
US.
- 4) Report of Captain James E. Harrison, Commander of the
5th US.
- 5) Report of Captain George C. Cram, Commander of the 6th
US.
- 6) Report of Major Henry C. Wheelan, Commander of 6th
Pennsylvania.
- 7) Report of Lieutenant Samuel S. Elder, Commander of
Horse Battery E, 4th US.

d. Report of Colonel Thomas C. Devin, Commander of the 1st Cavalry Division and the report of Colonel Josiah H. Kellogg, Commander of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

Headquarters 1st Division and Cavalry Reserve
Near Warrenton Junction, Virginia
June 13th, 1863

Lieutenant Colonel A. J. Alexander
Acting Adjutant General Cavalry Corps

Colonel,

I have the honor to report as follows of the part taken by the troops under my command in the cavalry engagement on the 9th instant near Beverly's Ford.

In pursuance to instructions from the Brigadier General commanding the Corps, during the afternoon and night of the 8th instant I placed my command composed of the 1st Division, Reserve Brigade and [Brigadier] General [Adelbert] Ames' infantry, very near to the ford unobserved by the enemy. About 4 AM the column was in motion, Colonel [Benjamin F.] Davis' 1st Brigade (8th Illinois, 3rd Indiana, 8th New York, 2 squadrons of 9th New York, and one squadron of 3rd [West] Virginia numbering 1,534 aggregate) leading. At 4:30 AM the ford was taken, and the enemy's pickets driven to the woods, some five hundred yards from the river. As soon as Colonel Davis' force was across, I directed him to push the enemy for a mile or more. He started and in a very few moments became engaged with the enemy strongly posted in the woods and behind barricades. He nevertheless drove them from their stronghold, through the woods back upon their artillery, and held them there, although they made desperate efforts to recover their lost ground. This woods was dearly bought, for among the noble and brave ones who fell was Colonel B. F. Davis, 8th New York Cavalry. He died in the front giving example of heroism and courage to all who were to follow. He was a thorough soldier, free from politics and intrigue. A patriot in the true sense, an ornament to his country and a bright star in his profession. When the sad news of Davis' fall reached me I crossed and pushed to the front to examine the country and to find out how matters stood. I then threw the 1st Division on the left of the road leading to Brandy Station with its left extending toward the railroad. General Ames' command was brought up and posted on each side of the road, in the skirt of the wood out of view, but facing and close to the enemy. The Reserve Brigade (composed 2nd, 5th, 6th United States Cavalry and 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry, the 1st United States being on picket) was posted on the right all connecting from right to left. While making this formation my extreme left was severely pressed by the enemy's skirmishers and artillery. Everything being arranged the Reserve under Major [Charles J.] Whiting swung around, gained the enemy's left flank and went at them, the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry, under Major [Robert, Jr.] Morris leading, supported by the rest of the Brigade and [First Lieutenant Samuel S.] Elder's Battery [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment]. The Brigade was somewhat delayed in getting out of the woods and in the eagerness for the advance, the column became somewhat lengthened. The 6th Pennsylvania, supported by a portion of the 6th US Cavalry, under Captain [George C.] Cram, when in reach, charged the enemy home, riding almost up to the mouth of his cannon. The 2nd US cavalry was to have followed, but before getting clear of the woods had received different orders. This attack relieved my left which was sorely pressed and drew the enemy to my extreme right, where they massed, and threatened to overwhelm me. Colonel [Josiah H.] Kellogg's Brigade [2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division] (17th

Pennsylvania and 6th New York) and a section of [Captain William M.] Graham's Battery [Horse Battery K, 1st US Artillery Regiment] then took the extreme right, resting on Hazel Run. In this position there was very severe work for the skirmishers and artillery for several hours, at one time the enemy's dismounted men made an attempt to gain a stone fence immediately in front of some of our guns. Captain [James E.] Harrison, with a portion of his brave regiment [5th US], was sent to gain it first and to keep it. He did so in splendid style and for several long hours he held it and punished those who came in sight to oppose him. He remained long after his carbine ammunition was expended in a very awkward place, the dispositions of the troops being such I could get no relief for him. Finally he was relieved but not until many of his horses were killed.

While in this position [Brigadier General David M.] Gregg's guns were heard and the enemy began moving. Major Whiting, with his Brigade and Elder's Battery, soon pressed forward driving the enemy over two miles up Hazel Run. Gregg's cannonading becoming more distinct and furious, I resolved to go to him if possible. All of the forces with me except the 5th US Cavalry and a section of Graham's [Battery] which was left to hold my right, swung around under a tremendous artillery fire and gained the crest overlooking Brandy Station. Then came the [?]. A portion of the Reserve after much difficulty forced its way through a dense forest and became engaged after exhausting the little ammunition it had left, out flew the sabers and most handsomely were they used. The enemy, although vastly superior in numbers was fought hand to hand and was not allowed to gain an inch of ground once occupied. During this hand to hand fighting Lieutenant [Albert O.] Vincent [Horse Battery B and L, 2nd US Artillery Regiment] poured his shot into them with terrible execution. By this time Gregg's firing had ceased, and I was ordered to withdraw. Abundance of means was sent to aid me, and we came off the field in fine shape and at our convenience. Captain [Richard S. C.] Lord with the 1st US came up fresh, comparatively, with plenty of ammunition and entirely relieved my much exhausted but undaunted command in a most commendable style. The engagement lasted near 14 hours. My loss I regret to report is heavy, annexed is a recapitulation. The enemy suffered equally. General Ames' command behaved handsomely, and to him I am much indebted for his hearty cooperation, given at all times and with so much alacrity that his services were invaluable. I trust his loss is not as severe as mine. The men and officers of the entire command without exception behaved with great gallantry. Colonel [Thomas C.] Devin, who succeeded Colonel Davis and fought the 1st Division deserves great praise. He was sorely pressed many times and most nobly did his brave men hold their ground. The Reserve Brigade was under my own observation nearly all day and I had opportunity to see many acts of gallantry. All were conspicuous, but among so many brave, tried men it is difficult for me to say who excelled the others. Without doing injustice I may be allowed to say that Major Morris, 6th Pennsylvania; Captain Merritt and Harrison, at the head of their fighting regiments; [Second] Lieutenant [Andrew] Stoll [6th US] with his dashing squadron; and [First] Lieutenant [Thomas B.] Dewers [2nd US] with his gallant skirmishers, won my admiration. Lieutenant Elder, Vincent and [Thomas, Jr.] Williams [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment] of the artillery, deserve great credit. They fought their guns with coolness, skill, and judgment and often where they were in hot places.

I transmit herewith the report of Colonels Devin and Kellogg and all the reports from the Reserve brigade. I fully endorse all they say of their officers and men and would mention more names, but for fear of doing someone injustice I must close.

To my staff, Captains [Myles W.] Keogh, [Theodore C.] Bacon; Lieutenants [John] Mix, [P.] Penn Gaskill and [William] Dean, I am under many obligations for their prompt and untiring exertions. I often had to send them where the fire was hot and when their horses were jaded, but there was no hesitation. Lieutenant Mix's horse was killed under him while delivering an order to a line of skirmishers. Captain [Joseph] O'Keeffe early in the day obtained my consent to serve for Major Whiting, and late in the day while leading a charge of the 2nd US cavalry was wounded and taken prisoner. To Captains [Elon J.] Fransworth, 8th Illinois, and [Ulric] Dahlgren, General Hooker's staff, I tender my thanks. To the former for the valuable information he gave me concerning the country, and enemy, and to the latter for volunteering his service in carrying messages to different parts of the field.

I am Colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

John Buford
Brigadier General, Volunteers

List of documents with accompanying report.

- A. Brigadier General Buford's report.
- B. Recapitulation of losses.
- C. List of casualties by name, rank, regiment, etc.
- D. Reports of Reserve Brigade.
- E. Reports of Colonels Devin and Kellogg (1st Division).

Headquarters, Cavalry Reserve Brigade
June 12th, 1863.

To Captain [Theodore C.] Bacon
Assistant Adjutant General
Right Wing, Cavalry Corps

I have the honor to forward the Regimental Commander's reports of the operations of the respective regiments in the late engagement with the enemy near Beverly's Ford, Virginia, on the 9th instant. And as these reports cover the operations of the Brigade, I have little to add.

I saw personally the conduct of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the 2nd [US] Cavalry spoken of by Captain [Wesley] Merritt, and cheerfully endorse all that he has said. Also the conduct of the 6th Pennsylvania, no old regiment could have conducted itself better.

The brigade being very much divided during the day, of course I cannot speak personally of but a portion of it.

I have to regret the loss of Captain [Joseph] O'Keeffe, who requested to act with me during the day, and after affording most valuable service could not resist the temptation of charging with the 2nd US Cavalry and was wounded and taken prisoner.

I was also much indebted to Lieutenant J. [James] F. McQueston, and Lieutenant L. [Lewis] Thompson for their activity and zeal in carrying orders. Both were exposed to heavy fire during most of the action.

I would also recommend to the favorable consideration of the General, Sergeant Charles Polk of the 2nd US. Cavalry, who acted as my chief bugler and showed great coolness and courage.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

CHARLES J. WHITING
Major, 2nd [US] Cavalry, Commanding Brigade

Headquarters, 1st United States Cavalry
June 11th, 1863.

Sir:

In compliance with instructions I have the honor to make the following report of the part my regiment took in the battle of the 9th. Being on picket my regiment did not receive orders to join the Brigade until 9:30 AM on the 9th. My pickets were at that time scattered over a distance of 16 miles. I collected them as soon as possible and joined the Brigade; moving to the front I took the advance, formed line of battle in front of the enemy and covered the crossing of our troops to the opposite bank of the river. My regiment was under fire from 2:00 PM until after sunset, constantly exposed to the cannonading and musketry of the enemy. I cannot speak in terms of too high praise of the coolness and gallantry of my officers and men. We crossed the river in rear of our entire forces. I lost one man killed and two wounded. Five horses killed under my men, one of which was Lieutenant Fisher.

Killed

Private August T. Eckholdt, Company B

Wounded

Corporal James Van Dyke, Company I (knee)

Private John Costello, Company F (hand)

I am sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

R. [Richard] S. C. LORD

Captain, 1st US Cavalry, Commanding Regiment

Headquarters 2nd Cavalry
In the field, June 10th, 1863.

Lieutenant,

I have the honor, in compliance with orders, to submit a report of the part taken by the 2nd US Cavalry in the operations of the 9th instant in the neighborhood of Beverly's Ford.

After fording the Rappahannock the regiment moved with the rest of the Brigade to the point near where Colonel B. [Benjamin] F. Davis' Brigade was engaging the enemy and then moved through the woods in the direction of heavy artillery fire, keeping by order to the right and rear of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry. After having marched about half a mile in this direction I was ordered to support [First Lieutenant Samuel S.] Elder's Battery [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment] which was changing position to the right rear, and immediately on gaining an open field I was ordered to oppose the enemy's skirmishers advancing in considerable force from two directions. To do this two squadrons were detached under Captain [Theophilus F.] Rodenbough and Lieutenant Moyer who held the enemy in check, although annoyed by an artillery fire from a hill about eight hundred yards distant. The enemy taking advantage of the woods to our left reinforced his skirmishers and sent two or more squadrons in a body to the left of my line, which fact I reported; when the Brigadier General Commanding sent orders to hold the line at any hazards, I immediately detached Captain [Charles W.] Canfield with his squadron to the support of the left. This gallant officer advanced his men dismounted at a double quick and drove the enemy's skirmishers back from the edge of the woods, which they had gained, and while emulating his example, his coolness and devotion to duty, his men (newly recruited squadron) held the position against great odds, their brave commander fell dead shot through the heart.

The regiment continued to skirmish for nearly three hours during which time Captain Rodenbough's squadron, having expended its carbine ammunition, was relieved by Lieutenant Lewis. In the meantime the artillery fire made it necessary to change, several times, the position of the few men in the regiment who were massed.

My regiment being relieved by an infantry regiment, I was ordered to support a section of Lieutenant Elder's battery, after which I was ordered to move rapidly and occupy the hill where the enemy with artillery had been posted all the morning but from which he was supposed to be moving. The regiment moved at a gallop driving the rear guard of the enemy and succeeded in making some captures. This hill was some half mile distant from our original position and a section of artillery on the left flank did some good practice at the regiment while it was passing over. After this the regiment moved with the remainder of the Brigade under the direction of the Brigadier General Commanding the right wing of the Corps, when a squadron was detached as skirmishers and charging the enemy's skirmishers drove them five or six hundred yards. At the same time a platoon under Lieutenant [Thomas B.] Dewers which had been detailed as an advance guard charged and drove a much superior force of the enemy's cavalry and then rallied

sufficiently soon to engage with the regiment in the combat which subsequently took place. The regiment in the meantime, by General Buford's order, moved forward in line of battle to support the skirmishers who were soon after charged by a regiment of the enemy's cavalry. Owing to a fence and ditch which intervened I found it necessary to wheel the regiment by platoons to the right and then to break by fours, and the ditch which was deep and [?] reduced the front of column to a single file. The head of the column crossed the ditch when I was obliged to halt until the formation of platoons was partially made. The men and officers bravely stood under a most galling fire at very short range until this was effected, when the charge was ordered and right gallantly did the regiment (when not two hundred strong) carry it home driving the Rebel regiment and punishing them severely with the saber and pistol. A number of prisoners were made and sent to the rear, but I fear most of them subsequently escaped.

After rallying, while the 6th US Cavalry was charging a second regiment of the enemy, my regiment was ordered to hold a road to the right near where a heavy force of the enemy was discovered advancing. Here a rapid fire was kept up for some hours, the men using their pistols when the carbine ammunition was all expended. Finally the 2nd was relieved by the 6th Cavalry and ordered to retire.

Too much credit cannot be given to the gallant Captain [Joseph] O'Keeffe, of General Buford's staff, who moved with the regiment most of the day assisting me greatly with his advice and labor. He fell wounded on the field after charging at the head of the 2nd. I regret to say that while my orderly was trying to bring him off a retreating Rebel shot at the wounded officer. He was pursued and killed by the orderly.

It is difficult to discriminate among so many brave men, who to mention for distinguished conduct. A list of the regiment would contain the name of no man who, to my knowledge, did not do his duty well. I cannot, however, forbear to mention Captain Canfield and Rodenbough. The former fell fighting gallantly early in the day; the later I rejoice to say, although his horse was shot five different times and himself cut over the shoulder with a saber, is spared to the regiment, an ornament to the Cavalry service.

Eight out of fifteen officers of the line and regimental staff were killed or wounded. All were rendered conspicuous by their bravery. [Second] Lieutenant [Edward J.] Spaulding, Acting Adjutant, was wounded during the second charge and his horse killed, fought on foot. Lieutenants [William] Blanchard, [Thomas B.] Dewers, [Charles W. K.] Leoser, [Robert] Lennox, [Paul] Quick, and [Elijah R.] Wells were all wounded while gallantly fighting at the heads of their respective commands. In addition I must increase the list of those among the officers particularly distinguished for valor, with the names of Lieutenants [Daniel] Flynn and [Michael] Lawless.

I cannot close the report without mentioning the name of Sergeant Major Deleaver whose good conduct is particularly recommended to the Major commanding the Brigade. Sergeant Painton of company L is also highly spoken of by his company commander.

It must not be inferred that I have mentioned the names of all who distinguished themselves during the days fighting. I can truly say that I am proud to be associated with such brave men as those whose names are contained in the rolls of the regiment.

I transmit herewith a list of the killed and wounded.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. [Wesley] MERRITT
Captain, 2nd US Cavalry, Commanding Regiment

Headquarters, 5th Cavalry
June 10th, 1863.

Sir,

I have the honor herewith to submit the following report of the operations of my regiment during the engagement with the enemy near Beverly's Ford on the 9th instant.

After crossing the river my regiment, consisting of three small squadrons, was detailed to support [First Lieutenant Samuel S.] Elder's Battery [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment], and almost immediately after, I was ordered to move forward at a quick gait for the purpose of checking a large force of cavalry that was driving a small party of our men. I moved forward at a gallop and formed in an open field preparatory to advancing on them when I received orders to deploy my men as skirmishers and take possession of and hold a stone fence about (200) two hundred yards in my front; having detached one squadron under Lieutenant Maley to support a section of [Captain William M.] Graham's Battery [Horse Battery K, 1st US Artillery] I advanced one squadron under Lieutenant [Frank M.] Dickerson to the stone fence and held the remaining squadron under Lieutenant [Henry] Jones as a support to the skirmishers. I held my position until my ammunition was entirely expended, when after having been relieved by two (2) fresh squadrons, I retired and acted as a support to a section of Graham's Battery during the rest of the day.

At 6:30 PM I received orders to re-cross the River. I beg leave to recommend to the consideration of the General Commanding Lieutenants Dickerson, [Gustavus] Urban, Jones, [Miles] Moylan, [James T.] Baden, Henly and [James] Hastings and [William] Brophy whose conduct for gallantry and intrepid bravery while skirmishing with the enemy during the whole of the engagement, under a terrible fire of artillery and sharpshooter, was most conspicuous. Lieutenants Dickerson and Urban were each wounded, the former in the head, and the latter in the upper thigh, neither of them seriously. The rest of my casualties were six (6) men killed and buried on the field, fifteen (15) wounded and fifteen (15) missing, and sixty-two (62) horses killed and so badly wounded as to make it necessary to leave them on the field. A complete list of casualties giving name and rank has been furnished to Brigade Headquarters

I am sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

J. [James] E. HARRISON
Captain, 5th Cavalry, Commanding Regiment

Regimental Camp 6th US Cavalry
Near Catlett's Station, Virginia
June 10th, 1863.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of the 6th US Cavalry, when under my command, during the engagements of the 9th instant at Beverly's Ford.

The Regiment, five (5) squadrons strong, crossed the Rappahannock shortly after daylight in the Brigade column and as a support of [First Lieutenant Samuel S.] Elder's Horse Artillery [Horse Battery E. 4th US Artillery Regiment] in which capacity it acted for about an hour after crossing till the 1st Squadron was, by order of Brigade Commander, detached to the left of our position for observation of the enemy on that flank, remaining on that duty till the close of the day when withdrawn by Brigadier General [John] Buford after most of the Brigade had recrossed.

The remaining four (4) squadrons present were then moved up in close supporting distance and on the left of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Owing to the overpowering numbers opposed to it, and being exposed to a heavy artillery fire at close range on its left, the Regiment was compelled to retire through the woods, instantly reforming on the edge to re-advance. The timber on the left was so dense that, but for the coolness of the officers and men, the formation of squadron would have been an impossibility, and it was in this advance that 2nd Lieutenant [Daniel] Madden was so seriously wounded by a shell that he was unable to keep the field. The Regiment, besides losing severely in horses and men disabled, met with a serious loss in 1st Lieutenant [Joseph] Kerin, the Regimental Adjutant, taken prisoner at my side while gallantly assisting me to reform the command after charging.

The Regiment was there again used as a battery support for Elder's Horse Artillery, remaining as such for several hours; a portion of the time under a severe fire till ordered to our extreme right with the 2nd US Cavalry. At that time, in the afternoon, a fifth squadron reported to me (Captain [James S.] Brisbin's), that officer with his command having been detached since the day before; and during the morning in command of six (6) companies dismounted (including four (4) of Volunteer cavalry), engaged in obstinately disputing with the enemy the possession of a fence and stone wall on our right and near the River. After again supporting the artillery in its new position on our right, and sending a squadron to dislodge the enemy from a point of woods on our right flank, the Regiment moved into this timber, deploying two squadrons as skirmishers to the front, connecting with the 2nd Cavalry line, and driving the enemy from its edge to an eminence on a ploughed field beyond. When on his attempting to flank my line of skirmishers I supported them with the two remaining squadrons under Lieutenants [Isaac M.] Ward and [Christian] Balder, twice charging the enemy, and each time driving him with severe loss from his position to a hill beyond and holding him in check against heavy odds till withdrawn with serious loss by the Brigade Commander. Then fell the gallant Ward at the head of his squadron within grasping

distance of the enemy's battle flag for which he had been struggling. On being withdrawn from this hotly contested position, and on our change of front to resist the enemy's flanking efforts, I for a short time acted as a reserve to the 2nd US Cavalry and 6th Pennsylvania; engaged with the enemy in the woods and there relieved those two Regiments with my four (4) squadrons (Captain Brisbin having been again detached and participating no further) which were deployed as skirmishers against the woods, driving the enemy back into the timber. Here too fell another squadron commander, 2nd Lieutenant [Andrew] Stoll, who fell mortally wounded while gallantly animating his command. The enemy firing on him repeatedly afterwards and shooting the bearers who were fruitlessly attempting to remove him. In compliance with orders from Brigade Commander, and the Brigade returning, I at the close of the engagement withdrew my command from the woods retiring slowly as skirmishers and keeping the enemy in check and acting as the rear guard of the Brigade, which after recrossing the Rappahannock I rejoined at sunset, having been repeatedly engaged for near thirteen (13) hours during which time I lost four (4) officers out of twelve (12) that went into action. Viz.:

Lieutenant Ward, killed.

Lieutenant Stoll, missing and believed to be dead.

Lieutenant Madden, severely wounded.

Lieutenant Kerin, taken prisoner.

Of enlisted men, out of two hundred and fifty four (254) actually engaged, I brought out one hundred and ninety one (191), losing killed outright seven (7), severely wounded twenty five (25), disabled and missing thirty-one (31), making aggregate loss officers and men, sixty-seven (67); of horses lost, forty-two (42), exclusive of Lieutenant Wade's squadron now absent on picket and from whom no return has been received.

In closing this report it is my duty to call attention of my superiors to the conduct of the officers and men during the severe engagement above reported: giving place first to the memory of the heroic Ward and Stoll, the example of whose brilliant conduct and splendid deaths fail even to compensate the service for their loss. I would especially and most earnestly mention Lieutenant Balder and [T. C.] Tupper for their distinguished skill and coolness in controlling and disposing their commands, especially commending the former to the distinguished notice of my superiors for his invaluable service at the time of Lieutenant Ward's fall when he by his promptness, desperate courage, and animating example at that critical moment, and by rallying the men on the instant drove back the almost irresistible onslaught of the enemy. I am happy to include Lieutenant Tupper in the same special recommendation for the ability with which he held the enemy in the woods and skillful and brilliantly deliberate manner in which at the close of the engagement he withdrew his skirmisher, he being the extreme rear guard of the entire Brigade, and checking the enemy of ever step as he retreated and suffering more than any other squadron. To Lieutenant [James T.] Wade and [Albert] Coats the warmest praise is due, the former for impetuous gallantry in the first charge in the morning, when his horse was shot under him, and during the entire day; to the latter for the promptness with which he replaced Lieutenant Kerin in his duties when captured, and the energy and quiet

courage under the most galling fire, he discharged the hazardous duties of Adjutant in the field. Captain Brisbin and Lieutenant [S. H.] Carpenter were remarkable for their zealous alacrity in the execution of the duties confided to them; the latter skillfully bringing out the lamented Stoll's squadron after he was shot, and Lieutenant [H.] McQuiston in the early part of the day rendered good service. The conduct of the men was remarkable for the indomitable endurance that marked it, and their unflinching and dashing readiness to follow their officers. A commendation all the more deserved and to be appreciated when it is known that owing to the paralyzing system of absenteeism of officers, so fatal to this Regiment, and under the losses of the day, three companies were during the engagement left without an officer, and where is the presence of a full complement of officers so essential to success as in a cavalry combat?

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

G. [George] C. CRAM
Captain, 6th US Cavalry,
Commanding on the 9th instant

Headquarters, 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry
Camp near Catlett's Station, Virginia
June 11th, 1863.

To Lieutenant James F. McQueston
Acting Assistant Adjutant General,
Regular Cavalry Reserve Brigade

Lieutenant,

I have the honor to report that five companies of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry under command of Major [Robert, Jr.] Morris crossed the Rappahannock at the head of the Reserve Cavalry Brigade about 5 o'clock on the morning of the 9th instant. The other five companies were on duty on the Railroad at Bealton, Warrenton Junction and one squadron on picket. Shortly after crossing, Major Morris was ordered to advance his command through a woods from which the enemy's sharpshooters had been annoying us. One company advanced as skirmishers, two squadrons followed as support. In an open on the other side of the belt of woods the Rebel cavalry, apparently about double our number, were drawn up. We charged them squadron front, and through a severe artillery fire on our left, drove them into the woods beyond where a hand to hand fight ensued. Whilst leading this charge Major Morris' horse fell with him at a ditch and broke away from him when he got up, thus leaving him dismounted and stunned by the fall. It is supposed that Major Morris was taken prisoner [died in August 1863 in Libby Prison, Richmond, from malnutrition and disease]. The Rebel cavalry being greatly superior in number to us closed in on one front and both flanks thus completely surrounding us. Those who returned had to cut their way through. The remnants of the five companies who went into the charge, when collected together, formed a small squadron. These were reinforced about 8 o'clock AM by Captain Fraziers squadron which returned from duty on railroad. Part of this command were skirmishing at a stone wall on the right of [First Lieutenant Samuel S.] Elder's Battery [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment] when I received orders to take the whole of it and relieve the skirmishers at the wall, whose ammunition was exhausted; as we advanced thru the open field we received a terrible fire of rifle shot in front and of grape and canister from the enemy's battery on our left. Captain [Charles B.] Davis and two men of Company B were killed before we reached the wall. The enemy's fire took deadly effect on our horses which were knocked over until one third the command was dismounted. The Rebels, after pouring in a murderous fire, charged and dislodged our skirmishers from their position. Captain Dickson's squadron and Captain Clarke's company now reinforced us from the north side of the river. After which we were constantly engaged in skirmishing and supporting a section of Elder's Battery until ordered by Major [Charles J.] Whiting to join the brigade towards evening. The conduct of the officers and men of the regiment was so uniformly good that it is impossible to mention any for particular distinction. Eight officers had horses shot under them.

The following is a list of casualties which occurred during the day.

Commissioned Officers

Capt. Charles B. Davis, killed	Major Robert Morris, Jr., taken prisoner
Lieut. Rudolph Ellis, wounded, in hospital	Lieut. Thompson Lannig, missing
Capt. Charles L Leiper, wounded, in hospital	Lieut. S. R. Colladay, missing

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

H. [Henry] C. WHEELAN
Major, Commanding 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry

Camp near Warrenton Junction
June 12th, 1863.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by my Battery in the engagement near Beverly's Ford on the 9th instant. I crossed the river at an early hour on the same morning with my Battery of four 3-inch Ordnance guns supported by [Major Charles J.] Whiting's Brigade [Reserve Brigade]. Shortly after having crossed I took position on an elevation to reply to the enemy who had opened from a commanding point at a distance of about 1,500 yards on our right. From this time until the close of the day the changes of position were so rapid and the nature of the ground such that I am unable fully to describe them. The number of rounds fired during the engagement is 260, chiefly Hotchkiss percussion shell which, although effective against the enemy is unsafe in the field owing to the fact that there is scarcely an instance where it is not required to fire over our own troops who are exposed to danger from the pieces of lead edging that fly from the projectile, frequently at a few yards from the muzzle of the gun. The Battery suffered no loss in killed, wounded, nor missing and the only loss in material, five horses and one spare wheel.

Lieutenant [Thomas, Jr.] Williams, the only officer except myself serving with the Battery, as well as the enlisted men during the whole of that fatiguing day behaved with the utmost gallantry, and I must add that never was a battery better supported. In my frequent changes of position I was never alone nor did my supports flinch, although compelled to sit quietly in their saddles under the most severe artillery fire.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

SAMUEL S. ELDER
1st Lieutenant, 1st Artillery
Commanding Horse Battery E, 4th Artillery

Headquarters First Cavalry Division,
Army of the Potomac

June 1863.

Captain,

I have the honor to report that on the afternoon of the 8th instant in compliance with orders from Headquarters, Right Wing, Cavalry Corps, I relieved Colonel [Josiah H.] Kellogg and assumed command of the 2nd Brigade of my Division.

I marched that night with the Brigade (composed with 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Colonel Kellogg; two Squadrons 6th New York Cavalry, Captain [William E.] Beardsley commanding and one section of [Lieutenant Albert O.] Vincent's Battery [Horse Battery B and L, 2nd US Artillery Regiment] to Bowen's Plantation [about one mile north of Rappahannock Station] where I encamped.

At 4 AM I marched to Beverly's Ford with orders to cover the rear of the column on the march towards Culpeper.

On reaching the Ford I formed into line and waited the passage of the Regular Brigade and the Infantry; finding that part of the latter were not to cross I sent to the front for orders.

I was thus ordered to assume command of the [First] Division and myself take charge and direct the operations of the 1st Brigade. Colonel [Benjamin F.] Davis having been mortally wounded.

Crossing the Ford I found the Brigade in the woods about two miles to the front and left formed in column of squadrons, and sending for the officer in command (Major [William S.] McClure, 3rd Indiana Cavalry) I made the necessary inquiries relative to the situation and position of Brigade and the position of the enemy.

I ascertained that one squadron of the 8th Illinois had been deployed as skirmishers, and proceeding to the front of the skirmish line found a force of about six regiments of Rebel cavalry five hundred (500) yards in front of my position with their skirmishers dismounted and advancing.

Returning I found that the 8th Illinois had been ordered to report to General [John] Buford and immediately relieved their skirmishers with a squadron of 3rd Indiana. I then ordered two squadrons to dismount and deploy to the right and left as skirmishers and on the right to connect with the skirmisher line of General [Adelbert] Ames.

After placing proper supports for the left and ascertaining that Major McClure was acquainted with the country in that direction, sent him with a squadron to watch that flank and preserve the communications towards the river, at the same time connecting with my skirmish line.

My front being thus covered I ordered up the section of Vincent's Battery left with 2nd Brigade (the four guns with Colonel Davis having been ordered away previous to my arrival).

Nearly my whole command being deployed as skirmishers, I was unable to advance then sufficiently to secure a position in the plain for the section, but masked it in the skirt of the woods.

The section opened on the enemy's line with excellent effort, they immediately ran out a full battery of six guns and quickly getting the range temporarily disabled one piece, killing one horse and wounding a gunner when the section was forced to retire.

The Rebel battery then advanced and opened on my position and for two hours rained a storm of shot, shell, grape and canister through the woods;

their skirmishers at the same time advancing and endeavoring to out flank us, while their cavalry in line alternately threatened to charge every part of my line. Many of my best officers and men were killed or wounded, my own horse being shot under me.

About this time Lieutenant [Michalowski ?] [Horse Battery K, 1st US Artillery Regiment ?] came up with a section of his battery, but retired after firing one or two shots.

Their skirmishers continuing to force me, a squadron of 9th New York under Major [W. B.] Martin was ordered to charge from left to right around the skirt of the wood, and at the same time advancing our skirmishers, we succeeded in clearing them out.

The enemy again threatening to charge, I formed all my supports, about two squadrons 8th New York and one squadron 3rd Indiana under Major [Edmund M.] Pope, to repel them when suddenly the Rebel line wheeled into column and began to work to the right.

I immediately sent word to General [Alfred] Pleasonton that General [David M.] Gregg must either be coming up or the Rebels were about massing on General Buford's front, at the same time advancing my skirmishers and sending orders to the section of Vincent's Battery (then on the road) to advance to the skirt of the wood and shell the enemy's column in flank.

As I [mauled ?] the enemy's flank with my skirmishers a part of their column that was detached increased their gait, and the dust increasing the deception made me suppose for a moment that it was General Gregg in pursuit, and I sent orders to the section to cease firing.

At the same time, by a dash of the skirmishers, I succeeded in capturing some prisoners from the flank of the column and ascertained my mistake before my order was delivered to the section which continued to shell the column.

I instantly brought up my reserve at the charging step hoping to get a dash at the last regiment, but they broke for the woods on the left of the road running parallel to my front.

I then brought up on a gallop the section of battery, and placing them in position on the road, opened on the Rebel line which was forming in a plain 3/4 mile to the front and left.

They again opened on us with their battery of six guns, but the ground enabling us to change position, the section was able to hold its own; although, the enemy's fire was close and heavy, killing several horses in the supports.

After remaining in this position for some time a section of battery on General Ames' front opened and drawing the enemy's fire relieved us greatly.

About 3 PM I was ordered to fall back towards the river and occupy the crest near the Ford to cover General Buford's approach.

When General Buford arrived, and the batteries occupied the crest, I was ordered to cross the river where I again went into camp at Bowen's plantation.

The next morning, June 10th, returned to camp at this place.

I consider it my duty to speak in the highest terms of the conduct of the officers and men of this Brigade during the engagement. With a front of over one mile to hold, covering a most important point (the left approach to the Ford), nearly the whole command deployed as skirmishers with slight support, they never wavered but stood to the work like veterans. Their list of killed and wounded is sufficient proof of the fact.

To Majors McClure and [Charles] Lemmon, 3rd Indiana; [Edmund M.] Pope of 8th New York and [W. B.] Martin of 9th New York (who was wounded in a charge), I am indebted for most valuable assistance, promptly and willingly rendered. An officer, Lieutenant Colonel of infantry, whose name I am sorry I have not been able to obtain also rendered me valuable aid with a detachment under his command at a time when I was sorely pressed.

The honorable commanding officer in command of a section of Vincent's Battery also deserves special mention for the manner in which he handled his pieces and held his position.

Lieutenant Dana, 8th Illinois; Acting Assistant Adjutant-General [Lieutenant J. H.] Mahnken; Brigade [Inspector ?] [Lieutenant Raymond L.] Wright and Captain [Harrison] White of Provost Guard rendered me valuable assistance in transmitting orders under the hottest fire.

I would respectfully refer to the report of Colonel Kellogg, 2nd Brigade, for the operations of his command while detached.

I have not yet received the report of 8th Illinois which was detached immediately after I assumed command. I will forward it as soon as received.

The list of killed, wounded, and property and prisoners lost and captured I will forward as fast as they can be made out.

Respectfully Submitted,

THOMAS C. DEVIN
Colonel, Commanding 1st Cavalry Division

Headquarters, 2nd Brigade,
1st Cavalry Division
June 11th, 1863

Sir,

I have the honor to report that the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, consisting of (448) four hundred forty-eight men of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry and (148) one hundred forty-eight men of the 6th New York Cavalry, moved from camp near Catlett's Station on the 8th June and crossed the Rappahannock River on the 9th instant in rear of the Cavalry Column. I was ordered first to support a section of artillery posted on the right of our line which, however, was soon after removed, and I was ordered to throw a strong picket line to the front and the right resting on the river and the left connecting with the Reserve Brigade. The 6th New York Cavalry was dismounted and formed the line of skirmishers. A squadron of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry was their immediate support, and the rest of the command held in reserve.

This line was held until the enemy was obliged to retire by our cavalry getting on their right flank.

I then remounted the skirmishers and followed up capturing six (6) of the enemy's skirmishers.

The enemy certainly lost many men killed and wounded in this part of the line. They left (5) five dead on the field in front of the second position taken by the enemy. I was ordered to support [Samuel S.] Elder's Battery [Horse Battery E, 4th US Artillery Regiment] and in retiring I supported one section of this battery, retiring to this side of the river in rear of the last piece.

The casualties are as follows

* * * * *

Total - Officers 3 wounded

Enlisted men, 4 wounded

I am Sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
J. [Josiah] H. KELLOGG
Colonel, 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry
Commanding

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