

Battles and leaders of the Civil War. Being for the most part contributions by Union and Confederate officers. Based upon "The Century war series". Ed. by R. U. Johnson and C. C. Buel  
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# BATTLES AND LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR



BEING FOR THE MOST PART CONTRIBUTIONS  
BY UNION AND CONFEDERATE OFFICERS.  
BASED UPON "THE CENTURY WAR SERIES."  
EDITED BY ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON  
AND CLARENCE CLOUGH BUEL, OF THE EDI-  
TORIAL STAFF OF "THE CENTURY MAGAZINE."

NEW-YORK  
**The Century Co.**



## THE GREAT CHARGE AND ARTILLERY FIGHTING AT GETTYSBURG.

BY E. PORTER ALEXANDER, BRIGADIER-GENERAL, C. S. A.

**T**HE Reserve Artillery of Longstreet's corps, in the Gettysburg campaign, consisted of the Washington Artillery of New Orleans, then under Major Eshleman, nine guns, and my own battalion of twenty-six guns. Besides these, the artillery of the corps comprised Cabell's, Henry's, and Dearing's battalions of eighteen guns each. The latter battalions were usually attached, on the march, respectively to McLaws's, Hood's, and Pickett's divisions of infantry.

On the first of July, 1863, the Reserve Artillery was encamped near Greenwood, and we had no idea that the great battle of the campaign had already opened about eighteen miles away. Early in the night, however, rumors reached us that Hill's corps had been heavily engaged, and that Ewell's had come to his assistance; that the enemy had been driven some distance, but had finally made a stand in a very strong position. These rumors were soon followed by orders for the artillery to march at 1 o'clock for the front. There was little time for sleep before taking the road, and I think but few improved even that little. There was the usual lively interest, of course, to hear of the personal fortunes of friends in the two corps which had been engaged. Who was killed and who safe? Then there was no one so dull as not to appreciate the tremendous gravity to us of the results of the battle which the next day was to bring. We had penetrated farther into the enemy's country than ever before. Our only communication with our arsenals and depots was by an unguarded wagon-road to Staunton, Virginia, about two hundred miles, over mountains and across unbridged rivers; much of it through a hostile country, and all of it liable to cavalry raids by the enemy. But we felt that we were now, somehow, nearer the enemy's heart than we had ever been before,—within easy reach of some vital part,—and that a blow struck now must have many times the effect it would have if given in Virginia against only an invading army. Our confidence in Lee was, of course, supreme, and the opportune arrival of Ewell to Hill's aid gave fresh confirmation of



CONFEDERATES WAITING FOR THE END OF THE ARTILLERY DUEL.

There was a great deal to do meanwhile. Our sound horses were to be fed and watered, those killed and disabled were to be replaced from the wagon-teams, ammunition must be replenished, and the ground examined and positions of batteries rectified. But a splendid moon made all comparatively easy, and greatly assisted, too, in the care of the wounded, many of whom, both our own and the enemy's, lay about among our batteries nearly all night. About 1 o'clock I made a little bed of fence-rails, as preferable to the trampled ground in the Peach Orchard, and got two hours' sleep. At 3 I began to put the batteries in position again and was joined by the Washington Artillery, which had been in reserve the day before. As daylight came I found I had placed about twenty guns so that the enemy's batteries on Cemetery Hill enfiladed the line, and I had a panic, almost, for fear the enemy would discover my blunder and open before I could rectify it. They could not, perhaps, see down into the valley as early as I could see them, and all was right before they opened. They never could have resisted the temptation to such pot-shooting. Apparently to feel us, they fired a few shots, and hit one or two men and some horses; but we did not respond, wanting to save our ammunition for the real work, and we were grateful to them for their moderation, our ground being very unfavorable as regarded shelter.

Early in the morning General Lee came around, and I was then told that we were to assault Cemetery Hill, which lay rather to our left. This necessitated a good many changes of our positions, which the enemy did not altogether approve of, and they took occasional shots at us, though we shifted about, as

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inoffensively as possible; and carefully avoided getting into bunches. But we stood it all meekly, and by 10 o'clock, Dearing having come up, we had seventy-five guns in what was virtually one battery, so disposed as to fire on Cemetery Hill and the batteries south of it, which would have a fire on our advancing infantry. Pickett's division had arrived, and his men were resting and eating. • Along Seminary Ridge, a short distance to our left, were sixty-three guns of A. P. Hill's corps, under Colonel R. L. Walker. As their distance was a little too great for effective howitzer fire, General Pendleton offered me the use of nine howitzers belonging to that corps. I accepted them, intending to take them into the charge with Pickett; so I put them in a hollow behind a bit of wood, with no orders but to wait there until I sent for them. About 11, some of Hill's skirmishers and the enemy's began fighting over a barn between the lines, and gradually his artillery and the enemy's took part, until over a hundred guns were engaged, and a tremendous roar was kept up for quite a time. But it gradually died out, and the whole field became as silent as a churchyard until 1 o'clock. The enemy, aware of the strength of his position, simply sat still and waited for us. It had been arranged that when the infantry column was ready, General Longstreet should order two guns fired by the Washington Artillery.‡ On that signal all our guns were to open on Cemetery Hill and the ridge extending toward Round Top, which was covered with batteries. I was to observe the fire and give Pickett the order to charge. I accordingly took position, about 12, at the most favorable point, just on the left of the line of guns and with one of Pickett's couriers with me. Soon after I received the following note from Longstreet:

"COLONEL: If the artillery fire does not have the effect to drive off the enemy or greatly demoralize him, so as to make our efforts pretty certain, I would prefer that you should not advise General Pickett to make the charge. I shall rely a great deal on your good judgment to determine the matter, and shall expect you to let General Pickett know when the moment offers."

This note rather startled me. If that assault was to be made on General Lee's judgment it was all right, but I did not want it made on mine. I wrote back to General Longstreet to the following effect:

"GENERAL: I will only be able to judge of the effect of our fire on the enemy by his return fire, for his infantry is but little exposed to view and the smoke will obscure the whole field. If, as I infer from your note, there is any alternative to this attack, it should be carefully considered before opening our fire, for it will take all the artillery ammunition we have left to test this one thoroughly, and, if the result is unfavorable, we will have none left for another effort. And even if this is entirely successful, it can only be so at a very bloody cost."

‡ In the "United Service Magazine" for August, 1885, Lieutenant-Colonel William Miller Owen, of the Washington Artillery, says:

"Returning to the position of the Washington Artillery, we all quietly awaited the order to open the ball. At 1:30 P. M. a courier dashed up in great haste, holding a little slip of paper, torn evidently from a memorandum-book, on which, written in pencil and addressed to Colonel Walton, was the following:

"HEADQUARTERS, July 3d, 1863. Colonel: Let the batteries open. Order great care and precision in firing. If the batteries at the Peach Orchard cannot be used against the point we intend attacking, let them open on the enemy on the

rocky hill. Most respectfully, J. LONGSTREET, Lieutenant-General Commanding."

"The order to fire the signal-gun was immediately communicated to Major Eshleman, commanding the Washington Artillery, and the report of the first gun rang out upon the still summer air. There was a moment's delay with the second gun, a friction-primer having failed to explode. It was but a little space of time, but a hundred thousand men were listening. Finally a puff of smoke was seen at the Peach Orchard, then came a roar and a flash, and 138 pieces of Confederate artillery opened upon the enemy's position, and the deadly work began with the noise of the heaviest thunder."

EDITORS.

To this presently came the following reply :

"COLONEL: The intention is to advance the infantry if the artillery has the desired effect of driving the enemy's off, or having other effect such as to warrant us in making the attack. When the moment arrives advise General Pickett, and of course advance such artillery as you can use in aiding the attack."

I hardly knew whether this left me discretion or not, but at any rate it seemed decided that the artillery must open. I felt that if we went that far we could not draw back, but the infantry must go too. General A. R. Wright, of Hill's corps, was with me looking at the position when these notes were received, and we discussed them together. Wright said, "It is not so hard to *go* there as it looks; I was nearly there with my brigade yesterday. The trouble is to *stay* there. The whole Yankee army is there in a bunch."

I was influenced by this, and somewhat by a sort of camp rumor which I had heard that morning, that General Lee had said that he was going to send every man he had upon that hill. At any rate, I assumed that the question of supports had been well considered, and that whatever was possible would be done. But before replying I rode to see Pickett, who was with his division a short distance in the rear. I did not tell him my object, but only tried to guess how he felt about the charge. He seemed very sanguine, and thought himself in luck to have the chance. Then I felt that I could not make any delay or let the attack suffer by any indecision on my part. And, that General Longstreet might know my intention, I wrote him only this: "GENERAL: When our artillery fire is at its best, I shall order Pickett to charge."

Then, getting a little more anxious, I decided to send for the nine howitzers and take them ahead of Pickett up nearly to musket range, instead of following close behind him as at first intended; so I sent a courier to bring them up in front of the infantry, but under cover of the wood. The courier could not find them. He was sent again, and only returned after our fire was opened, saying they were gone. I afterward learned that General Pendleton had sent for a part of them, and the others had moved to a neighboring hollow to get out of the line of the enemy's fire at one of Hill's batteries during the artillery duel they had had an hour before.

At exactly 1 o'clock by my watch the two signal-guns were heard in quick succession. In another minute every gun was at work. The enemy were not slow in coming back at us, and the grand roar of nearly the whole artillery of both armies burst in on the silence, almost as suddenly as the full notes of an organ would fill a church. [See p. 371.]

The artillery of Ewell's corps, however, took only a small part, I believe, in this, as they were too far away on the other side of the town. Some of them might have done good service from positions between Hill and Ewell, enfilading the batteries fighting us. The opportunity to do that was the single advantage in our having the exterior line, to compensate for all its disadvantages. But our line was so extended that all of it was not well studied, and the officers of the different corps had no opportunity to examine each other's ground for chances to coöperate.

The enemy's position seemed to have broken out with guns everywhere, and from Round Top to Cemetery Hill was blazing like a volcano. The air seemed full of missiles from every direction. The severity of the fire may be illustrated by the casualties in my own battalion under Major Huger.

Under my predecessor, General S. D. Lee, the battalion had made a reputation at the Second Manassas and also at Sharpsburg. At the latter battle it had a peculiarly hard time fighting infantry and superior metal nearly all day, and losing about eighty-five men and sixty horses. Sharpsburg they

called "artillery hell." At Gettysburg the losses in the same command, including the infantry that volunteered to help serve the guns, were 144 men and 116 horses, nearly all by artillery fire. Some parts of the Federal artillery suffered in the same proportion under our fire. I heard of one battery losing 27 out of 36 horses in 10 minutes.



MAJOR-GENERAL CADMUS M. WILCOX, C. S. A.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

Before the cannonade opened I had made up my mind to give Pickett the order to advance within fifteen or twenty minutes after it began. But when I looked at the full development of the enemy's batteries, and knew that his infantry was generally protected from our fire by stone walls and swells of the ground, I could not bring myself to give the word. It seemed madness to launch infantry into that fire, with nearly three-quarters of a mile to go at midday under a July sun. I let the 15 minutes pass, and 20, and 25, hoping vainly for something to turn up. Then I wrote to Pickett: "If you are coming at all you must come at once, or I cannot give you proper support; but the enemy's fire has not slackened at all; at least eighteen guns are still firing from the cemetery itself." Five minutes after sending that message, the enemy's fire suddenly began to slacken, and the guns in the cemetery limbered up and vacated the position.

We Confederates often did such things as that to save our ammunition for use against infantry, but I had never before seen the Federals withdraw their guns simply to save them up for the infantry fight. So I said, "If he does not run fresh batteries in there in five minutes, this is our fight." I looked anxiously with my glass, and the five minutes passed without a sign of life on the deserted position, still swept by our fire, and littered with dead men and horses and fragments of disabled carriages. Then I wrote Pickett, urgently: "For God's sake, come quick. The eighteen guns are gone; come quick, or my ammunition won't let me support you properly."

I afterward heard from others what took place with my first note to Pickett.

Pickett took it to Longstreet, Longstreet read it, and said nothing. Pickett said, "General, shall I advance?" Longstreet, knowing it had to be, but

unwilling to give the word, turned his face away. Pickett saluted and said, "I am going to move forward, sir," galloped off to his division and immediately put it in motion.↓

Longstreet, leaving his staff, came out alone to where I was. It was then about 1:40 P. M. I explained the situation, feeling then more hopeful, but afraid our artillery ammunition might not hold out for all we would want. Longstreet said, "Stop Pickett immediately and replenish your ammunition." I explained that it would take too long, and the enemy would recover from the effect our fire was then having, and we had, moreover, very little to replenish with. Longstreet said, "I don't want to make this attack. I would stop it now but that General Lee ordered it and expects it to go on. I don't see how it can succeed."

I listened, but did not dare offer a word. The battle was lost if we stopped. Ammunition was far too low to try anything else, for we had been fighting three days. There was a chance, and it was not my part to interfere. While Longstreet was still speaking, Pickett's division swept out of the wood and showed the full length of its gray ranks and shining bayonets, as grand a sight as ever a man looked on. Joining it on the left, Pettigrew stretched farther than I could see. General Dick Garnett, just out of the sick ambulance, and buttoned up in an old blue overcoat, riding at the head of his brigade passed us and saluted Longstreet. Garnett was a warm personal friend, and we had not met before for months. We had served on the plains together before the war. I rode with him a short distance, and then we wished each other luck and a good-bye, which was our last.

Then I rode down the line of guns, selecting such as had enough ammunition to follow Pickett's advance, and starting them after him as fast as possible. I got, I think, fifteen or eighteen in all, in a little while, and went with them. Meanwhile, the infantry had no sooner debouched on the plain than all the enemy's line, which had been nearly silent, broke out again with all its batteries. The eighteen guns were back in the cemetery, and a storm of shell began bursting over and among our infantry. All of our guns — silent as the infantry passed between them — reopened over their heads when the lines had got a couple of hundred yards away, but the enemy's artillery let us alone and fired only at the infantry. No one could have looked at that advance without feeling proud of it.

But, as our supporting guns advanced, we passed many poor, mangled victims left in its trampled wake.↓ A terrific infantry fire was now opened upon Pickett, and a considerable force of the enemy moved out to attack the right flank of his line. We halted, unlimbered, and opened fire upon it. Pickett's men never halted, but opened fire at close range, swarmed over the fences and among the enemy's guns — were swallowed up in smoke, and that

↓ See General Longstreet's statement on pp. 344, 345.—EDITORS.

↓ I remember one with the most horrible wound that I ever saw. We were halted for a moment by a fence, and as the men threw it down for the guns to pass, I saw in one of the corners a man sitting

down and looking up at me. A solid shot had carried away both jaws and his tongue. I noticed the powder smut from the shot on the white skin around the wound. He sat up and looked at me steadily, and I looked at him until the guns could pass, but nothing, of course, could be done for him.—E. P. A.

was the last of them. The conflict hardly seemed to last five minutes before they were melted away, and only disorganized stragglers pursued by a moderate fire were coming back. Just then, Wilcox's brigade passed by us, moving to Pickett's support. There was no longer anything to support, and with the keenest pity at the useless waste of life, I saw them advance. The men, as they passed us, looked bewildered, as if they wondered what they were expected to do, or why they were there. However, they were soon halted and moved back. They suffered some losses, and we had a few casualties from canister sent at them at rather long range.

From the position of our guns the sight of this conflict was grand and thrilling, and we watched it as men with a life-and-death interest in the result. If it should be favorable to us, the war was nearly over; if against us, we each had the risks of many battles yet to go through. And the event culminated with fearful rapidity. Listening to the rolling crashes of musketry, it was hard to realize that they were made up of single reports, and that each musket-shot represented nearly a minute of a man's life in that storm of lead and iron. It seemed as if 100,000 men were engaged, and that human life was being poured out like water. As soon as it appeared that the assault had failed, we ceased firing in order to save ammunition in case the enemy should advance. But we held our ground as boldly as possible, though we were entirely without support, and very low in ammunition. The enemy gave us an occasional shot for a while and then, to our great relief, let us rest. About that time General Lee, entirely alone, rode up and remained with me for a long time. He then probably first appreciated the full extent of the disaster as the disorganized stragglers made their way back past us. The Comte de Paris, in his excellent account of this battle, remarks that Lee, as a soldier, must at this moment have foreseen Appomattox—that he must have realized that he could never again muster so powerful an army, and that for the future he could only delay, but not avert, the failure of his cause. However this may be, it was certainly a momentous thing to him to see that superb attack end in such a bloody repulse. But, whatever his emotions, there was no trace of them in his calm and self-possessed bearing. I thought at the time his coming there very imprudent, and the absence of all his staff-officers and couriers strange. It could only have happened by his express intention. I have since thought it possible that he came, thinking the enemy might follow in pursuit of Pickett, personally to rally stragglers about our guns and make a desperate defense. He had the instincts of a soldier within him as strongly as any man. Looking at Burnside's dense columns swarming through the fire of our guns toward Marye's Hill at Fredericksburg, he had said: "It is well war is so terrible or we would grow too fond of it." No soldier could have looked on at Pickett's charge and not burned to be in it. To have a personal part in a close and desperate fight at that moment would, I believe, have been at heart a great pleasure to General Lee, and possibly he was looking for one. We were here joined by Colonel Fremantle of Her Majesty's Coldstream Guards, who was visiting our army. He afterward published an excellent account of the battle in "*Blackwood*," and described

many little incidents that took place here, such as General Lee's encouraging the retreating stragglers to rally as soon as they got back to cover, and saying that the failure was his fault, not theirs. Colonel Fremantle especially noticed that General Lee reproved an officer for spurring a foolish horse, and advised him to use only gentle measures. The officer was Lieutenant F. M. Colston of my staff, whom General Lee had requested to ride off to the right and try to discover the cause of a great cheering we heard in the enemy's lines. We thought it might mean an advance upon us, but it proved to be only a greeting to some general officer riding along the line.

That was the end of the battle. Little by little we got some guns to the rear to replenish and refit, and get in condition to fight again, and some we held boldly in advanced positions all along the line. Sharp-shooters came out and worried some of the men, and single guns would fire on these, sometimes very rapidly, and manage to keep them back; some parts of the line had not even a picket in front. But the enemy's artillery generally let us alone, and I certainly saw no reason to disturb the *entente cordiale*. Night came very slowly, but came at last; and about 10 the last gun was withdrawn to Willoughby Run, whence we had moved to the attack the afternoon before.

Of Pickett's three brigadiers, Garnett and Armistead were killed and Kemper dangerously wounded. Fry, who commanded Pettigrew's brigade, which adjoined Garnett on the left, and in the charge was the brigade of direction for the whole force, was also left on the field desperately wounded. Of all Pickett's field-officers in the three brigades only one major came out unhurt. The men who made the attack were good enough: the only trouble was, there were not enough of them.

Next day, July 4th, we took a pretty fair position, except that it had no right flank, and awaited the enemy, who we thought would be inspired by the day to attack us. Meanwhile the wounded and the trains were started back to the Potomac, and at night, in a pouring rain and over roads that were almost gulfs of mud, the army followed. Providence had evidently not yet taken a "proper view of the situation." We had not finished the war, but had to go back to Virginia and start afresh. Yet the *morale* of the army seemed not at all affected. The defeat was attributed entirely to the position, and, if anything, it rather gave to the men confidence in what position could do for them if they had it on their side. Had Meade attacked us at Downsville, where we were stopped for several days by high water in the Potomac, I believe we should have repulsed him easily, barring exhaustion of ammunition.

The retreat was a terrible march for the artillery, crippled as we were by the loss of so many horses in battle, and the giving out of many more on the stony roads for the lack of horseshoes. We were compelled to trespass on the reluctant hospitality of the neighboring farmers, and send squads in every direction to get horses. Wherever found they were to be bought, whether the owner desired to sell or not. Of course our only money was Confederate bills, but we explained to the farmers that these would be as good as greenbacks if only they would make their own Government stop



HAND-TO-HAND FOR RICKETTS'S GUNS ON  
THE EVENING OF THE SECOND DAY.  
SEE P. 313.

## THE THIRD DAY AT GETTYSBURG.†

BY HENRY J. HUNT, BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL, U. S. A., CHIEF OF ARTILLERY, A. P.

IN view of the successes gained on the second day, General Lee resolved to renew his efforts. These successes were:

1st. *On the right*, the lodgment at the bases of the Round Tops, the possession of Devil's Den and its woods, and the ridges on the Emmitsburg road, which gave him the coveted positions for his artillery.

2d. *On the left*, the occupation of part of the intrenchments of the Twelfth Corps, with an outlet to the Baltimore pike, by which all our lines could be taken in reverse.

3d. *At the center*, the partial success of three of Anderson's brigades in penetrating our lines, from which they were expelled only because they lacked proper support. It was thought that better concert of action might have made good a lodgment here also.

Both armies had indeed lost heavily, but the account in that respect seemed in favor of the Confederates, or at worst balanced. Pickett's and Edward Johnson's divisions were fresh, as were Posey's and Mahone's brigades of R. H. Anderson's, and William Smith's brigade of Early's division. These could be depended upon for an assault; the others could be used as supports, and to follow up a success. The artillery was almost intact. Stuart had arrived with his cavalry, excepting the brigades of Jones and Robertson, guarding the communications; and Imboden had also come up. General Lee, therefore, directed the renewal of operations both on the right and left. Ewell had been ordered to attack at daylight on July 3d, and during the night reënforced Johnson with Smith's, Daniel's, and O'Neal's brigades. Johnson had made his preparations, and was about moving, when at dawn Williams's artillery opened upon him, preparatory to an assault by Geary and Ruger for the recovery of their works. The suspension of this fire was followed by an immediate advance by both sides. A conflict ensued which lasted with varying success until near 11 o'clock, during which the Confederates were driven

†Continued from p. 313.—EDITORS.



THE 29TH PENNSYLVANIA FORMING LINE OF BATTLE ON CULP'S HILL AT 10 A. M., JULY 3.

angle between Gibbon and Caldwell. General Newton, having been assigned to the command of the First Corps, *vice* Reynolds, was now in charge of the ridge held by Caldwell. Compactly arranged on its crest was McGilvery's artillery, forty-one guns, consisting of his own batteries, reënforced by others from the Artillery Reserve. Well to the right, in front of Hays and Gibbon, was the artillery of the Second Corps under its chief, Captain Hazard. Woodruff's battery was in front of Ziegler's Grove; on his left, in succession, Arnold's Rhode Island, Cushing's United States, Brown's Rhode Island, and Rorty's New York. In the fight of the preceding day the two last-named batteries had been to the front and suffered severely. Lieutenant T. Fred Brown was severely wounded, and his command devolved on Lieutenant Perrin. So great had been the loss in men and horses that they were now of four guns each, reducing the total number in the corps to twenty-six. Daniels's battery of horse artillery, four guns, was at the angle. Cowan's 1st New York battery, six rifles, was placed on the left of Rorty's soon after the cannonade commenced. In addition, some of the guns on Cemetery Hill, and Rittenhouse's on Little Round Top, could be brought to bear, but these were offset by batteries similarly placed on the flanks of the enemy, so that on the Second Corps line, within the space of a mile, were 77 guns to oppose nearly 150. They were on an open crest plainly visible from all parts of the opposite line. Between 10 and 11 A. M., everything looking favorable at Culp's Hill, I crossed over to Cemetery Ridge, to see what might be going on at other points. Here a magnificent display greeted my eyes. Our whole front for

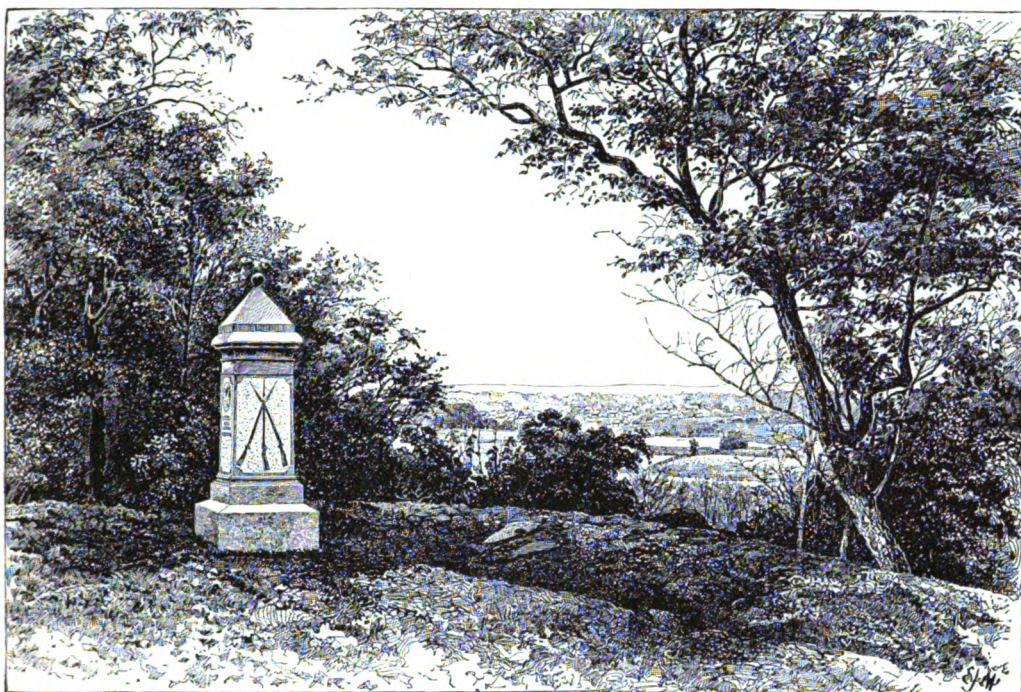
two miles was covered by batteries already in line or going into position. They stretched — apparently in one unbroken mass — from opposite the town to the Peach Orchard, which bounded the view to the left, the ridges of which were planted thick with cannon. Never before had such a sight been witnessed on this continent, and rarely, if ever, abroad. What did it mean? It might possibly be to hold that line while its infantry was sent to aid Ewell, or to guard against a counter-stroke from us, but it most probably meant an assault on our center, to be preceded by a cannonade in order to crush our



BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE S. GREENE.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

batteries and shake our infantry; at least to cause us to exhaust our ammunition in reply, so that the assaulting troops might pass in good condition over the half mile of open ground which was beyond our effective musketry fire. With such an object the cannonade would be long and followed immediately by the assault, their whole army being held in readiness to follow up a success. From the great extent of ground occupied by the enemy's batteries, it was evident that all the artillery on our west front, whether of the army corps or the reserve, must concur as a *unit*, under the chief of artillery, in the defense. This is provided for in all well-organized armies by special

rules, which formerly were contained in our own army regulations, but they had been condensed in successive editions into a few short lines, so obscure as to be virtually worthless, because, like the rudimentary toe of the dog's paw, they had become, from lack of use, mere survivals — unintelligible except to the specialist. It was of the first importance to subject the enemy's infantry, from the first moment of their advance, to such a cross-fire of our artillery as would break their formation, check their impulse, and drive them back, or at least bring them to our lines in such condition as to make them an easy prey. There was neither time nor necessity for reporting this to General Meade, and beginning on the right, I instructed the chiefs of artillery and battery commanders to withhold their fire for fifteen or twenty minutes after the cannonade commenced, then to concentrate their fire with all possible accuracy on those batteries which were most destructive to us — but slowly, so that when the enemy's ammunition was exhausted, we should have sufficient left to meet the assault. I had just given these orders to the last battery on Little Round Top, when the signal-gun was fired, and the enemy opened with all his guns. From that point the scene was indescribably grand. All their batteries were soon covered with smoke, through which the flashes were incessant, whilst the air seemed filled with shells, whose sharp explosions, with the hurtling of their fragments, formed a running accom-



GETTYSBURG FROM CULP'S HILL. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ABOUT 1886.

paniment to the deep roar of the guns. Thence I rode to the Artillery Reserve to order fresh batteries and ammunition to be sent up to the ridge as soon as the cannonade ceased; but both the reserve and the train had gone to a safer place. Messengers, however, had been left to receive and convey orders, which I sent by them; then I returned to the ridge. Turning into the Taneytown pike, I saw evidence of the necessity under which the reserve had "decamped," in the remains of a dozen exploded caissons, which had been placed under cover of a hill, but which the shells had managed to search out. In fact, the fire was more dangerous behind the ridge than on its crest, which I soon reached at the position occupied by General Newton behind McGilvery's batteries, from which we had a fine view as all our own guns were now in action.

Most of the enemy's projectiles passed overhead, the effect being to sweep all the open ground in our rear, which was of little benefit to the Confederates—a mere waste of ammunition, for everything here could seek shelter. And just here an incident already published may be repeated, as it illustrates a peculiar feature of civil war. Colonel Long, who was at the time on General Lee's staff, had a few years before served in my mounted battery expressly to receive a course of instruction in the use of field-artillery. At Appomattox we spent several hours together, and in the course of conversation I told him I was not satisfied with the conduct of this cannonade which I had heard was under his direction, inasmuch as he had not done justice to his instruction; that his fire, instead of being concentrated on the point of attack, as it ought to have been, and as I expected it would be, was scattered over



MONUMENT OF THE 2D MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY, FACING THE EAST BASE OF CULP'S HILL.

ing him "over and over." He fell behind the rear rank, apparently dead, and a ridge of earth where he had been lying reminded me of the backwoods practice of "barking" squirrels. Our fire was deliberate, but on inspecting the chests I found that the ammunition was running low, and hastened to General Meade to advise its immediate cessation and preparation for the assault which would certainly follow. The headquarters building, immediately behind the ridge, had been abandoned, and many of the horses of the staff lay dead. Being told that the general had gone to the cemetery, I proceeded thither. He was not there, and on telling General Howard my object, he concurred in its propriety, and I rode back along the ridge, ordering the fire to cease. This was followed by a cessation of that of the enemy, under the mistaken impression that he had silenced our guns, and almost immediately his infantry came out of the woods and formed for the assault. On my way to the Taneytown road to meet the fresh batteries which I had ordered up, I met Major Bingham, of Hancock's staff, who informed me that General Meade's aides were seeking me with orders to "cease firing"; so I had only anticipated his wishes. The batteries were found and brought up, and Fitzhugh's, Weir's, and Parsons's were put in near the clump of trees. Brown's and Arnold's batteries had been so crippled that they were now withdrawn, and Brown's was replaced by Cowan's. Meantime the enemy advanced, and McGilvery opened a destructive oblique fire, reënforced by that of Ritzenhouse's six rifle-guns from Round Top, which were served with remarkable accuracy, enfilading Pickett's lines. The Confederate approach was magnificent, and excited our admiration; but the story of that charge is so well

the whole field. He was amused at the criticism and said: "I remembered my lessons at the time, and when the fire became so scattered, wondered what you would think about it!"

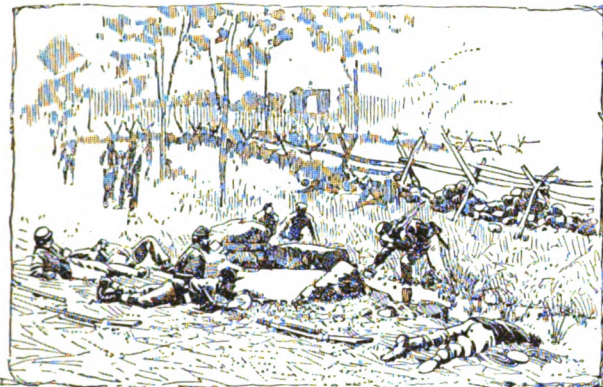
I now rode along the ridge to inspect the batteries. The infantry were lying down on its reverse slope, near the crest, in open ranks, waiting events. As I passed along, a bolt from a rifle-gun struck the ground just in front of a man of the front rank, penetrated the surface and passed under him, throw-



SLOCUM'S HEADQUARTERS, POWER'S HILL.

known that I need not dwell upon it further than as it concerns my own command. The steady fire from McGilvery and Rittenhouse, on their right, caused Pickett's men to "drift" in the opposite direction, so that the weight of the assault fell upon the positions occupied by Hazard's batteries. I had counted on an artillery cross-fire that would stop it before it reached our lines, but, except a few shots here and there, Hazard's batteries were silent

until the enemy came within canister range. They had unfortunately exhausted their long range projectiles during the cannonade, under the orders of their corps commander, and it was too late to replace them. Had my



MENCHEY'S SPRING, BETWEEN CULP'S HILL AND THE CEMETERY GATE.

instructions been followed here, as they were by McGilvery, I do not believe that Pickett's division would have reached our line. We lost not only the fire of one-third of our guns, but the resulting cross-fire, which would have doubled its value. The prime fault was in the obscurity of our army regulations as to the artillery, and the absence of all regulations as to the proper relations of the different arms of service to one another. On this occasion it cost us much blood, many lives, and for a moment endangered the integrity of our line if not the success of the battle. Soon after Pickett's repulse, Wilcox's, Wright's, and Perry's brigades were moved forward, but under the fire of the fresh batteries in Gibbon's front, of McGilvery's and Rittenhouse's guns and the advance of two regiments of Stannard's Vermont brigade, they soon fell back. The losses in the batteries of the Second Corps were very heavy. Of the five battery commanders and their successors on the field, Rorty, Cushing, and Woodruff were killed, and Milne was mortally and Sheldon severely wounded at their guns. So great was the destruction of men and horses, that Cushing's and Woodruff's United States, and Brown's and Arnold's Rhode Island batteries were consolidated to form two serviceable ones.

The advance of the Confederate brigades to cover Pickett's retreat showed that the enemy's line opposite Cemetery Ridge was occupied by infantry.



SPANGLER'S SPRING, EAST OF CULP'S HILL.

Our own line on the ridge was in more or less disorder, as the result of the conflict, and in no condition to advance a sufficient force for a counter-assault. The largest bodies of organized troops available were on the left, and General Meade now proceeded to Round Top and pushed out skirmishers to feel the enemy in its front. An advance to the Plum Run line, of the troops behind it, would have brought them directly in front of the numerous batteries which crowned the Emmitsburg Ridge, commanding that line and all the intervening ground; a farther advance, to the attack, would have brought them under additional heavy flank fires. McCandless's brigade,



COLONEL ELIAKIM SHERRILL, COMMANDING  
THE THIRD BRIGADE OF HAYS'S DIVISION,  
SECOND CORPS. KILLED JULY 3, 1863.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

supported by Nevin's, was, however, pushed forward, under cover of the woods, which protected them from the fire of all these batteries; it crossed the Wheat-field, cleared the woods, and had an encounter with a portion of Benning's brigade, which was retiring. Hood's and McLaws's divisions were falling back under Longstreet's orders to their strong position, resting on Peach Orchard and covering Hill's line. It needs but a moment's examination of the official map to see that our troops on the left were locked up. As to the center, Pickett's and Pettigrew's assaulting divisions had formed no part of A. P. Hill's line, which was virtually intact. The idea that there must have been "a gap of at least a mile" in that line, made by throwing forward these divisions, and that a prompt advance

from Cemetery Ridge would have given us the line, or the artillery in front of it, was a delusion. A prompt counter-charge after a combat between two small bodies of men is one thing; the change from the defensive to the offensive of an army, after an engagement at a single *point*, is quite another. *This* was not a "Waterloo defeat" with a fresh army to follow it up, and to have made such a change to the offensive, on the assumption that Lee had made no provision against a reverse, would have been rash in the extreme. An advance of 20,000 men from Cemetery Ridge in the face of the 140 guns then in position would have been stark madness; an immediate advance from any point, in force, was simply impracticable, and before due preparation could have been made for a change to the offensive, the favorable moment — had any resulted from the repulse — would have passed away.

Whilst the main battle was raging, sharp cavalry combats took place on both flanks of the army. On the left the principal incident was an attack made by order of General Kilpatrick on infantry and artillery in woods and behind stone fences, which resulted in considerable losses, and especially in the death of General Farnsworth, a gallant and promising officer who had but a few days before been appointed brigadier-general and had not yet received his commission. On the right an affair of some magnitude took

for guessing; the long marches, followed by the forced ones of July 1-2, of the Army of the Potomac left thousands of stragglers on the roads. These totals are of little importance; they would have been of some significance had the larger army been defeated; but it was not. At the "points of contact" the Confederates were almost always the stronger. On July 1st 18,000 Federal combatants contended against at least 25,000 Confederates, and got the worst of it. On July 2d Longstreet's 15,000 overcame Sickles's 10,000, and had to halt when a larger force was opposed to them. Williams's Twelfth Corps retook its works from a larger body of Ewell's troops, for at the contested point they were opposed by an inferior number; and then held them, for Johnson's superior force was as much hampered here by the nature of the ground as was Meade's on the left, the evening before. In many respects the Confederates had the advantage: they had much better ground for their artillery; they were fresher; they were all veterans; they were better organized; they were commanded by officers who had been selected for their experience and abilities, and in whom they had implicit confidence. These were enormous advantages, sufficient to counterbalance the difference of numbers, which, if any existed, was small; and whilst all the Confederate army, except here and there a brigade, were fought to the utmost, the strongest Federal corps (the Sixth) was hardly in action, the total loss of its eight brigades being but two hundred and forty-two killed, wounded, and missing. But the Southerners were subjected here to the disadvantages that the Northerners had to contend with in Virginia: they were surrounded by enemies, not friends who supplied them with aid and information; and they were not by choice, but by necessity, the assailants on the chosen ground of their opponents.

Right gallantly did they act their part, and their failure carried no discredit with it. Their military honor was not tarnished by their defeat, nor their spirit lowered, but their respect for their opponents was restored to what it had been before Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

## GENERAL HANCOCK AND THE ARTILLERY AT GETTYSBURG.

I. BY FRANCIS A. WALKER, BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL, U. S. V.

GENERAL HUNT, in his article on "The Third Day at Gettysburg" [see p. 375], criticises General Hancock's conduct of his artillery, on the ground that his directing the Second Corps batteries to continue firing throughout the Confederate cannonade was both an encroachment upon his own (General Hunt's) proper authority, as chief of artillery of the Army of the Potomac, and an act of bad policy. On the latter point he says:

"Had my instructions been followed here, as they were by McGilvery, I do not believe that Pickett's division would have reached our line. We lost not only the fire of one-third of our guns, but the resulting cross-fire, which would have doubled its value."

This, it will be seen, constitutes a very severe impeachment. I have had much correspondence and conversation with General Hancock on the subject; and, as the heroic leader of the Second

Corps can no longer reply for himself, I beg leave to speak on his behalf.

In the first place, two antagonistic theories of authority are advanced. General Hancock claimed that he commanded *the line of battle* along Cemetery Ridge. General Hunt, in substance, alleges that General Hancock commanded the infantry of that line, and that he himself commanded the artillery. Winfield S. Hancock did not read his commission as constituting him a major-general of infantry, nor did he believe that a line of battle was to be ordered by military specialists. He knew that by both law and reason the defense of Cemetery Ridge was intrusted to him, subject to the actual, authentic orders of the commander of the Army of the Potomac, but not subject to the discretion of one of General Meade's staff-officers. General Meade could, under the President's order, have

placed a junior at the head of the Second Corps, but whomsoever he did place over the corps became thereby invested with the whole undiminished substance, and with all the proper and ordinary incidents of command.

So much for the question of authority. On the question of policy there is only to be said that a difference of opinion appears between two highly meritorious officers—one, the best artillerist of the army, the other, one of the best, if not the best, commander of troops in the army—as to what was most expedient in a given emergency. Unquestionably it would have been a strong point for us if, other things being equal, the limber chests of the artillery had been full when Pickett's and Pettigrew's divisions began their great charge. But would other things have been equal? Would the advantage so obtained have compensated for the loss of *morale* in the infantry which might have resulted from allowing them to be scourged, at will, by the hostile artillery? Every soldier knows how trying and often how demoralizing it is to endure artillery fire without reply.

Now, on the question thus raised, who was the better judge, General Hunt or General Hancock? Had Henry J. Hunt taken command of a brigade

of infantry in 1861, had he for nearly two years lived with the infantry, marching with them, camping among them, commanding them in numerous actions, keeping close watch of their temper and spirit, observing their behavior under varying conditions and trials, I believe that by the 3d of July, 1863, he would have become one of the most capable and judicious corps commanders of the army. But in so doing he would necessarily have forfeited nearly all of that special experience which combined with his high intelligence and great spirit to make him one of the best artillerists whom the history of war has known. Certainly a service almost wholly in the artillery could not yield that intimate knowledge of the temper of troops which should qualify him, equally with Hancock, to judge what was required to keep them in heart and courage under the Confederate cannonade at Gettysburg, and to bring them up to the final struggle, prepared in spirit to meet the fearful ordeal of Longstreet's charge. Hancock had full authority over that line of battle; he used that authority according to his own best judgment, and he beat off the enemy. That is the substance of it.

BOSTON, January 12th, 1887.

## II. REJOINDER BY HENRY J. HUNT, BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL, U. S. A.

GENERAL F. A. WALKER, of General Hancock's staff, comments on my expressed belief that, had my instructions for the cannonade of July 3d been carried out by Captain Hazard, commander of the artillery of the Second Corps, the Confederate assault would not have reached our lines, and considers this "a very severe impeachment" of General Hancock's conduct of his artillery. I fully appreciate and honor the motive of General Walker's courteous criticism, and his very kind references to myself, but he writes under misapprehensions which are widespread and misleading, and which, as they place me in a false position, I beg leave to explain.

General Hancock's claim that he commanded all the troops of every description posted on his part of Cemetery Ridge is perfectly valid. It cannot be disputed, and I never questioned it; but all commands must be exercised subject to the established principles for the government of armies. Under these, commanders of special arms issue their own orders direct to their subordinates serving with army corps, who must submit them to the corps commanders with whom they serve. The latter, being supreme on their own lines, can modify or countermand these orders, but by doing so they make themselves responsible for the result. Thus all conflicts or theories as to authority are avoided. Our "Regulations" (Scott's), adopted in 1821, read:

"The superior officer of the corps of engineers, or of the artillery, serving with one of the army corps . . . will receive the orders of the commandant thereof, to whom the said superior officer of engineers or of artillery will communicate any orders he may receive from his own particular commandant-in-chief, attached to general headquarters."

Separate paragraphs provided rules for the military "staff" and administration,—the latter including the supply departments. "Staff-officers" are forbidden to give orders except in the names of their generals. From this rule administrative officers are specially exempted, their chiefs directing their respective departments in their own names, but subject to the control of the generals under whom they serve.

All these regulations are essential to the management of a large army, but are only partly applicable to a two-company post, the school in which most of our officers, both of the war office and of the regiments, were trained. So in the "Regulations" of 1861-3, they were all condensed into one short paragraph:

"Staff-officers and commanders of artillery, engineers, and ordnance, report to their immediate commanders the state of the supplies and whatever concerns the service under their direction, and receive their orders, and communicate to them the orders they receive from their superiors in their own corps."

Closely examined, this is correct, but it is obscure and misleading. It lumps together officers of the staff and of administration as "staff-officers," and so connects them with those of the special arms as seemingly to confirm the erroneous idea that engineer officers are staff-officers, and of course that artillery officers must be the same. It is an odd notion, which could not find a lodgment in any other army than our own, that an artillery commandant-in-chief, himself a "corps commander," and provided with a staff of his own, is "one of the staff-officers" who runs about a battle-field carrying "the actual and authentic orders" of the general-in-chief to other corps com-

manders. A "staff-officer" is an officer attached to the person or headquarters of a general as his aide or assistant.

To illustrate the general principle as to the service of the special arms, I quote from the "Instructions of Frederick the Great" to his artillery. He was himself, by the way, an "artillery specialist" of the highest order, yet I have never heard it suggested that this unfitted him for "ordering a line of battle." He was also a disciplinarian of the sternest school, yet he "almost preached insubordination" in order to reduce to a minimum the mischief that meddling with the artillery by any general, even the general-in-chief, might occasion. He says:

"It sometimes happens that the general in command, or some other general, is himself forgetful, and orders the fire to be opened too soon, without considering what injurious consequences may result from it. In such case the artillery officer must certainly obey, but he should fire as slowly as possible, and point the pieces with the utmost accuracy, in order that his shots may not be thrown away."

As to the other question, that of policy, each general must decide it for himself, and General Hancock presumably acted according to his best judgment in the emergency suddenly presented to him when the cannonade opened. I do not know his reasons for countermanding my orders, and therefore cannot discuss them, even were I disposed to do so. As to the hypothetical case presented by General Walker, the possible effect of the enemy's cannonade on the *morale* of our troops, and his question, "Who was the better judge, General Hunt or General Hancock?" I may be permitted to reply, that a corps commander ought to be, so far as his own corps is concerned. It is, however, one of the necessary duties of an

artillery commander to study the qualities of the other arms, for these must be considered in organizing and distributing the artillery, and are, as we see in this very case, important elements in determining its service. I had studied the Army of the Potomac, believed in its high qualities, and when, for special reasons, I instructed our batteries to withhold their fire for a given period, I knew the severity of the trial to which I was subjecting all the troops. I knew, also, that while the batteries would be the direct object of the enemy's fire, their men must stand idle at the guns and bear its full fury, while the infantry, lying on the reverse slope of the ridge and out of the enemy's sight, would be partly sheltered from it. Yet I felt no misgiving as to the fortitude of my cannoneers, and no doubt as to that of the infantry. I think I was justified by the event, for the troops on General Hancock's line, where my instructions were not followed, and those on General Newton's line (on Hancock's immediate left), where they were followed, were equal in "heart and courage" for the "fearful ordeal of Longstreet's charge." The object of my orders, however, was to spare them this ordeal altogether by breaking up the charge before it reached our lines. Had my orders been fully carried out, I think their whole line would have been—as half of it was—driven back before reaching our position, and this would have given us our only chance for a successful counter-attack. As it was, the splendid valor of Pickett's division alone enabled the Confederates, although defeated, to preserve their *morale* intact. Had they been repulsed without coming into immediate contact with our infantry, their *morale* would have been seriously impaired, their sense of superiority humbled.

## REPELLING LEE'S LAST BLOW AT GETTYSBURG.

I. BY EDMUND RICE, BREVET LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, U. S. A.

THE brigades of Harrow, Webb, and Hall, of Gibbon's division, Hancock's corps, occupied the crest on Cemetery Ridge on July 3d. The right of Hall's and the left of Webb's brigades were in a clump of trees, called by the enemy the salient of our position, and this grove was the focus of the most fearful cannonade that preceded Pickett's charge. One regiment, the 72d Pennsylvania, in Webb's command, was a little in rear of the left of its brigade; two regiments, the 19th Massachusetts and 42d New York, Colonel A. F. Devereux commanding, of Hall's brigade, were in rear of the right of their brigade.

From the opposite ridge, three-fourths of a mile away, a line of skirmishers sprang lightly forward out of the woods, and with intervals well kept moved rapidly down into the open fields, closely followed by a line of battle, then by another, and by yet a third. Both sides watched this never-to-be-forgotten scene,—the grandeur of attack of so many thousand men. Gibbon's division, which was to stand the brunt of the assault, looked with admiration on the different lines of Confederates,

marching forward with easy, swinging step, and the men were heard to exclaim: "Here they come!" "Here they come!" "Here comes the infantry!"

Soon little puffs of smoke issued from the skirmish line, as it came dashing forward, firing in reply to our own skirmishers in the plain below, and with this faint rattle of musketry the stillness was broken; never hesitating for an instant, but driving our men before it, or knocking them over by a biting fire as they rose up to run in, their skirmish line reached the fences of the Emmitsburg road. This was Pickett's advance, which carried a front of five hundred yards or more. I was just in rear of the right of the brigade, standing upon a large boulder, in front of my regiment, the 19th Massachusetts, where, from the configuration of the ground, I had an excellent view of the advancing lines, and could see the entire formation of the attacking column. Pickett's separate brigade lines lost their formation as they swept across the Emmitsburg road, carrying with them their chain of skirmishers. They pushed on toward the crest, and merged into one crowding, rushing line,