

THE LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
GEORGE GORDON MEADE

MAJOR-GENERAL UNITED STATES ARMY

BY  
GEORGE MEADE

CAPTAIN AND AIDE-DE-CAMP AND BREVET LIEUTENANT-COLONEL UNITED STATES ARMY

EDITED BY  
GEORGE GORDON MEADE

VOLUME II

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THE LIFE AND LETTERS  
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VOLUME II

## PART V

### NARRATIVE OF THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

#### I

#### THE MARCH TO GETTYSBURG

ON the afternoon of the same day on which this last letter was written, June 25, General Meade received the order of march for the following day, which was to bring his corps to Frederick City, Maryland. Accordingly, early in the morning of June 26, the corps started *en route* for that place, and going by way of Carter's Mill<sup>1</sup> and Leesburg, crossed the Potomac at the upper pontoon bridge, at Edwards's Ferry, and proceeded to within four miles of the Monocacy, where it encamped for the night. Resuming its march, early on the 27th, it forded the Monocacy near its mouth, and arrived toward afternoon at Ballinger's Creek, just outside of Frederick City.

After making proper dispositions for the encampment of the corps, General Meade rode into Frederick City with one or two of his staff, hoping to meet there General Hooker, whom he had not seen since breaking camp near Banks's Ford, on the Rappahannock, on the 13th of June, and to gain some information as to the plans and supposed whereabouts of the enemy; in which hope he was disappointed, General Hooker not having yet arrived.

Returned to camp, ignorant of a great change which had been decided upon and impended over him and the army, General Meade lay quietly asleep in his tent at three o'clock of the morning of June 28, when he was aroused by hearing on the outside an inquiry for his tent, by a person who claimed to be the bearer of important despatches to him. This proved to be Colonel James A. Hardie, of General Halleck's staff, who entered General Meade's tent and executed his mission.

What this mission might have been was the occasion of agitated comment among several of General Meade's aides, who, their tents

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

being in the immediate vicinity, were awakened by the stir in camp at that hour. That it had been executed in the dead of night, by an officer direct from the general-in-chief at the War Department, proved it to be of the last importance; but that was the only thing evident. What it portended, whether good or ill, to their general, no one could pretend to say. Enough, however, of the misunderstandings and difficulties with which he lately had had to contend was known to that little band to make some apprehensive that all was not well. The details of the interview between General Meade and Colonel Hardie will be left for the general himself to relate in the next letter to his wife.

General Meade soon appeared from his tent, and designating one of his aides as the only officer, besides Colonel Hardie, to accompany him, just as the day was faintly dawning he mounted and set out with his two companions for the head-quarters of the army. The little party rode silently along, the conversation almost restricted to a few questions asked by General Meade, who seemed deeply absorbed in his own thoughts, until, head-quarters being reached just after daylight, he was ushered into the tent of General Hooker, who was apparently ready to receive him. The interview between Generals Hooker and Meade lasted for some time, when the latter issued from the tent and called to his aide, who had been patiently waiting outside, still uninformed as to what was taking place, but with a vague impression that the fate of his general was not to be that predicted by his brother aides-de-camp. Although, as he answered the general's summons, he could not fail to observe that the general continued very grave, he also perceived a familiar twinkle of the eye, denoting the anticipation of surprise at information to be imparted, the effect of which he was curious to see; and so, when he at last quietly said, "Well, George, I am in command of the Army of the Potomac," his hearer was not, after all, very much surprised.

Giving immediate directions for his other aides-de-camp to join him at head-quarters, and for having personal effects brought over from the head-quarters of the Fifth Corps, the general retired into one of the tents, and in his consummate manner, in which all his powers were at his disposal at a moment's notice, at once bent his mind and energies to the task before him. The magnitude of this task may be faintly imagined but cannot be realized. It must be remembered that a change of commanders had been made in an army, not when, the preliminary manœuvres having been executed, it awaited or was engaged in battle, where, in either case, a change



of commanders is an ordinary incident of war, but that the change had been made in an army on the march, with its corps necessarily distributed over a great extent of territory, advancing to intercept and concentrate against an army of supposably equal or superior numbers, the whereabouts of which was not accurately known, led by the ablest general of the enemy.

General Hooker, at the interview which had taken place between him and his successor, relieved it of all embarrassment by the extreme courtesy of his demeanor, expressing his gratification at the choice which had been made for his successor. General Meade responded in the same spirit, and assured General Hooker that the selection had been made without any action or even knowledge on his part; that it was against his personal inclinations; but that, as a soldier, subject to authority, he felt bound to obey orders.

Within a few hours after being relieved of the command of the army, General Hooker took his departure for Baltimore, the post designated in his orders. General Meade received no intimation from him of any plan that he had formed, or of any views that he held, and therefore naturally presumed that he had had no definite plans, but that he had been, up to that moment, as he himself was subsequently obliged to be, governed by developments.

It seems that the final disagreement between General Hooker and the general-in-chief, General Halleck, was with reference to the post and garrison of Harper's Ferry. General Hooker had visited Harper's Ferry on the 27th, and thence addressed a recommendation to General Halleck to abandon the post and order the garrison to join the Army of the Potomac. General Halleck declined to consent to this, and General Hooker, in consequence of this action, feeling aggrieved, requested to be relieved from the command of the army. His request being complied with, soon after the arrival of General Meade he bade farewell to the army in a general order.

With the order placing General Meade in command of the Army of the Potomac came the following letter from General Halleck:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 27, 1863.*

MAJOR GENERAL G. G. MEADE,

*Army of the Potomac.*

GENERAL:

You will receive with this the order of the President placing you in command of the Army of the Potomac. Considering the circumstances, no one ever received a more important command; and I



cannot doubt that you will fully justify the confidence which the Government has reposed in you.

You will not be hampered by any minute instructions from these headquarters. Your army is free to act as you may deem proper under the circumstances as they arise. You will, however, keep in view the important fact that the Army of the Potomac is the covering army of Washington, as well as the army of operation against the invading forces of the rebels. You will therefore manœuvre and fight in such a manner as to cover the Capital and also Baltimore, as far as circumstances will admit. Should General Lee move upon either of these places, it is expected that you will either anticipate him or arrive with him, so as to give him battle.

All forces within the sphere of your operations will be held subject to your orders.

Harper's Ferry and its garrison are under your direct orders.

You are authorized to remove from command and send from your army any officer or other person you may deem proper; and to appoint to command as you may deem expedient.

In fine, General, you are intrusted with all the power and authority which the President, the Secretary of War, or the General-in-Chief can confer on you, and you may rely on our full support.

You will keep me fully informed of all your movements and the positions of your own troops and those of the enemy, so far as known.

I shall always be ready to advise and assist you to the utmost of my ability.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

H. W. HALLECK,

*General-in-Chief.*

Soon after his interview with General Hooker, General Meade telegraphed to the general-in-chief as follows:

FREDERICK, MD., 7 A. M., June 28, 1863.

H. W. HALLECK,

*General-in-Chief:*

The order placing me in command of this army is received. As a soldier I obey it, and to the utmost of my ability will execute it. Totally unexpected as it has been, and in ignorance of the exact condition of the troops and position of the enemy, I can only now say

cannot doubt that you will fully justify the confidence which the Government has reposed in you.

You will not be hampered by any minute instructions from these headquarters. Your army is free to act as you may deem proper under the circumstances as they arise. You will, however, keep in view the important fact that the Army of the Potomac is the covering army of Washington, as well as the army of operation against the invading forces of the rebels. You will therefore manœuvre and fight in such a manner as to cover the Capital and also Baltimore, as far as circumstances will admit. Should General Lee move upon either of these places, it is expected that you will either anticipate him or arrive with him, so as to give him battle.

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that it appears to me I must move towards the Susquehanna, keeping Washington and Baltimore well covered, and if the enemy is checked in his attempt to cross the Susquehanna, or if he turns towards Baltimore, to give him battle. I would say that I trust that every available man that can be spared will be sent to me, as, from all accounts, the enemy is in strong force. So soon as I can post myself up I will communicate more in detail.

GEORGE G. MEADE,  
*Major General.*

The general then at once issued his order assuming the command of the army.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 28, 1863.*

General Orders, No. 67.

By direction of the President of the United States, I hereby assume command of the Army of the Potomac.

As a soldier, in obeying this order—an order totally unexpected and unsolicited—I have no promises or pledges to make.

The country looks to this army to relieve it from the devastation and disgrace of a foreign invasion. Whatever fatigues and sacrifices we may be called upon to undergo, let us have in view, constantly, the magnitude of the interests involved, and let each man determine to do his duty, leaving to an all-controlling Providence the decision of the contest.

It is with great diffidence that I relieve in the command of this army an eminent and accomplished soldier, whose name must ever appear conspicuous in the history of its achievements; but I rely upon the hearty support of my companions in arms to assist me in the discharge of the duties of the important trust which has been confided to me.

GEORGE G. MEADE,  
*Major General, commanding.*

It would be well for the reader here briefly to review in sequence the events which had taken place, in which he cannot fail to see the cumulative causes which had led at last to the selection of General Meade for the command of the Army of the Potomac at this critical juncture.

Going back to the Peninsular campaign, we have seen him as a

brigade commander rendering efficient service, and falling wounded in the last of the Seven-Days' Battles, amidst the hottest of the fighting. We have seen him at the Second Battle of Bull Run, again as brigade commander, stemming the tide of defeat, and afterwards receiving the thanks of the commanding general. We have seen him at the head of his division storm the heights at South Mountain and gain the plaudits of the army, so exciting the admiration of his corps commander as to make him exclaim: "Look at Meade! Why, with troops like those, led in that way, I can whip anything!" We have seen him at Antietam, at a most critical moment of the battle, selected in preference to superiors in rank, by the commanding general of the army, to replace his wounded corps commander. We have seen him at Fredericksburg selected, with his division, to make an assault, for the reason that "the Army of the Potomac had no braver soldier or better officer than General Meade to lead his division to the attack." And, finally, we have seen him at Chancellorsville, the main reliance of the commanding general at a most disastrous moment of that most disastrous field.

We have gleaned from his letters of this latter period, through mention of the willingness and desire of his brother corps commanders, seniors in rank, to serve under him, knowledge of the high estimation in which he was held by them. We find it reported that that able soldier General John F. Reynolds, with whom he had long served and fought side by side, upon being offered the command of the army, declined the honor, and suggested General Meade, as the best fitted, in his estimation, for the command. And we find that the gallant soldier General John Sedgwick, when waited on after Chancellorsville, by one high in the confidence of the President, to hear his views as to the condition of the army, and to learn whether, in case a change of commanders should prove necessary, he would accept the position, declined the command, and emphatically replied, in answer to the question as to the best appointment that could be made from those serving in the army, "Why, Meade is the proper one to command this army."

It was the general recognition among the high officers of the army, through intimate association in the field in the face of the enemy, of General Meade's strict attention to duty, his constant presence with his command, quick perception, generous support at all times of his immediately superior officers, his promptness and decision in action, his firm self-reliance; it was, in a word, the general



recognition of his rare combination of dutifulness, military talent, and gallantry that led at last to its legitimate result in the almost universal sentiment among these officers of his pre-eminent fitness to command the Army of the Potomac. These were the influences, and these alone, that prompted the authorities at Washington, when the country was oppressed with dreadful uncertainty and dark foreboding as to what the next few days might bring forth, to intrust one unsupported by personal or political favor with the leadership of its last hope against an invading army, strong in numbers and flushed with success, which threatened the principal cities of the North and even the safety of the Capital itself. How grandly General Meade executed this trust, how completely he justified the sentiment of the army, how he restored bright hopes throughout the North, where before there was only deep depression, the events of the next few days will show.

The change of commanders, although made at a time which all regarded as critical, was received by the army with its usual admirable spirit. The congratulations and assurances of hearty support, tendered on all sides, were particularly gratifying to the new commander. A feeling of confidence soon pervaded the army, greatly strengthened by observation of the systematic manner in which General Meade at once set to work. The first day, the 28th of June, he devoted to gaining a knowledge of the strength and condition of the different corps, and their relative positions, and of the position and movements of the enemy; and when, on the following day, the army moved forward, the enthusiasm and determination evinced on all sides was a favorable omen of success.

The Army of the Potomac consisted at this time of seven corps of infantry, one of cavalry, and the Artillery Reserve.<sup>1</sup> The First Corps, commanded by Major-General John F. Reynolds, numbered 10,022 men; its position was at Middletown, Maryland. The Second Corps, commanded by Major-General Winfield Scott Hancock, numbered 12,996 men; it was on the march from Sugar Loaf Mountain, Maryland, under orders from General Hooker, to encamp at Frederick City. By orders of General Meade it was halted near Monocacy Junction, and encamped there during the night. The Third Corps, commanded by Major-General Daniel E. Sickles,<sup>2</sup> numbered 11,924 men; it was at Middletown. The Fifth Corps, lately Gen-

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 1, position June 28.

<sup>2</sup> General Sickles resumed the command of the Third Corps, relieving General Birney, on the morning of the 28th of June.

eral Meade's, now commanded by Major-General George Sykes, numbered 12,509 men; it was at Frederick City, Maryland. The Sixth Corps, commanded by Major-General John Sedgwick, numbered 15,679 men; it was at Hyattstown, Maryland. The Eleventh Corps, commanded by Major-General Oliver O. Howard, numbered 9,893 men; it was, with the First and Third Corps, at Middletown. The Twelfth Corps, commanded by Major-General Henry W. Slocum, numbered 8,589 men; it arrived at 2 P. M., on the 28th, at Frederick City, from Knoxville, Maryland. The Artillery Reserve, commanded by Brigadier-General Robert O. Tyler, consisted of twenty-one batteries (108 guns) and 2,546 men; it was at Frederick City.<sup>1</sup> The Cavalry Corps, commanded by Brigadier-General Alfred Pleasanton, numbered 11,501 men; it was disposed on the flanks of the army.<sup>2</sup> The First Division, commanded by Brigadier-General John Buford, on the left flank, at Middletown, and the Second Division, commanded by Brigadier-General David McM. Gregg (which had been bringing up the rear of the army and covering its crossing of the Potomac), on the right flank, at various points between Frederick City and Ridgeville, on the road to Baltimore. The Third Division (formerly Stahl's), commanded by Brigadier-General Judson Kilpatrick, and lately added to the army, was at Frederick City. During the day, June 28, the First, Third, and Eleventh Corps were withdrawn from Middletown and concentrated in the neighborhood of Frederick City.

From the meagre information obtainable by General Meade, and that chiefly through the public press, he was led to believe that the Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by General Robert E. Lee, and estimated at over 100,000 men, had crossed the Potomac, passed through Hagerstown, and was marching up the Cumberland Valley. He decided to move as quickly as possible on the main line from Frederick City to Harrisburg, extending his wings as far as he could consistently with facility of rapid concentration, and to continue the movement until he either had come suddenly upon the enemy or had had reason to believe that the enemy was advancing upon him; his object, of course, being at all hazards (except uncovering Washington and Baltimore) to compel the enemy to relinquish his hold

<sup>1</sup> The positions of the Artillery Reserve are not shown on the maps.

<sup>2</sup> The dotted line designating the cavalry situation on the maps simply shows the general line covered by the main divisions of the cavalry. Beyond this line their pickets and patrols were scouting the country for miles in all directions.



upon the Susquehanna, and to accept battle. It was his determination, subject to the necessity of general manœuvres, to deliver battle wherever and whenever he could possibly find the enemy.

Upon inquiry of the authorities at Washington whether he would be permitted to withdraw a portion of the force under General French, at Harper's Ferry, he was informed that it was now under his orders. Previously, he had been notified that the troops of General Schenck, outside of the defences of Baltimore, were subject to his orders, as were also those of General Couch at Harrisburg. However, as on June 29, telegraphic communication was cut off by the enemy's cavalry with Baltimore and Washington, and as the distance to General Couch was too great for him to be available, no assistance was possible from either of these quarters. The cutting of telegraphic communication by the enemy's cavalry between the army and Washington, Baltimore, and other places had, although annoying in some respects, the redeeming feature of isolating the army and relieving the commanding general from the necessity of considering the usual suggestions from Washington and the thousand idle rumors which would have been brought to his attention, and of allowing him to concentrate it upon his own army, that of the enemy, and upon the main purpose in view.

During the day information was received by General Meade that a body of Confederate cavalry, the exact strength of which was not known, had crossed the Potomac at Seneca Falls, and was between his army and Washington. Two brigades of cavalry and a battery of artillery were at once despatched in search and pursuit of this force, which eventually proved to be the main body of Stuart's cavalry.

Having perfected his plans, General Meade issued to the army the order of march for the following day:<sup>1</sup>

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
FREDERICK, MD., *June 28, 1863.*

#### Orders:

The army will march to-morrow as follows:

4 A. M. The 1st Corps, Major General Reynolds, by Lewistown and Mechanicstown to Emmettsburg, keeping the left of the road from Frederick to Lewistown, between J. P. Cramer's<sup>2</sup> and where the road branches to Utica and Cregerstown, to enable the 11th Corps to march parallel to it.

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 2, position night of June 28.

<sup>2</sup>Not shown on map.

4 A. M. The 11th Corps, Major General Howard, by Utica and Cregarstown to Emmettsburg.

4 A. M. The 12th Corps, by Ceresville,<sup>1</sup> Walkersville and Woodsborough, to Taneytown.

4 A. M. The 2d Corps, by Johnsville, Liberty and Union,<sup>2</sup> to Frizzleburg.

4 A. M. The 3d Corps, by Woodsborough and Middleburg (from Walkersville), to Taneytown.

The 5th Corps will follow the 2d Corps, moving at 8 A. M., camping at Union.<sup>3</sup>

The 6th Corps, by roads to the right of the 5th and 2d Corps, to New Windsor.

The Reserve Artillery will precede the 12th Corps, at 4 A. M., and camp between Middleburg and Taneytown.

General Lockwood,<sup>4</sup> with his command, will report to and march with the 12th Corps.

The Engineers and bridge-trains will follow the 5th Corps.

Headquarters will move at 8 A. M. and be to-morrow night at Middleburg. Headquarter's train will move by Ceresville and Woodsborough to Middleburg, at 8 A. M.

The cavalry will guard the right and left flanks and the rear, and give the Commanding General information of the movement and of the enemy in front.

Corps commanders and commanders of detached brigades will report by a staff officer their positions to-morrow night and on all marches in future.

The corps moving on the different lines will keep up communication from time to time, if necessary. They will camp in position, and guard their camps. Corps commanders will send out scouts in their front, as occasion offers, to bring in information. Strong exertions are required and must be made to prevent straggling.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

*Asst. Adj't. Gen'l.*

On the morning of the 29th of June, before leaving Frederick City, General Meade despatched to General Halleck a communica-

<sup>1</sup> Ceresville not shown on map.    <sup>2</sup> Or Uniontown.    <sup>3</sup> Or Uniontown.

<sup>4</sup> General Lockwood and command had just arrived from Baltimore as a reinforcement.



tion in which, after giving the position the army would occupy by night, he said:

"If Lee is moving for Baltimore, I expect to get between his main army and that place. If he is crossing the Susquehanna, I shall rely upon General Couch, with his force, holding him until I can fall upon his rear and give him battle. \* \* \* I shall incline to the right towards the Baltimore and Harrisburg Road, to cover that and draw supplies from there if circumstances will permit it; my main objective point being, of course, Lee's army, which I am satisfied has all passed through Hagerstown towards Chambersburg. My endeavors will be in my movements to hold my force well together, with the hope of falling on some portion of Lee's army in detail."

General Meade further stated that the cavalry force between him and Washington, which had caused much anxiety in Washington, would be looked to, and added: "My main point being to find and fight the enemy, I shall have to submit to the cavalry raids around me, in some measure;" and also, in speaking of the impossibility, in the absence of telegraphic communication, of his giving orders to General Schenck, in Baltimore, or to the troops on the Potomac, in his rear, or to General Couch, at Harrisburg, he said: "These circumstances are beyond my control."

Just before leaving Frederick City he seized the first opportunity that had offered to write personally to Mrs. Meade as to the wondrous change in his affairs.

*To Mrs. George G. Meade :*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 29, 1863.*

It has pleased Almighty God to place me in the trying position that for some time past we have been talking about. Yesterday morning, at 3 A. M., I was aroused from my sleep by an officer from Washington entering my tent, and after waking me up, saying he had come to give me trouble. At first I thought that it was either to relieve or arrest me, and promptly replied to him, that my conscience was clear, void of offense towards any man; I was prepared for his bad news. He then handed me a communication to read; which I found was an order relieving Hooker from the command and assigning me to it. As, dearest, you know how reluctant we both have been to see me placed in this position, and as it appears to be God's will for some good purpose—at any rate, as a soldier, I had

nothing to do but accept and exert my utmost abilities to command success. This, so help me God, I will do, and trusting to Him, who in his good pleasure has thought it proper to place me where I am, I shall pray for strength and power to get through with the task assigned me. I cannot write you all I would like. I am moving at once against Lee, whom I am in hopes Couch will at least check for a few days; if so, a battle will decide the fate of our country and our cause. Pray earnestly, pray for the success of my country, (for it is my success besides). Love to all. I will try and write often, but must depend on George.

The army, as ordered, had moved promptly, at four o'clock in the morning, and by nightfall, although the march was made over very bad roads, nearly all the corps found themselves at the specified points.<sup>1</sup> The Second Corps, however, through delay in receiving its orders, did not start until eight o'clock, and was halted one mile beyond Uniontown, by two o'clock at night, having in the interval accomplished, with its entire train, a march of over thirty miles. Frizelburg, its destination, was not reached; the distance from Monocacy Junction, from which it had started for Frizelburg, being considerably further than indicated on the maps. This delay in the movement of the Second Corps correspondingly delayed the Fifth Corps, which had to follow on the same road, and in consequence, the latter corps only reached Liberty instead of its destination, Uniontown. The march was disagreeable and fatiguing, owing to a drizzling rain and the very bad condition of the roads. The general advance of the army was twenty miles.

General Meade established his head-quarters at Middleburg, where he passed the night of the 29th of June.

During the day he had been in constant communication with the advancing columns, the whole tenor of his instructions and orders looking to a rapid march. To General Sedgwick, who reported that he would be unable to reach New Windsor, he replied that it was of the utmost importance that he should move early the next morning, and, with his left at Westminster, occupy the railroad terminating at that place. He requested General Sickles to give his immediate personal attention to keeping his trains moving, which were reported at a standstill at Middleburg, and blocking the way. In reply to General Sykes, who reported some detention, he stated that he was

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 3, position night of June 29.



satisfied with the progress made, and wished him to regulate his movements by endeavoring to cover just so much ground as he could without over-fatiguing the men. To his provost marshal he gave orders to have all stragglers collected and returned to their commands. He ordered General French, at Harper's Ferry, to remove, under escort, the public property from that place to Washington, and with the rest of his command, to join the army without delay; adding, that he expected to engage the enemy within a few days, and looked anxiously to being reinforced by him. This order to General French was, on July 1, when it was found that it would be impossible for him to arrive in time, changed by instructions to him to remain where he then was, at Frederick City, for the purpose of keeping communication open between that place and the army.

Not much had been added during the day to the store of information regarding the movements of the enemy. The reports coming in from the front showed that the army was not in the immediate vicinity of the enemy. In fact, what little information was procurable rather confirmed the opinion that the enemy was still moving in the direction of Harrisburg.

The order of march for June 30, issued at Middleburg on the 29th, directed the Twelfth Corps, passing the Third Corps, to move to Littlestown. The Fifth Corps was ordered to the crossing of Pipe Creek, at Union Mills, on the road between Littlestown and Westminster. The Sixth Corps was ordered to move to Manchester; the First Corps to the crossing of Marsh Creek, half-way to Gettysburg; the Artillery Reserve, following the Twelfth Corps, to the crossing of Piney Run,<sup>1</sup> by the road between Littlestown and Taneytown. The order of march for these corps was, in fact, nothing but continuing the execution of the plan of the previous day. It brought up the right flank to Manchester, the left to beyond Emmettsburg, and the centre to Littlestown; outlying corps being within easy supporting distance.

From Middleburg, in the evening, General Meade again wrote home:

*To Mrs. George G. Meade:*

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBURG, MD., *June 29, 1863.*

We are marching as fast as we can to relieve Harrisburg, but have to keep a sharp lookout that the rebels don't turn around us

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

and get at Washington and Baltimore in our rear. They have a cavalry force in our rear, destroying railroads, etc., with the view of getting me to turn back; but I shall not do it. I am going straight at them, and will settle this thing one way or the other. The men are in good spirits; we have been reinforced so as to have equal numbers with the enemy, and with God's blessing I hope to be successful. Good-by!

The army was off again promptly on the morning of June 30, and the respective corps reached their newly allotted positions before night.

At 11.30 A. M., just before leaving Middleburg, General Meade sent a despatch, of which the following are extracts, to General Reynolds, in reply to a communication of his of that morning:<sup>1</sup>

"The enemy undoubtedly occupy the Cumberland Valley in force. Whether the holding of the Cashtown Gap is to prevent our entrance, or is their advance against us, remains to be seen. \* \* \* With Buford at Gettysburg and Mechanicstown, and a regiment in front of Emmettsburg, you ought to be advised in time of their approach. In case of an advance in force, either against you, or Howard at Emmettsburg, you must fall back to that place, and I will reinforce you with the corps nearest to you, which are Sickles's at Taneytown, and Slocum's at Littlestown. You are advised of the general position of the army. We are as concentrated as my present information of the present position of the enemy justifies. I have pushed out the cavalry in all directions to feel for them, and as soon as I can make up any positive opinion as to their position, I will move again. In the meantime, if they advance against me, I must concentrate at that point where they show the strongest force. \* \* \* The only news we have beyond yours is that Stuart, with a large cavalry force, was in Westminster last night, and moved towards Gettysburg—supposed the same force that has been harassing in our rear. If, after occupying your present position, it is in your judgment that you would be in a better position at Emmettsburg than where you are, you can fall back without waiting for the enemy or further orders. Your present position was given more with a view to an advance on Gettysburg than a defensive point."

During the day General Meade moved his head-quarters to Taneytown. The reports that here began to come in from the advance,

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 4, position noon of June 30.



especially the cavalry, announced that the army was closely approaching the enemy. In consequence, General Meade placed General Reynolds in command of the left wing, consisting of his own corps, the First, and of the Third and Eleventh Corps. Orders were given to General Sickles to move his corps to Emmettsburg, and the two following circulars were forwarded to each corps of the army:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Circular:

The Commanding General has received information that the enemy are advancing, probably in strong force, on Gettysburg. It is the intention to hold this army pretty nearly in the position it now occupies, until the plans of the enemy shall have been more fully developed.

Three corps, 1st, 3d and 11th, are under the command of Major General Reynolds, in the vicinity of Emmettsburg, the 3d Corps being ordered up to that point. The 12th Corps is at Littlestown. General Gregg's division of cavalry is believed to be now engaged with the cavalry of the enemy, near Hanover Junction.

Corps commanders will hold their commands in readiness at a moment's notice, and upon receiving orders, to march against the enemy. Their trains (ammunition trains excepted) must be parked in the rear of the place of concentration. Ammunition wagons and ambulances will alone be permitted to accompany the troops. The men must be provided with three-days' rations in haversacks, and with sixty rounds of ammunition in the boxes and upon the person.

Corps commanders will avail themselves of all the time at their disposal to familiarize themselves with the roads communicating with the different corps.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

*Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Circular:

The Commanding General requests that, previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in the struggle. The enemy are on our soil; the whole country now looks anxiously to this army to deliver it from the presence of the foe. Our failure to do so will leave us no

such welcome as the swelling of millions of hearts with pride and joy, as our success would give to every soldier of this army. Homes, firesides and domestic altars are involved. The army has fought well heretofore; it is believed that it will fight more desperately and bravely than ever, if it is addressed in fitting terms.

Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty at this hour.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,

*Asst. Adj. Gen'l.*

These circulars were soon succeeded by the following orders for the march of July 1, to be executed immediately upon their receipt:<sup>1</sup>

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *June 30, 1863.*

Orders:

HEADQUARTERS AT TANEYTOWN:

3d Corps to Emmettsburg.

2d Corps to Taneytown.

5th Corps to Hanover.

1st Corps to Gettysburg.

11th Corps to Gettysburg.  
(or supporting distance).

12th Corps to Two Taverns.

Cavalry to front and flanks, well out in all directions, giving timely notice of operations and movements of the enemy. All empty wagons, surplus baggage, useless animals, and impedimenta of every sort, to Union Bridge,<sup>2</sup> three miles from Middleburg; a proper officer from each corps with them; supplies will be brought up there as soon as practicable.

The General relies upon every commander to put his column in the lightest possible order. The Telegraph Corps to work east from Hanover, repairing the line, and all commanders to work repairing the line in their vicinity between Gettysburg and Hanover.

Staff-officers to report daily from each corps, and with orderlies to leave for orders. Prompt information to be sent into headquarters at all times. All ready to move to the attack at any moment.

The Commanding General desires you to be informed that, from present information, Longstreet and Hill are at Chambersburg, partly towards Gettysburg; Ewell, at Carlisle and York; movements indicate a disposition to advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg. General Couch telegraphs, 29th, his opinion that enemy's operations

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 5, position night of June 30.

<sup>2</sup>Not shown on map.



on Susquehanna are more to prevent co-operation with this army than offensive.

The General believes he has relieved Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and now desires to look to his own army and assume position for offensive or defensive, as occasion requires, or rest to the troops. It is not his desire to wear the troops out by excessive fatigue and marches, and thus unfit them for the work they will be called upon to perform.

Vigilance, energy and prompt response to the orders from headquarters are necessary, and the personal attention of corps commanders must be given to reduction of impedimenta. The orders and movements from these headquarters must be carefully and confidentially preserved, that they do not fall into the enemy's hands.

By command of Major General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,  
*Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.*

Late in the afternoon, and during the evening, reports from the cavalry came in, giving notice of the presence of the enemy on both flanks. General Buford had moved his division of cavalry from Middletown through Turner's Gap,<sup>1</sup> successively through Boonesboro, Cavetown, and Monterey Springs,<sup>1</sup> and had encamped on the night of the 29th of June a few miles short of Fairfield. Moving forward very early the next morning, to reach Gettysburg by the way of Fairfield, upon approaching the latter place he came across a body of the enemy, and after skirmishing sufficiently to ascertain it to be in strong force, not wishing to bring on an engagement there, as Fairfield was four or five miles west of the route assigned him, he drew off toward Emmettsburg and was soon on the direct road to Gettysburg. Entering that place in the forenoon, just as the body of the enemy was about to enter it from the direction of Cash-town, he prepared to advance upon them, when they retired in the direction from which they had come, leaving pickets about four or five miles from Gettysburg.

General Kilpatrick, who that morning had moved his division of cavalry from Littlestown to Hanover, reported that, on entering the latter town, he had encountered a body of Stuart's cavalry and, after a sharp fight, had succeeded in driving it out of the town, capturing several prisoners and a battle-flag, the enemy retreating in the direc-

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

tion of York. He stated, also, that it was reported that a division of the enemy's infantry had left York at daybreak.

This information, with various other reports, having reached General Meade during the night of June 30, he was convinced that the enemy was advised of his movements. It was therefore evident to him that a general engagement would not be long deferred.

Since assuming the command of the army everything had been done by General Meade to push it forward. Under General Hooker it had been almost continuously marching and manœuvring, after leaving the Rappahannock, and now, with only one day's intermission, it had just completed two hard marches. The weather for the greatest part of the time had been intensely hot, the roads stifling from dust, and besides, for the last two days there had been a disagreeable, drizzling rain. General Meade feared that the troops would break down if pushed any harder, and in reporting to General Halleck, on the afternoon of June 30, he stated that he might be obliged to rest them for a day; although, of course, he should be compelled to govern his action by what he learned of the movements of the enemy.

Having made all his dispositions for the following day, General Meade wrote home:

*To Mrs. George G. Meade:*

HEADQUARTERS, TANEYTOWN, *June 30, 1863.*

All is going on well. I think I have relieved Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and that Lee has now come to the conclusion that he must attend to other matters. I continue well, but much oppressed with a sense of responsibility and the magnitude of the great interests entrusted to me. Of course, in time I will become accustomed to this. Love, blessings and kisses to all. Pray for me and beseech our heavenly Father to permit me to be an instrument to save my country and advance a just cause.

Let us now turn to the Confederate army, to learn what it had been doing since crossing the Potomac.

On the night of June 27—that is to say, about the very same time when General Meade was put in command of the Army of the Potomac—the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia was across



the Potomac, had passed up the Cumberland Valley, and had entered Pennsylvania.

Before beginning this campaign the Army of Northern Virginia had been reorganized. It now consisted of three corps of infantry: the First Corps, under command of General James Longstreet; the Second, under Lieutenant-General Richard S. Ewell; the Third, under Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill; and the cavalry, under Major-General J. E. B. Stuart. It is supposed that, preparatory to so important a campaign as that about to ensue, involving an invasion of the heart of the hostile territory, and from the success of which important results were expected to flow, General Lee recruited his army from every available source.

General Ewell's corps had led the advance of the infantry, and Rodes's division of it reached the Potomac on June 15. It crossed the river at once, and, resting on the other side for a few days, resumed its march on the 19th of June, pursuing the direct route by way of Hagerstown and Greencastle to Chambersburg, where it was overtaken by General Johnson's division of the same corps, which had crossed the Potomac at Shepardstown on the 18th of June. Preceded by Jenkins's brigade of cavalry, together they advanced to Carlisle, arriving there on the 27th.<sup>1</sup> The Third Division of General Ewell's corps (Early's) crossed the Potomac at Shepardstown on the 22d, marched along the western base of South Mountain, and reached Greenwood on the 24th. Resuming his march on the 26th, and proceeding by way of Cashtown, Mummasburg, and Berlin, General Early reached York on the 28th.<sup>2</sup> At Cashtown he had detached one of his brigades (Gordon's), with White's battalion of cavalry, to march by way of Gettysburg, which force passed through the town on the same day, driving out of it some militia cavalry, and after levying contribution upon the town, and burning some bridges and cars, it proceeded on the direct road to York and entered that place on the 28th, just in advance of the rest of the division. From that point General Early pushed out General Gordon's brigade, with cavalry, to seize the bridge which crosses the Susquehanna at Wrightsville. It had been his intention to cross his whole command by this bridge, march on Lancaster, cut the Pennsylvania Railroad, and then march upon and attack Harrisburg in the rear. His purpose, however, was frustrated by a body of militia stationed at the bridge, which, upon the approach of General Gordon, retreated across it to

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 6, position night of June 27.

<sup>2</sup> General Early encamped on the 27th at Berlin.

Columbia and fired the bridge. General Early, thus foiled in his intention, then moved General Gordon's brigade back to York, and sent out parties in all directions, burning bridges and railway stations.

On the 24th and 25th the corps of Generals Longstreet and Hill had crossed the Potomac; that of the former at Williamsport, of the latter at Shepardstown. Concentrating at Hagerstown, they marched on Chambersburg, where they arrived on the 27th and encamped.

From this point General Lee, present in person with this part of his army, and unaware of the crossing of the Potomac by the Federal army, ordered a general advance of his forces, on the 30th, on Harrisburg, a movement with which that of General Early, detailed above, and frustrated by the burning of the bridge over the Susquehanna at Wrightsville, was intended to be combined.

General Ewell, who, on the 27th, we left at Carlisle with the divisions of Rodes and Johnson, was prepared and waiting to begin the movement on Harrisburg. The cavalry had thoroughly reconnoitred the country in that direction, their advanced scouts approaching on the 29th to within a few miles of the town.

The troops were in the highest spirits. Everything to them looked favorable. Although they had marched far since leaving the Rappahannock, they had had, at intervals since crossing the Potomac, several days of rest. The campaign, so far, had been eminently successful. They had swept down the Shenandoah Valley, carrying everything before them. Their march up the Cumberland Valley had been unopposed, and made so leisurely that they had been able to levy from the towns they passed through, and from the surrounding country, ample contributions in provisions and in all needful supplies of clothing, forage, etc. The greatest enthusiasm pervaded the ranks. It was taken for granted that the order to march meant the fall of the capital of the great State of Pennsylvania.

General D. N. Couch, a veteran of the Army of the Potomac, had, early in June, been summoned to take command of the newly organized Department of the Susquehanna, head-quarters at Harrisburg. In the brief interval allowed by coming events, every effort had been made by this officer to fortify the approaches to Harrisburg, situated on the left bank of the Susquehanna. Under various calls of the President, and of the Governor of Pennsylvania, for troops for the pending emergency, he had been able to collect a respectable force of militia, which was hastily organized as well as circumstances



would permit, and divided into commands over which he placed a number of experienced officers absent from the army, either recovering from wounds or on leave of absence, who promptly volunteered their services on the occasion. It was upon this force that General Meade counted for checking and delaying General Lee's advance sufficiently to enable him to come to its relief. More than this was not to be expected. Undoubtedly it would have acquitted itself as well as its hasty organization and discipline, untried by battle, would have admitted. It is not to be supposed that it could have long withstood the bronzed veterans of the Army of Northern Virginia.

But suddenly upon the strategical horizon appeared a foe worthy of the steel of the Army of Northern Virginia. General Lee received word at Chambersburg, through a scout, that his old antagonist of many a hard-fought field, the Army of the Potomac, was rapidly advancing. Necessity demanded that attention should be first paid to its movements. It was on the night of the 28th of June that General Lee received the information that the whole of the Federal army had crossed the Potomac and had advanced beyond Frederick City. This at once compelled him to stop the general advance upon Harrisburg and concentrate his army.<sup>1</sup>

General Lee states in his report of the campaign that the absence of the cavalry, commanded by General Stuart, had prevented his obtaining definite information of the movements of the Federal army. Judging by his report, he certainly did not expect General Stuart to pursue the course he took. General Stuart, on the contrary, speaks positively in his report of his having had authority from General Lee for the movement which he made. The discrepancy is easily reconcilable by the supposition that General Lee's orders to General Stuart were not explicit, but allowed a certain latitude, which in his judgment was not used with discretion. This is evidently not the place to enter upon a discussion of the merits of the case, even if it could be done with the faintest hope of adjusting satisfactorily the burden of responsibility. The province of this history extends no further than to state that there was evidently some misunderstanding of intention between Generals Lee and Stuart as to the projected movements of the latter when detached from the Confederate army. One thing only in this connection is certain: that from the 24th of June to the 2d of July General Lee was without the services of the

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 7, position night of June 28, No. 2.

main body of his cavalry, under General Stuart, upon which he had counted for information of the enemy's movements.

In what manner the cavalry of General Stuart had been engaged from the 24th to the 30th of June must now form the subject of a necessary digression, in order to afford the reader a clear comprehension of the way in which all the forces on both sides eventually reached the field of Gettysburg.

On the night of June 24th General Stuart, who had since the affairs at Aldie and Upperville been watching Ashby's and Snicker's Gaps, in the Blue Ridge, secretly rendezvoused three brigades of cavalry (Hampton's, Fitz Lee's, and W. H. F. Lee's, the latter under command of Colonel Chambliss) at Salem Depot, on the Manassas Gap Railroad. It was his intention to move in rear of the Army of the Potomac, intercept its communications with Washington, delay its passage over the Potomac, embarrass its advance, and then join General Lee north of the Potomac, and, placing himself on the right flank of the Confederate army, take part in the purposed movement on Harrisburg and the Susquehanna. The cavalry brigades of Robertson and Jones were left to hold the positions on the Blue Ridge which he was leaving.

Marching from Salem at 1 A. M. on June 25, and moving to the right, he first tried to pass by way of Haymarket and Gainesville to the west of Centreville. Finding General Hancock, with the Second Corps, marching in this direction, and, as he expresses it, "having the right of way," he moved back to Buckland, and marched thence to Brentsville and to the crossing of Bull Run at Wolf's Run Shoal. Here he crossed on the morning of the 27th, and pushing ahead through Fairfax Court House and Dranesville, striking the Potomac opposite the mouth of Seneca Creek on the night of the same day, by great exertions got his whole force across the river by twelve o'clock that night. At this point he captured a good many prisoners, and supplies in boats on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, destroyed a lock gate, and otherwise inflicted much damage. He here ascertained that the Federal army had crossed the Potomac, and moving toward Frederick City, was interposing between General Lee and himself. Now realizing the importance of reaching his commanding general as speedily as possible, he determined to push directly north, hoping to come up with Early's column, which he knew ought to be at York. Starting soon on the 28th, he was not long in reaching Rockville, on the main highway between Washington and Frederick.



Brushing away a few cavalymen belonging to the defences of Washington, he here cut the telegraph wires and captured a large wagon train of supplies for the Army of the Potomac, together with a number of prisoners. The train he very effectually destroyed, reserving only such wagons and supplies as could be carried along.

This was the point of time at which, as will be perceived by the preceding narrative, General Meade was first apprised of the presence of the enemy's cavalry.

The raid upon Rockville occupied the cavalry a good part of the day. When finished, it pushed forward and reached Brookville at night, when, finding that the number of prisoners was embarrassing, they were paroled, and it kept on, marching all night, passing through Cooksville on the morning of the 29th, and striking the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Hood's Mill. Here the cavalry tore up the track for miles, destroyed the bridge at Sykesville, and cut the telegraph wires, thus severing all communication between the Army of the Potomac and Washington and Baltimore. Hence it marched direct on Westminster, reaching that place at 5 P. M. on June 29, where it had a smart skirmish with a portion of the Fifth Delaware Cavalry, which had been sent out from Baltimore. It soon disposed of this force, though with the loss of two officers and several men. The head of the column was halted that night (the 29th) at Union Mills, while the column remained strung out between that place and Westminster.

Early on June 30 the cavalry was off again, and going by a cross cut reached Hanover about 10 A. M., just as General Kilpatrick's column of cavalry was passing through the town. A severe fight ensued, which lasted several hours, and resulted in General Stuart's falling back from the town. The situation had become critical for him. Much embarrassed by what captured wagons he had retained, and his direct route north intercepted by General Kilpatrick, he determined to make a *détour* to the right, through Jefferson, and thence in the direction of York, trusting to be able to join General Early's column of infantry. He hastened forward, therefore, as fast as compatible with the fatigued condition of men and horses, now almost spent with marching. Up to this time he had had no communication with General Lee, and had been unable to find out where the army was. But, having accompanied General Stuart thus far, we must leave him struggling along on this dark night, over rough roads, to return to General Lee, and resume the main thread of the narrative by mention of the new dispositions necessitated by the knowledge

which he had suddenly acquired of the movement of the Army of the Potomac.

It was said, before entering upon the digression which has accounted for the absence of General Stuart's cavalry, and for General Lee's prolonged ignorance of the movements of the Army of the Potomac—circumstances dependent upon each other—that General Lee had, upon receiving the intelligence of the presence of that army beyond Frederick City, at once changed his plans and countermanded the movement upon Harrisburg. The time of a possible *coup de main* had now evidently passed. Immediate concentration was of vital importance to the Confederate army. Just what General Meade said, in one of his hastily written missives, that he thought he had obliged the enemy to do the enemy had been obliged to do; for by his own dispositions in advancing, to have relieved the threatened outlying places, Harrisburg and Washington, the enemy's objective points in the zone of operations, meant that the enemy must concentrate or be lost.

Consequently General Lee at once addressed himself to the task of concentration, and fearing lest his communications by way of the Cumberland Valley should be interrupted, he determined, in order to prevent a movement of the Army of the Potomac further toward the west, to concentrate his army east of the mountains. Accordingly Generals Longstreet and Hill were ordered to concentrate at Cashtown, and General Ewell was ordered to withdraw from Harrisburg to the same point.

Under these orders, General Ewell, on the 29th, sent Johnson's division, with the trains, back by way of Shippensburg to Greenwood, and taking Rodes's division himself, left Carlisle on the morning of the 30th, and passing through Petersburg, halted at Heidlersburg and bivouacked for the night.<sup>1</sup> On the same day, the 29th, that these two divisions marched, General Ewell despatched orders to his remaining division, Early's, at York, to retire and join the rest of the corps on the west side of South Mountain. General Early, on the 30th, moved in that direction, marching by way of Berlin toward Heidlersburg, so as to be able to move thence either to Shippensburg or Greenwood, as circumstances might demand, and encamped that night about three miles from Heidlersburg.

General Hill, at Chambersburg, moved Heth's division, on the 29th, to Cashtown, followed the next morning by the other two divi-

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 8, position night of June 29, No. 2.



sions of his corps. Heth, on the morning of the 30th, still in the advance, sent Pettigrew's brigade of his division forward from Cashtown to Gettysburg, to secure a supply of shoes that he had heard were there. Pettigrew, approaching the suburbs of Gettysburg, unexpectedly came across General Buford's cavalry, which he, supposing it to be supported by infantry, did not deem it advisable to encounter, but falling back to Cashtown, reported the presence of the enemy.

General Longstreet, with two divisions, followed General Hill, on the 30th, and was at Greenwood that night. He left his Third Division (Pickett's) at Chambersburg, guarding the trains, to await the arrival of Imboden, who, with a brigade of cavalry, had been at McConnellsburg, and had been ordered to Chambersburg to relieve Pickett. Up to that time General Imboden had been operating on the left of the Confederate army on its march into Maryland and Pennsylvania, and had inflicted great damage along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad between Martinsburg and Cumberland,<sup>1</sup> and to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; had been at Hancock on the 27th; and, under orders, had marched to McConnellsburg, collecting supplies all along his route.

The reader has followed the strategical operations of the opposing forces. He sees them now almost face to face, in all but battle-array. On the night of June 30, the Army of the Potomac occupied the following positions:<sup>2</sup> General Buford, with two brigades of cavalry, having, as mentioned, caused the advance of Pettigrew's brigade to retire upon Cashtown, was at Gettysburg, with his pickets well thrown out and patrols scouring the country in all directions, gathering information. General Reynolds was on Marsh Creek, four miles from Gettysburg, ready to march for that place early the next morning. General Howard was within supporting distance of General Reynolds, between him and Emmettsburg. General Sickles was at Emmettsburg. General Hancock was at Uniontown. General Slocum was about a mile beyond Littlestown, on the road to Hanover. General Sykes was at Union Mills. General Sedgwick was within two miles of Manchester. General Gregg, with his division of cavalry, was at Manchester, and General Kilpatrick, with his division, at Hanover. General Meade's head-quarters were at Taneytown.

The same night, the 30th of June, the Army of Northern Virginia was disposed in the following manner: General Hill was at Cashtown;

<sup>1</sup> About thirty miles west of Hancock, off of map.

<sup>2</sup> See Map No. 9, position night of June 30, No. 2.

his advance, consisting of Heth's and Pender's divisions, toward Gettysburg; his Third Division (Anderson's) at Fayetteville. General Longstreet, with two of his divisions (McLaw's and Hood's), was at Greenwood; his Third Division (Pickett's) at Chambersburg. General Ewell, with Rodes's division, was at Heidlersburg. General Early's division was within three miles of Heidlersburg. General Johnson, with his division, was at Scotland. Jenkins's brigade of cavalry was with General Johnson, convoying General Ewell's trains. Colonel White's battalion was on General Early's left, on the direct road from York to Gettysburg. General Stuart, with the main body of the cavalry, was, as we have seen, making the best of his way between Jefferson and Dover, searching for some portion of the main body of the army. General Lee's head-quarters had been just outside of Chambersburg since the 25th. On the morning of the 30th he rode to Greenwood, where he passed the night.

When Lee started from Fredericksburg he could have contemplated nothing more definite than the invasion of Pennsylvania by such a march that, while his right flank was for a long time protected by the Blue Ridge and his base of supplies well established at the most salient bend of the Potomac toward the zone of his contemplated operations, he should be able, by spreading out his corps over that zone, to threaten, and even to capture, Washington, Baltimore, Lancaster, Harrisburg, and also, in this event, Philadelphia. Of so much of a plan of operations as involved threatening these places he could be sure, but of nothing more, leaving all else to be determined by circumstances, which hourly changed, and which culminated in the battle of Gettysburg.

But Lee's march, even from the beginning, was compelled to have reference to the known and the probable movements of the Army of the Potomac, although those movements were trammelled by a responsibility from which Lee was exempt—the necessity of covering a capital and two rich and populous cities. Hooker, constrained by Lee's initiative to follow his course as nearly as possible in a parallel line, and to confine Lee's march to one line of invasion, had still that other necessity imposed upon him, to pursue in such a manner, at such a rate, and with such dispositions, as to make sure of covering at least Washington and Baltimore. Up, therefore, to the moment when Hooker, having crossed the Potomac, was superseded by Meade, at Frederick City, Maryland, although the move-



ments of the two armies had acted and reacted on each other, they were then, from that time forth to the end, to influence each other reciprocally, with ever quicker and quicker impulse. From the time when Meade took command, the enemy having swept out toward the east from beyond the mountains, the advance of the Army of the Potomac had to be well extended toward the right as well as toward the left. As for the determination of the exact locality of the battle-field, if there were to be a battle, it did not depend upon the decision of either Meade or Lee, but upon many circumstances which each could modify, but could not altogether control; for besides the circumstances of ground and the disposition of troops, each general was by his action creating varying circumstances for the other. Not until the order came to march upon Gettysburg, did circumstances prescribe to each exactly the same course. When Lee's information that the Army of the Potomac had reached Frederick City and was advancing, caused him to recall Ewell from Carlisle and Early from York, he had accepted the necessity of his own concentration, and the consequence of the enemy's concentration to meet it. But the exact point where the battle was to take place must have still remained at that time an insoluble problem to both generals.

The battle-field might have been anywhere from Chambersburg and Heidlersburg, and beyond, counting from west to east; or anywhere from Chambersburg and Heidlersburg to Emmettsburg and Pipe Creek, counting from north to south. Ewell and Early could just as easily have countermarched to Lee at Chambersburg as to Cashtown, near Gettysburg. But Gettysburg, although somewhat more distant than Chambersburg from Lee's base at Williamsport, had for him the inestimable advantage, in view of the then position of the Army of the Potomac, of rendering secure his line of communication with Williamsport. His marching on Gettysburg meant the maintenance of the invasion. He was compelled, under the circumstances of Meade's advance, to converge upon Gettysburg, but not necessarily with the knowledge that the battle would take place there. That was a question which depended upon the final action of the Army of the Potomac. If the Army of the Potomac had not at that point of time been so well advanced and in hand as it proved to be, despite the necessities which had embarrassed its progress, Lee must either have retreated and abandoned the invasion, or else have advanced south beyond Gettysburg.

Lee had no alternative but to deliver battle speedily or speedily

to retreat. In the contingency suggested, of the Army of the Potomac not having been sufficiently advanced and in hand as to be able to meet the enemy at Gettysburg, Lee would have been obliged to push beyond, and in all probability the battle would have taken place on Pipe Creek, for the simple reason that, Meade having compelled the enemy to relinquish the hold which he was about to take upon the Susquehanna, there was no such urgent necessity of immediate fighting laid upon him as upon Lee. The tables had been suddenly turned. Only two days before the battle it was more urgent for the Army of the Potomac to meet the Army of Northern Virginia than for the Army of Northern Virginia to meet the Army of the Potomac. Now, Meade was in a position where it was more urgent for Lee to seek him than to be sought; for not only was the line of the Susquehanna safe, and Washington and Baltimore covered, but Lee was in a hostile country, with the line of his communications endangered.

That neither general knew of the tactical importance of Gettysburg is no discredit to either, in view of the slight knowledge in both armies of the country in which they were operating, and in view of the pooriness of the maps. The place of Lee's concentration was dictated solely by his knowledge of the strategic importance of Gettysburg, under the circumstances of his having been compelled to withdraw Ewell from the direction of Harrisburg; but exactly where the battle would be fought he could not have known until much later than the time of his issuing orders for the concentration of his corps at Gettysburg.

Similarly, Meade, although he knew of the strategic importance of Gettysburg, and consequently, that Lee might attempt to concentrate there, could not, twenty-four hours before the battle, have been able, any more than Lee, to predict with certainty that the impending battle would take place at Gettysburg. Then, at once, from that moment, events hastened on, and what had only a short while before taken days to develop became matter of hourly development, until both commanders found themselves urging their troops forward toward Gettysburg, both compelled by the fact of its strategical relations to their previous movements, but neither, until the actual ground was reached, at all aware of the military strength of the two positions that it affords.

To sum up, Meade's movements compelled Lee to concentrate somewhere; the strategical importance of Gettysburg, growing out



of the relative positions of the opposing forces, constrained Lee to endeavor to concentrate there; and that same cause, in turn, constrained Meade to endeavor to anticipate, or at least to meet him there.

On the night of June 30, Meade became satisfied, from information received from various sources, that the enemy had relinquished his hold upon the Susquehanna, through having become aware of the movements of the Army of the Potomac, and was in consequence concentrating his forces. He was therefore aware that he might expect shortly to come in contact with the enemy, but when and where, as has been proved, it was then impossible to predict with certainty. In order to be prepared, if possible on ground of his own choosing, to give him battle, in case he should advance over the South Mountain, Meade, while on the march, had instructed his engineers to make an examination with reference to the selection of ground having relation to the then general position of the army, upon which, if occasion should arise, the army might find it desirable to concentrate.

On June 30, General Humphreys, commanding the Second Division of the Third Corps, was instructed by the commanding general to make a similar examination at Emmettsburg, and on the following day Reynolds was instructed to acquaint himself thoroughly with the country, conferring, if expedient, with General Humphreys as to the ground. He had previously been told that he might fall back on Emmettsburg if he thought, after examination, that it was a better position than where he was at Marsh Creek.

As the result of the first examination mentioned, a position on the general line of Pipe Creek had been selected for the contingency of battle in that vicinity, and a circular was issued, notifying corps commanders that the occupation of that position might become necessary in the specified eventuality, in which they were directed how to move, and where to place their troops along that line.

The intention of this circular has sometimes been much misunderstood. It was written before Meade had any positive knowledge that the enemy was moving on the Cashtown Road. In fact, all that he positively knew at the time of the issue of the order was that the enemy was concentrating. The circular was merely a preliminary order of manœuvre to meet a given contingency. This circular has also been misrepresented by some who can hardly be thought to have misunderstood it, but who, it must be supposed, were actuated in their misinterpretation of it by desire to detract from Meade's

military reputation. These persons have asserted that the circular proves that, at that time, Meade was desirous of retiring before, instead of fighting, the enemy. Now, the whole tenor of the circular is opposed to that theory, as completely as Meade's other action, from the moment of his taking command, is opposed to that theory. The circular was written late on the night of June 30. The intention was that it should be in the hands of the several corps commanders early on the following morning, July 1. There was, however, delay in expediting it, so much so that General Reynolds never received it.

Language is powerless to express more clearly than this circular does the idea that, through the fortunes of war, the army might have to receive, instead of to make, an attack; that, if attack were made by the enemy, then the position, provisorily selected at Pipe Creek, being strong, and known to the corps commanders, was the best possible to occupy; and that, finally, as no man could say what a few hours might bring forth, the army might be obliged to take the offensive from the positions which it then occupied. In one word, if the army was obliged at first to receive attack, then there was the prearranged place to receive it; if the army had to take the offensive, then orders would be forthcoming for that. And this, which follows, was the clear and concise manner in which the idea was expressed, so that no honorable man in his senses, with full knowledge of the circumstances, can put any other construction upon it than the one assigned:

"This order is communicated that a general plan, perfectly understood by all, may be had for receiving attack, if made in strong force upon any portion of our present position. Developments may cause the Commanding General to assume the offensive from his present positions."

To assume the offensive from his then position was what happened to occur. At the time when he issued the circular, the other alternative was just as likely to occur, and, at least, even if it were not, it was the part of a prudent general to guard against it. It was wise for Meade to learn about the ground over which the army was passing, and to instruct his officers how to meet a probable crisis, but no more forecasting and wise than he always was.

Early in the day of July 1 the commanding general sent to Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth Corps, at Manchester, on the extreme right, the following despatch:



*July 1, 1863.*

## COMMANDING OFFICER SIXTH CORPS:

I am directed by the Commanding General to state that it would appear from reports received, that the enemy is moving in heavy force on Gettysburg (Ewell from Heidlersburg, and Hill from Cash-town Pass), and it is not improbable he will reach that place before the command under Major General Reynolds (the First and Eleventh Corps), now on the way, can arrive there. Should such be the case, and General Reynolds finds himself in the presence of a superior force, he is instructed to hold the enemy in check, and fall slowly back. If he is able to do this, the line indicated in the circular of to-day will be occupied to-night. Should circumstances render it necessary for the Commanding General to fight the enemy to-day, the troops are posted as follows for the support of Reynolds's command, viz.: On his right, at "Two Taverns," the Twelfth Corps; at Hanover, the Fifth Corps; the Second Corps is on the road between Taneytown and Gettysburg; the Third Corps is at Emmettsburg.

This information is conveyed to you, that you may have your Corps in readiness to move in such direction as may be required at a moment's notice.

Very respectfully, etc.,

S. WILLIAMS,

*Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.*

Thus, early in the day, Sedgwick had his warning of the only two contingencies probable and approaching, and full information of the disposition of the troops in the advance and on the right flank, and was therefore duly prepared for either emergency implied in the despatch and the circular. At the point of time noted, it was impossible, as has been said, to predict with certainty whether the battle that was imminent would take place at Gettysburg or at Pipe Creek. All that could be known with certainty was that it would first take place on the left of the general advance. Hence Sedgwick, who, as has been mentioned, was furthest away on the right, was early forewarned of the situation on the left and advance, in order that he might be able to co-operate to the best advantage according to circumstances.

It will be remembered that Buford, with two brigades of his division of cavalry, had entered Gettysburg on the afternoon of June 30, and that, on his appearance, an advance of the enemy had withdrawn

toward Cashtown. During the night of the 30th he pushed out scouting parties in every direction, and from information gathered by them he became convinced that the enemy was concentrating near him. He therefore proceeded to dispose his troops to the best advantage, to make as good a resistance as possible to the enemy's advance, hoping to keep him beyond the town, and hold him in check until the infantry under Reynolds could come up.

About 8 A. M., of July 1, Buford's advanced pickets gave warning that the enemy was approaching on the Chambersburg Road.<sup>1</sup> Gamble's brigade was promptly moved forward and formed in line of battle across the Chambersburg Road, about a mile beyond the Seminary,<sup>2</sup> with skirmishers well out, and with Calef's battery, Second U. S. Artillery, disposed along the line. The advance of the enemy, Heth's division of A. P. Hill's corps, a heavy column, marching down the road, now appeared. Skirmishing soon began, and as the Confederates came within range, Lieutenant Roder, in charge of the right section of Calef's battery, fired the first gun, which opened the battle of Gettysburg. Heth then deployed his two leading brigades, Archer on the right of the Chambersburg Road and Davis on the left, and continued his advance.

Gamble made a stubborn fight, but being outnumbered, was forced to fall back to the next ridge, about two hundred yards to the rear. Devins's brigade was brought up and deployed on Gamble's right, his line extending across the Mummasburg Road,<sup>3</sup> with a line of pickets well out to the right and rear, across the Carlisle Road<sup>4</sup> to Rock Creek,<sup>5</sup> in which direction it was also reported that the enemy was advancing. Buford handled his two small brigades admirably. Although opposed by a strong force of infantry, which was gradually overlapping both of his flanks, he made a sturdy resistance to the enemy and held him well in check. As soon as the action had begun, he had sent word of it to Reynolds, and now anxiously awaited succor.

Reynolds, who had passed the night at the point where the Em-

<sup>1</sup> Chambersburg Pike, not shown on map, extends from Chambersburg to Gettysburg through Cashtown.

<sup>2</sup> The seminary, not shown on map, is three-quarters mile west of Gettysburg.

<sup>3</sup> Mummasburg Road, not shown on map, extends from Mummasburg to Gettysburg.

<sup>4</sup> Carlisle Road, not shown on map, enters Gettysburg from the north.

<sup>5</sup> Rock Creek, name not shown on map, flows south, three-quarters mile east of Gettysburg.



mettsburg Pike crosses Marsh Creek, set his corps in motion, at 8 A. M., under his orders of the previous day, on the road to Gettysburg, Wadsworth's division in the advance, with Doubleday's following, and Robinson's bringing up the rear. He had directed Howard, at Emmettsburg, to follow with the Eleventh Corps.

When about two miles from Gettysburg, Reynolds heard the guns of the cavalry hard at work beyond the town. Here he was met by a messenger from Buford, announcing the approach of the enemy in force. Instead, therefore, of continuing in the course which he had been pursuing toward the town, he deflected the head of his column to the left, off the main road, instructed Wadsworth to push on rapidly in a northwesterly direction, toward the firing, despatched word back to Howard to urge on the Eleventh Corps, and galloped on in advance and joined Buford at the Seminary.

What general plan Reynolds intended to pursue will never be known. This much, however, is known, that he was one of the most capable and trustworthy officers in the Army of the Potomac, and that he had the full confidence of the commanding general. The day that the command of the army was conferred upon Meade, at Frederick City, Reynolds visited him, to tender his congratulations, and to assure him of his hearty support. They were on that occasion long in consultation, and the commanding general fully explained to him his plans as far as they could be formed. These were to push forward the army as rapidly as possible in the direction of Harrisburg; in which direction it was then supposed that the enemy was moving, to compel him to relinquish his hold upon the Susquehanna, and to force him to battle whenever and wherever found. On June 30 was committed to Reynolds the responsible duty of commanding the advance of the army. Almost the last communication from Meade to Reynolds (which has been elsewhere quoted from), beginning with the words, "Your despatch is received. The enemy undoubtedly occupy the Cumberland Valley, from Chambersburg, in force; whether the holding of Cashtown Gap is to prevent our entrance, or is their advance against us, remains to be seen," etc., was timed 11.30 A. M., on June 30. The very last communication from Meade to Reynolds, when he had already ordered him to advance on Gettysburg, reads as follows:

*July 1, 1863.*

The telegraphic intelligence received from General Couch, with the various movements reported by Buford, seem to indicate the

concentration of the enemy either at Chambersburg, or at a point situated somewhere on a line drawn between Chambersburg and York, through Heidlersburg, and to the north of Gettysburg.

The Commanding General cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to attack until he learns something more definite of the point at which the enemy is concentrating. This he hopes to do during the day. Meanwhile, he would like to have your views upon the subject, at least so far as concerns your position.

If the enemy is concentrated to the right of Gettysburg, that point would not, at first glance, seem to be a proper strategic point of concentration for this army. If the enemy is concentrating in front of Gettysburg, or to the left of it, the General is not sufficiently informed of the nature of the country to judge of its character either for an offensive or defensive position. The number of the enemy are estimated at about 92,000 infantry, with 270 pieces of artillery, and his cavalry, from six to eight thousand. Our numbers ought to equal it, and with the arrival of General French's command, which should get up to-morrow, exceed it, if not too much weakened by straggling and fatigue.

The General having assumed command in obedience to orders, with the position of affairs leaving no time to learn the condition of the army as to *morale* and proportionate strength, compared with its last return, would gladly receive from you any suggestions as to the points laid down in this note. He feels that you know more of the condition of the troops in your vicinity, and the country, than he does.

General Humphreys, who is at Emmettsburg with the Third Corps, the General considers an excellent adviser as to the nature of the country for defensive or offensive operations. If near enough to call him to consultation with you, please do so, without interference with the responsibilities that devolve upon you both. You have all the information which the General has received, and the General would like to have your views.

The movement of your Corps to Gettysburg was ordered before the positive knowledge of the enemy's withdrawal from Harrisburg and concentration was received.

What we know of Reynolds, subsequently to this time, is very little, as he fell among the first on the field of battle; but that little is conclusive as to his having at once realized the military situation



and taken every means to meet it. He had had the fullest understanding with the commanding general, and possessed the definite information as to his intentions conveyed in the despatch just quoted. Even if he had received the Pipe Creek circular, that would not have embarrassed him or any other good general, for he would have seen that its instructions were conformable with the military situation as he found it. As the officer in command of the advance, put there for the express purpose of his being able to act with judgment in every contingency covered by the expressed intentions of his superior, he acted, when the special case did arise, just as the commanding general had contemplated that he would act. Meade, let it be remembered, had said in his despatch: "The commanding general cannot decide whether it is his best policy to move to attack until he learns something more definite of the point at which the enemy is concentrating. This he hopes to do during the day." The eyes, the ears, and the brain which Meade, in default of his being able to be omnipresent, had selected for the advance, soon obtained that definite knowledge of which he had spoken, requisite, as he had said, to enable him with advantage to move to attack. In conformity with his instructions, perception and action were necessarily simultaneous on the part of Reynolds, when he suddenly acquired knowledge of the imminence of the concentration of the enemy at Gettysburg.

During the morning the Second Corps, under Hancock, had been marching from Uniontown, and about eleven o'clock halted outside of Taneytown and bivouacked. Hancock rode over to the commanding general's head-quarters and reported to him. In a long and earnest conference between them, Meade fully explained his views and plans, and expressed his intentions to fight a battle in front, if practicable, and if not there, wherever practicable. Hancock then returned to his command.

About half-past eleven o'clock Meade received the first positive intelligence of the movement of the enemy on Gettysburg, and of the engagement of his advance at that place. It was brought to him by an aide-de-camp of Reynolds's, Captain Stephen M. Weed, who had left his gallant chief at ten o'clock, at the moment when Reynolds and Buford had just met outside of Gettysburg, and who had ridden hard with his message. Captain Weed reported that General Reynolds had said to him, "Ride at your utmost speed to General Meade. Tell him the enemy are advancing in strong force, and that

I fear they will get to the heights beyond the town before I can. I will fight them inch by inch, and if driven into the town, I will barricade the streets and hold them back as long as possible. Don't spare your horse—never mind if you kill him."

General Meade seemed disturbed at first at this news, lest he should lose the position referred to at Gettysburg. At his request the officer repeated the message, when he seemed reassured, and said: "Good! that is just like Reynolds; he will hold on to the bitter end."

It must have been shortly after this, judging by the distance, and by the time at which the despatch was written, that Meade received a message from Buford. It was as follows:

*To General Meade:*

GETTYSBURG, July 1, 10.10 A. M.

The enemy's force (A. P. Hill's) are advancing on me at this point and driving my pickets and skirmishers *very* rapidly. There is also a large force at Heidlersburg, that is driving my pickets at that point from that direction. General Reynolds is advancing, and is within three miles of this point, with his leading division. I am positive that the whole of A. P. Hill's force is advancing.

JOHN BUFORD,

*Brig. Gen.*

About one o'clock news was brought to the commanding general of the engagement and of the death of Reynolds at Gettysburg. Upon receipt of the intelligence of this not only great, but, at the present juncture, doubly serious loss to the army, in the death of Reynolds, Meade, of course, realized at once the urgency of despatching to the front some one who might, through familiarity with his own views and intentions, be able to replace him. Hancock, gallant soldier as he was, and possessing also, as he did, the full confidence of Meade in his ability, was also, through the late, long, and earnest conference, and through his being still at hand, the officer in whom all requirements met to replace the fallen commander. Accordingly, Meade at once directed Hancock to proceed to Gettysburg, to take command of the troops there, and to advise him as to the exact situation of affairs, and as to the practicability of fighting a battle there. His written instructions to Hancock were these:



HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 1, 1863—1.10 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, SECOND CORPS:

The Major General Commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed or badly wounded. He directs that you turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon; that you proceed to the front, and by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General Reynolds's death, you assume command of the corps there assembled, viz., the Eleventh, First, and Third, at Emmettsburg. If you think the ground and position there a better one to fight a battle under existing circumstances, you will so advise the General, and he will order all the troops up. You know the General's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

Later. 1.15 P. M.

Reynolds has possession of Gettysburg, and the enemy are reported falling back from the front of Gettysburg. Hold your column ready to move.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

S. WILLIAMS,

*A. A. Gen'l.*

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

*Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.*

Hancock at once turned over the command of the Second Corps to Gibbon, commander of its Second Division, and promptly proceeded to Gettysburg; and General Meade soon ordered Gibbon to move the corps for that place.

Hancock, as was seen in his written instructions, had been ordered to report, upon his arrival at Gettysburg, as to the character of the ground there, with reference to its availability for fighting a battle, and had been informed that, if his report were favorable, the commanding general would move the whole army forward. But, before hearing from him, Meade, owing to information received from officers returning from the front, had become satisfied that the enemy was advancing in sufficient force to prove that Lee was concentrating his whole army at Gettysburg. Therefore, without awaiting the report of Hancock, he began to move the troops to the front.<sup>1</sup>

At 4.30 P. M., General Meade sent a despatch to Sedgwick, as follows:

<sup>1</sup> See map No. 10, position 2.30 P. M., July 1.

July 1, 1863, 4.30 P. M.

COMMANDING OFFICER, SIXTH CORPS:

The Major General Commanding directs that you move your command up to Taneytown to-night, your trains, except ambulances and ammunition, to Westminster and south of the railroad, as ordered. I regret to inform you that Maj. Gen'l. Reynolds was killed at Gettysburg this morning. You will inform Gen'l. Sykes of your movement, and the cavalry.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

S. WILLIAMS,

*A. A. Gen'l.*

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

*Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.*

About the same time that the commanding general sent the preceding order to Sedgwick, he also sent orders to the Fifth Corps, and to the Twelfth Corps, to move to Gettysburg. Six batteries of the Reserve Artillery were also ordered to Gettysburg.

About four o'clock, Hancock sent from Gettysburg a verbal message by one of his aides, Major Mitchell, which probably reached the commanding general shortly after six o'clock, explaining the situation of affairs and stating that "he would hold the ground until dark"; meaning by this, as Hancock afterward explained, in his testimony before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, to allow the commanding general time to decide the question of maintaining the position. At 5.25 P. M., Hancock sent the following written despatch by his aide, Captain Parker:

July 1, 5.25.

GENERAL:

When I arrived here an hour since, I found that our troops had given up the front of Gettysburg and the town. We have now taken up a position in the cemetery, which cannot well be taken; it is a position, however, easily turned. Slocum is now coming on the ground, and is taking position on the right, which will protect the right. But we have as yet no troops on the left, the Third Corps not having yet reported; but I suppose that it is marching up. If so, his (Sickles's) flank march will in a degree protect our left flank. In the meantime Gibbon had better march on so as to take position on our right or left, to our rear, as may be necessary, in some commanding position. Gen. G. will see this despatch. The battle is



quiet now. I think we will be all right until night. I have sent all the trains back. When night comes it can be told better what had best be done. I think we can retire; if not, we can fight here, as the ground appears not unfavorable with good troops. I will communicate in a few moments with General Slocum, and transfer the command to him.

Howard says that Doubleday's command gave way.

Your obedient servant,

WINFIELD S. HANCOCK,

*Maj. Gen'l., Com'd'g. Corps.*

General Warren is here.

At 6 P. M., probably before even Hancock's 4 P. M. verbal message had had time to reach head-quarters at Taneytown, and certainly before Hancock's 5.25 P. M. written despatch had had time to reach there, for Taneytown is thirteen miles from Gettysburg, the commanding general had sent to Hancock the following despatch:

*July 1, 1863, 6 P. M.*

MAJ. GEN'L. HANCOCK, and copy to

MAJ. GEN'L. DOUBLEDAY:

If General Slocum is in the field, and I hope he is, of course he takes command; say to him I thought it prudent to leave a division of the Third Corps at Emmettsburg, to hold in check any force attempting to come through there. It can be ordered up to-night, if required. It seems to me that we have so concentrated, that a battle at Gettysburg is now forced on us, and that if we can get up our people and attack with our whole force, to-morrow, we ought to defeat the force the enemy has. Six batteries of the Reserve Artillery have been sent up and more will be sent up to-morrow.

Very respectfully, etc.,

GEO. G. MEADE,

*Major General, Commanding.*

At 7 P. M., the commanding general sent further orders to the Fifth Corps, to urge it forward. At 7.30 P. M., he sent orders to the Sixth Corps, and to the two brigades of the Third Corps, left at Emmettsburg, to urge the forward movement to Gettysburg. Those to Sedgwick, of the Sixth Corps, were as follows:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
TANEYTOWN, *July 1, 1863, 7.30 P. M.*

COMMANDING OFFICER, SIXTH CORPS:

The Major General Commanding directs me to say that a general battle seems to be impending to-morrow at Gettysburg. That it is of the utmost importance that your command should be up. He directs that you stop all trains, or turn them out of the road, that impede your progress. Your march will have to be a forced one, to reach the scene of action, where we shall be largely outnumbered without your presence. If any shorter road presents itself without difficulty in getting up, you will use your discretion in taking it, and report the facts to these headquarters. General Sykes has been ordered up from Hanover to Gettysburg, and General Slocum from Littlestown, and General Hancock's Corps from here. The whole army is there (Gettysburg), or under way for that point. The General desires you to report here in person, without delay, the moment you receive this; he is waiting to see you before going to the front. The trains will all go to Westminster and Union Bridge, as ordered.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Official:

S. WILLIAMS,  
A. A. G.

DAN'L. BUTTERFIELD,  
*Maj. Gen'l., Chief of Staff.*

At the same time the commanding general sent orders to the provost marshal and others to collect all stragglers and send them to the front. The trains were all sent back to Westminster, and guarded by the engineer battalion and other infantry of the army.

It had been for some hours, as evidenced by the preceding orders and dispositions, a fixed fact in the mind of the commanding general that the battle would take place at Gettysburg, so, at 6 P. M., he despatched a messenger to Frederick City, to send the following telegram to General Halleck, in Washington, apprising him of the definite conclusion that had been reached:

*July 1, 1863, 6 P. M.*

The First and Eleventh Corps have been engaged all day in front of Gettysburg. The Twelfth, Third and Fifth have been moving up, and all I hope, by this time on the field. This leaves only the Sixth, which will move up to-night. General Reynolds was killed this morning, early in the action. I immediately sent up General



Hancock to assume command. A. P. Hill and Ewell are certainly concentrating. Longstreet's whereabouts, I do not know. If he is not up to-morrow, I hope, with the force I have concentrated, to defeat Hill and Ewell; at any rate, I see no other course than to hazard a general battle. Circumstances during the night may alter this decision, of which I will try to advise you.

I have telegraphed Couch that if he can threaten Ewell's rear from Harrisburg, without endangering himself, to do so.

GEORGE G. MEADE,  
*Major General.*

Sedgwick, in compliance with Meade's order, started soon after 7 P. M. for Taneytown, and had marched in that direction beyond the Baltimore Pike,<sup>1</sup> which here is the direct road to Gettysburg, when he was met by an aide, despatched to him by the commanding general, who had been awaiting his arrival at Taneytown, but who, having concluded to wait no longer, had sent this officer to instruct him not to pass through Taneytown, but to take the more direct road to Gettysburg by the way of Littlestown. Turning bridle, Sedgwick rejoined the head of his column, and after considerable difficulty and delay, owing to the narrowness of the road upon which it was then moving, countermarched it, regained the Baltimore Pike, and started on the direct road to Gettysburg through Littlestown.

Just as, shortly before ten o'clock, Meade was about starting for the front Hancock arrived and reported to him the condition of affairs up to the time of his leaving Gettysburg. Guided by Captain W. H. Paine, of the engineer staff, he then started, and notwithstanding that the night was dark and the road blocked by troops and artillery moving to the front, in fifty-seven minutes by the watch after leaving Taneytown the general reached the head-quarters of the Second Corps, a distance of between eight and nine miles. He here stopped for about fifteen minutes for consultation with General Gibbon, and gave him orders to push forward as soon as it was light. Resuming his route, it was about a quarter of twelve o'clock when he rode into the cemetery, about three and a half miles beyond where he had left Gibbon.

If the reader will place the point of a pair of dividers on the town of Gettysburg, as laid down on the map, as a centre, and with the distance from Gettysburg to Chambersburg, twenty-four miles, for

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

radius, describe a circle, he will find that Carlisle, York, and Hagerstown lie only a short distance outside of, and about the same distance from, the circumference of the circle, and that Manchester and Westminster, seven and a half miles distant from each other, lie just inside, and each about two miles from, the circumference.

From this simple consideration, the relations to each other of the two contending armies, in their final positions and movements on Gettysburg, are clearly perceived. Ewell's dispersed corps was recalled, by Lee's orders, from the circumference of the circle toward the centre, Gettysburg. From Chambersburg, a point on the circumference itself, and the head-quarters of Lee, A. P. Hill's corps and Longstreet's corps advanced toward that centre.

Critically examining the map, we find that the line of Lee's main direction in the final advance from Chambersburg to Gettysburg, and the line from Manchester to Emmettsburg, which represented the extreme right and left of Meade's advance, are parallel, although not opposite to each other, the first being to the south of east and the other necessarily to the north of west. The significance of these two advancing positions is this: Lee, still protected on his right flank by the line of the South Mountain, is issuing through them by Cashtown Pass, if we except Ewell's corps, rejoining him to the east of Cashtown Pass. Meade's necessity is to hold on, longer than anywhere else, with a force at Emmettsburg, because he cannot be sure that Lee's appearance at Cashtown is not a feint, and that, masked by the line of mountains, Lee may not issue with his main force on the left flank of the Army of the Potomac, at Emmettsburg. Meade has his right wing extended to Manchester, because Early has been over on his right as far as York. If Lee's movement on Cashtown had been a feint, and his objective point, with A. P. Hill's and Longstreet's corps, while Ewell was joining them, had been Emmettsburg, then the vicinity of Emmettsburg, or more probably the line of Pipe Creek, would have been the battle-ground, and in that event, certainly the first part of the great contest would have taken place at Emmettsburg.

Westminster, which was noted in connection with the circle drawn from Gettysburg as a centre, is, as remarked, just within the circumference. It was the place upon which the trains of the army were chiefly directed when the final advance had been ordered. Hagerstown, on the enemy's side of the mountains, and just beyond the circumference of the circle, is not far from Williamsport, on the Potomac,



his base of supplies. Meade's head-quarters, at Taneytown, had lain between Manchester and Emmettsburg, a little south of a line drawn between those two points, and a little nearer to Emmettsburg than to Manchester.

The reader has now been afforded, first, a view of the general field of operations of the campaign; and, second, a view of the smaller field of operations just before the final collision between the two armies took place.<sup>1</sup> It only remains that he shall become acquainted with the actual battle-ground of Gettysburg, and this will be described in connection with the operations there.

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 11, Lines of March from the Rappahannock to Gettysburg.

## II

### THE FIRST DAY

THE scene now naturally shifts back to the battle-field at Gettysburg, where Reynolds, just arrived, had immediately despatched an aide-de-camp to the commanding general with the urgent message which has been already given.

One thing is obvious from the consideration of an incidental mention in this message: that Reynolds had seen at a glance that the position finally obtained by the Federal army was that which ought to be secured. And the inference, moreover, is unavoidable, that he thought dispositions on the field should be made with reference to safe retirement to the heights of Cemetery Hill and Ridge. In the situation, however, that was to be instantaneously met, as he reached the field, the only thing to be done was to put in the arriving troops wherever they could be placed, in order to stem the tide of the advancing Confederates.

For details of the battle-ground of the three following days the reader must of course resort to the map.<sup>1</sup> But a good general idea of the ground can be obtained by regarding, as before, the town of Gettysburg as a centre, and forming one's notions of directions and accidents of surface by regarding them as seen from that centre. Facing the north, thence, we may define the general shape of the battle-ground as rudely representing a parallelogram, four and a half miles long by two and a half wide, the long sides of it lying north and south, the short sides east and west, the spectator in the town of Gettysburg occupying the middle of it, taking it from east to west, and about one-fourth of its length from the north, taking it from north to south. Two creeks, Rock Creek and Willoughby Run, flow, as to their general direction, north and south along the east and west sides of this parallelogram. Their direction may be more nearly particularized by saying that Rock Creek, taken due east of the centre of Gettysburg, is three-quarters of a mile distant, and that Willoughby Run, taken due west of the centre of Gettysburg, is a mile

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 12, The Battle-field.



and a quarter distant, making the distance between them at Gettysburg two miles; and that, from these points, the creeks, in flowing the three miles and a half to the end of the battle-field, at the south diverge from this width of two miles apart at the north to a width apart of three miles and a half.

Now, again assuming the centre of Gettysburg as the point from which to view in imagination the movements of the contending armies, through the convergence of roads at the town, we find that, coming from Cashtown, Lee (A. P. Hill's and Longstreet's corps) marched on Gettysburg by the Chambersburg Pike, southeast; and that Ewell and Early, coming from Carlisle and York to reinforce Lee, marched on the town by the Carlisle Road, due south, and by the Harrisburg Road, south of southwest.

Meade's troops advanced toward the town by the Emmettsburg Pike, north of northeast; by the Taneytown Road, west of north; by the Baltimore Pike, northwest; and by the Hanover Road, west of northwest.

It now only remains to add that on the line of a semicircle, rudely described, north of Gettysburg from the centre of Gettysburg, taking in the slopes rising from Rock Creek and Willoughby Run and across the Carlisle Road, the battle of the first day was waged. The position of the Army of the Potomac where the battle was finally delivered (to which, of course, the Confederate position was generally conformable), was along the high ground running south of southwest from Gettysburg for three miles, ending with Big and Little Round Tops; a line making, inclusive of a sharp turn to the eastward of about a mile in length at the cemetery, and inclusive also of the flexures in the hills, a position of over four miles in length for the Federal line of battle. Beyond this reference the reader could glean nothing from a general description of the ground, and must refer for details to the map, in conjunction with a study of the separate movements in battle.

Wadsworth's division, Cutler's brigade leading, left the Emmettsburg Road about two miles from Gettysburg, and double-quicking across the fields in a northwesterly direction, reached Seminary Ridge, relieving Buford's tired troopers, who by hard fighting had, alone, thus far successfully disputed the enemy's advance. Three regiments of Cutler's brigade were rapidly put in line, on the right of the Chambersburg Road, across the old railroad cut.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.

<sup>2</sup> See Map No. 13, July 1, 10 A. M.

other two regiments of the brigade were placed by Reynolds on the left of the Chambersburg Road, in support of Hall's Second Maine Battery. Cutler at once became hotly engaged.

It was now ten o'clock. Meredith's brigade was formed as it came up, on the left of the Chambersburg Road, and under Reynolds's immediate direction moved forward into a strip of woods on the ridge parallel to and in front of Seminary Ridge through which the enemy was advancing, charged, and drove him back across Willoughby Run. Two of Meredith's regiments (the Nineteenth Indiana and the Twenty-fourth Michigan) were thrown across the run, enveloping Archer's brigade of A. P. Hill's corps. Archer and the greater part of his brigade were captured by this well-executed movement.

At the moment of Meredith's advance, Reynolds, who was directing the movement, was killed, shot through the head. Never, perhaps, has a general fallen in battle at a more momentous time; never, perhaps, at such a crisis, has a command passed from an extraordinary soldier to one so inferior to him. Doubleday, to whom that command fell by seniority, was brave, and capable enough for ordinary emergencies; but this emergency was extraordinary, and the soldier to whom he succeeded was without a peer in the army. He was of the stuff of which marshals of France were made when every soldier carried the baton in his knapsack. Still, it is no disparagement of the other that the same cannot be said of him.

Doubleday, who had appeared upon the field in advance of his division before Reynolds was killed, and had received orders from Reynolds as to what portion of it he should direct, was now separated from Reynolds, and consequently was not for some time aware of the death of his chief, and that he had thus become the ranking officer on the field.

Cutler's three regiments, on the right of the road, were opposed by the whole of Davis's brigade. Finding themselves, after a short but sharp fight, outnumbered and outflanked, they were ordered to retire. They at first gradually fell back to Seminary Ridge, and then still further to the rear. The retiring of this brigade left Hall's battery, posted to its front and left, and already heavily engaged in a very exposed position, and the right of Meredith's brigade as well, of which opportunities Davis took immediate advantage. Freed now from opposition on his front, he turned his attention to this battery, and after subjecting it to a very severe fire, killing many men and horses, rushed forward to capture it. Hall, now endeavoring to



retire and save it, accomplished his purpose, except in the case of one piece, of which all the horses were killed and many of the men killed and wounded.

Just at this critical moment the Sixth Wisconsin, of Meredith's brigade, which had, up to this time, been in reserve, appeared on the scene, and being joined by the Ninety-fifth New York and the Fourteenth Brooklyn, two of the regiments which had acted as the support to the battery, they together made a gallant charge, recovered Hall's gun, and drove the advancing enemy across and into the railroad cut, capturing some three hundred men belonging to Mississippi regiments of Davis's brigade. This brilliant dash maintained that portion of the field.

In the meantime Meredith's brigade had been recalled to the hither side of the run and reformed in line. Cutler's brigade was now ordered forward with those of his regiments which had fallen back, and his brigade, reunited, was reformed, occupying to the right of the road the ground where the fight had begun. Stewart's First United States Artillery was also brought up and posted on Cutler's line.

About eleven o'clock Doubleday's division came upon the field and at once took position, Stone's brigade in the interval between Cutler and Meredith, and Biddle's brigade, with Cooper's First Pennsylvania Battery, on the left of Meredith, Gamble's brigade of cavalry being deployed on Biddle's left. Robinson's division, following Doubleday's, was placed in reserve near the seminary.

The attack of Archer and Davis had signally failed. Archer, as has been said, had been captured, with many of his men, and the brigade driven back. Davis's brigade had suffered so severely, had been so badly cut up and scattered, that it could not be again brought into action until late in the day.

Heth, bringing up the brigades of Pettigrew and Brockenborough, with the remnants of Archer's brigade, formed a new line on his right of the Chambersburg Road, and awaited further orders. There was now a lull in the action until after one o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

It was verging toward one o'clock when the head of the column of the Eleventh Corps reached Gettysburg, Schurz's division, then commanded by Schimmelfennig, leading. This division was advanced through the town into the open country beyond, to the north, with orders to form line of battle on the right of the First Corps.

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 14, July 1, 11 A. M.

Howard, with the Eleventh Corps, had left the vicinity of Emmetsburg about 8.30 A. M., under orders from Reynolds to march to Gettysburg. Barlow's division of the corps followed the route of the First Corps, while the divisions of Schurz and Von Steinwehr took a road which would bring them into Gettysburg by the Taneytown Road. After seeing his column started, Howard rode ahead to Gettysburg. On his way he received from Reynolds news of the engagement and orders to hasten forward with the corps. Sending back these orders to the advancing divisions of the corps, Howard again hastened forward, arriving at Gettysburg at about eleven o'clock. Shortly after his arrival he was notified of the death of Reynolds, and became aware that he was the senior officer on the field.

During the lull in the conflict that had taken place between eleven and one o'clock General A. P. Hill, with Pender's division, had arrived by the Chambersburg Road. Having been apprised of the approach of Ewell from the north, he ordered Heth to advance at once and attack with his whole line, notifying him that Pender would support him.

Ewell, with Rodes's division, had passed the night of June 30 at Heidlersburg, and had moved on the morning of July 1, under orders to march toward Cashtown. Before reaching Middletown, however, he had received word from A. P. Hill, that he was moving toward Gettysburg. Ewell, therefore, turned the head of Rodes's column for that place by the way of the Middletown Road, and sent word to Early to advance by the Heidlersburg Road.<sup>1</sup>

Upon arriving near the field Rodes found that, by keeping along the ridge, which is here a prolongation of Seminary Ridge, he could strike in flank the force opposed to Hill. Accordingly, he formed his line facing due south, with Iverson's brigade on the right, O'Neill's in the centre, and Doles's on the left, with Daniels and Ramseur in reserve. He continued along with this formation until he arrived at Oak Hill, a commanding point from which he had a full view of the First Corps's line. Rodes then advanced his batteries and opened fire on Cutler's troops. Having his own troops in position, and deeming the opportunity favorable, he ordered Iverson and O'Neill to advance. To meet this advance Cutler moved further to the right, and swinging back his right, soon became hotly engaged. As Rodes continued to press and overlap him, Baxter's brigade, of Robinson's division, Robinson himself accompanying it, was hastened over from

<sup>1</sup> Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.



the seminary to his assistance and formed on his right, extending to the Mummasburg Road.

As the afternoon passed, and Rodes's efforts to break the Federal line increased, and the fighting became in consequence more and more desperate, Paul's brigade was also brought up and disposed partly in support of Baxter, and partly on his right.

Now was the time, when the enemy was appearing on Oak Hill, that the Eleventh Corps came upon the immediate field, Schurz, directed by Howard to assume command of the corps, moving his own division, under Schimmelfennig, to the right of the First Corps. Before, however, Schurz had had time to occupy Oak Hill, on his left and front, Rodes's division had seized it and was advancing. Schimmelfennig therefore deployed his division in the open fields, facing it north, to the right of the First Corps. His line, however, did not extend far enough to connect with the right of that corps, quite a wide interval intervening between the two bodies of troops. On his left was placed Dilger's First Ohio Battery, and a little later that was reinforced by the addition of Wheeler's Thirteenth New York Independent Battery, brought up on the right of Dilger. Barlow's division, which had arrived by the Emmettsburg Pike, marched through the town of Gettysburg, and took position on the right of Schimmelfennig, Von Gilsa's small brigade, with Battery G of the Fourth United States Artillery, being advanced to a small wooded eminence near Rock Creek, Ames's brigade remaining in reserve. Devins's cavalry, up to this time disputing the advance of Rodes, and now relieved by the advance of the Eleventh Corps, fell back to the right of the York Road, covering that approach.

Von Steinwehr's division, of the Eleventh Corps, remains to be accounted for. As it had arrived to the southward of Gettysburg, it had, by direction of General Howard, been turned off to the right and stationed, with Wiedrich's New York battery, on the heights in front of the cemetery, just south of the town.

To return now to the First Corps, on the left of the line: Heth, on receiving the order from Hill to attack, advanced his whole line, Brockenborough on the left, Pettigrew in the centre, and Archer on the right. Archer was soon compelled to change front to the right, on account of the active demonstrations of Gamble's troopers, and Brockenborough encountered such a determined resistance from Stone and Meredith that he made no headway. But Pettigrew, although not without hard fighting and suffering heavy loss, was more suc-

cessful. Biddle's line opposed his; but, although far outnumbered and greatly outflanked on the left, Biddle maintained his position with spirit for a long time, under a severe front and flank fire, when he was compelled to retire, a movement which he executed slowly, to a partial cover close to the seminary. In this advance Heth himself was wounded.

On the right of the First Corps the fighting had been equally desperate with that on the left. O'Neill's brigade had, upon receiving the order to assault, advanced in such irregular formation as to make his attack so ineffective that he was almost immediately hurled back and attacked in turn by Robinson, his troops scattered, and many prisoners taken.

About this time Cutler's brigade, being entirely out of ammunition, and the men exhausted by the day's encounters, was withdrawn from the field.

Iverson, on O'Neill's right, had, in moving forward, swung around his right until he faced in a southeasterly direction. Baxter, being now relieved on his front by the repulse of O'Neill, which had uncovered Iverson's left, promptly changed front and furiously assaulted Iverson, driving him back with fearful slaughter. Iverson's change of direction had uncovered the front of Daniels, who was following on his right and rear. In consequence Daniels moved directly forward until he reached the railroad cut. There Stone, who had refused his right, so that it was then facing north, obstinately resisted Daniels. Daniels managed to get possession of the railroad cut, but was unable to gain any further advantage. Baxter's brigade was now withdrawn, and for a time remained on the eastern slope of Seminary Ridge, north of the Chambersburg Road in support of Stewart's battery. Ramseur now advanced and, with the remnants of Iverson's and O'Neill's brigades, prepared to attack the right flank of the First Corps.

The movements of Schimmelfennig had caused Rodes to extend Doles's brigade further to the left, in order to protect that flank, and also to connect with Early's division, coming on the field by the Heidlersburg Road.<sup>1</sup> Early arrived at 2.30 p. m. and formed line of battle on some wooded hills across Rock Creek; Hays's brigade in the centre, Gordon's on the right, and Avery's on the left, with Smith in reserve. The artillery of this division, placed in position south of the Harrisburg Road, opened fire and enfiladed

<sup>1</sup> Shown on map as Harrisburg Road.



Barlow's line. Ames was brought up and placed on the left of Von Gilsa.

At 1 p. m. Howard had sent a despatch to Sickles, at Emmettsburg, urging him to come up. A little later he had sent to Slocum a message, stating how hard they were pressed, and calling for assistance. At 2 p. m., just before this period of the fight that we have reached, he reported to the commanding general:<sup>1</sup>

HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH CORPS, *July 1, 2 p. m.*

GEN. MEADE:

The First Corps came in position in front of town—two divisions of the Eleventh Corps on the right of the town, one division, Eleventh Corps in reserve.

Enemy reported to be advancing from York (Ewell's corps)—the First and Eleventh Corps were engaged with Hill's forces.

Have ordered General Sickles to push forward.

O. O. HOWARD,  
M. G.

As Doles was attacking Schimmelfennig in front, Gordon's brigade advanced across Rock Creek, and, in joining Doles, attacked Barlow's right. Von Gilsa's brigade, being hard pressed, after a brief resistance fell back in great disorder, the men pouring through Ames's regiment, and causing much confusion. Barlow was desperately wounded, and his division fell back, leaving him a prisoner in the hands of the enemy.

Doles was equally successful with Schimmelfennig. The whole line of the Eleventh Corps gave way. There was an attempt to rally, some four or five hundred yards to the rear, near the county almshouse,<sup>2</sup> but Hays and Hoke, having crossed Rock Creek, south of the Harrisburg Road, took the Federals in flank, and they, being pressed in front by Gordon and Doles, made but a brief stand, and continued to retreat pell-mell to the town.

Dilger's, Wheeler's, and Wilkeson's batteries had rendered excellent service throughout the engagement. Lieutenant Wilkeson had been mortally wounded early in the day. When the infantry fell back, the three batteries were by skilful handling safely retired, fighting their guns in retreat to Cemetery Hill, one of Wheeler's guns, only on account of its being disabled, being left on the field.

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 15, July 1, 2.30 p. m., No. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Not shown on map.

It was now half-past three o'clock. Before the retreat Howard had sent word to Schurz to fall back, but this order was not received until the corps was in full retreat. At the same time that Howard had sent this order he had advanced as support Coster's brigade, of Von Steinwehr's division. This brigade, with Heckman's Ohio battery, was advanced just northeast of the town, between the Harrisburg Road and the Hanover Railroad. They were able, however, to retard the enemy's advance only sufficiently to enable the shattered remains of the rest of the Eleventh Corps to take refuge behind them, when they, in turn, to avoid being enveloped, were compelled to retire, Heckman losing two of his guns.

During this onslaught on the Eleventh Corps, which had just terminated so disastrously, the First Corps had maintained its position against the most vigorous attacks, from Heth in front and from Rodes on the right. Robinson, after a magnificent defence, now, on account of his right being uncovered by the rout of the Eleventh Corps, and, as well, furiously attacked on front and left, received orders to withdraw.

The time of day was half-past three in the afternoon. Heth's division, now out of ammunition, and thoroughly exhausted by almost continuous fighting since ten o'clock in the morning, was relieved by Pender's division. Pender promptly advanced his three brigades in line, Lane's on the right, Perrin's in the centre, and Scales's on the left, all south of the Chambersburg Road, the other brigade of this division, Thomas's, being held in reserve as a support to the artillery. Lane had not advanced far before he was compelled to concentrate his attention on Gamble's cavalry brigade, which, well extended to the left, thus threatened the right flank of the advancing line. Scales, on the left, passing Brockenborough's troops, came into action by vigorously attacking Stone and Meredith.

By this time Doubleday had withdrawn his line to the seminary, collecting the batteries of the corps, to make there the last stand under which to cover the withdrawal of the rest of the First Corps from the field. Stone and Meredith, in conjunction with the batteries, opened such a murderous fire upon Scales that his brigade was almost annihilated and he himself wounded. Of Scales's brigade, but five hundred men and one field officer were left.

Perrin's brigade, advancing beyond Pettigrew, attacked Biddle, who, after a gallant resistance, was compelled to relinquish his position.



The check to Scales had, however, enabled all the batteries to retire. But Perrin still continuing to press on, the order to abandon Seminary Hill was given. Scales, although badly wounded, collected the fragments of his brigade, and joining Perrin's, still pressed on, when the Federal line, now attacked in front and on both flanks, fell back toward Gettysburg. Perrin continued to pursue to the town, where he halted, having captured one gun, belonging to Reynolds's New York battery.

Lane, still beset by Gamble, had been unable to take any part in this last attack, and had to content himself with slowly pushing Gamble back to the cover of the guns on Cemetery Hill. Gamble was here joined by Devins, whom Buford had moved over from the right of the town.

General Paul, commanding the First Brigade of Robinson's division of the First Corps, had been badly wounded in one of the attacks on the right of the First Corps. He was succeeded by Colonel Leonard, of the Thirteenth Massachusetts, and he by Colonel Root, of the Ninety-fourth New York, and he again, by the time the brigade had reached Cemetery Hill, by Colonel Coulter, of the Eleventh Pennsylvania, belonging to the Second Brigade of the division; all but Colonel Coulter being wounded. Similarly, Colonel Stone, of the Second Brigade, Third Division, had been wounded early in the fight, and was succeeded by Colonel Wister, of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Pennsylvania, who was wounded very shortly afterward, and succeeded by Colonel Dana, of the One Hundred and Forty-third Pennsylvania Regiment.

Pender's division was collected and halted outside of the town, and between four and five o'clock Anderson's division, of A. P. Hill's corps, came up and bivouacked about a mile to the rear of the battle-field.

It was just before this issue of the conflict that Buford sent his well-known despatch to Pleasanton, who was with the commanding general at Taneytown. It is timed 3.20 P. M. In it he said:

"I am satisfied that Longstreet and Hill have made a junction. A tremendous battle has been raging since nine and a half A. M., with varying success. At the present moment the battle is raging on the road to Cashtown, and in short cannon range of this town; the enemy's line is a semicircle on the height from north to west. General Reynolds was killed early this morning. In my opinion there seems to be no directing person.—We need help now."

Not until the Eleventh Corps, on its right, had entirely given way, was it that the First Corps was obliged to seek safety in retreat. It was about 4 P. M. when the whole line was abandoned, the corps sullenly retiring toward Gettysburg, and turning at every favorable opportunity to check the too eager advance of the enemy. As the corps reached the town it necessarily became involved with the confused masses of the routed Eleventh Corps, and in consequence of this, the confusion naturally increasing, as the enemy were pressing forward on all sides, many prisoners were taken.

In this state of affairs, at nearly 4 P. M., when the whole of the positions previously occupied by the Federals had been abandoned, and when the troops from the First and Eleventh Corps were surging through the streets of Gettysburg, Hancock arrived upon the field at the cemetery. He had, after receiving the verbal and written orders of the commanding general, ridden direct from Taneytown.

The sight which met his gaze upon his arrival at Cemetery Hill was, on the immediate ground, Smith's brigade, of Von Steinwehr's division, well posted, with Weidrich's battery, of the Eleventh Corps, along the crest of the hill. To the northward and westward, on the plain below, a half-mile distant, stretched the line of battle of Buford's dismounted cavalry, interposing between the advancing enemy's right wing, and presenting such a firm front to the enemy as to cause him on that part of the field to desist from his pursuit of the broken ranks of infantry. Beyond, to the north of Gettysburg, stretching toward Cemetery Hill, came the remnants of the Eleventh Corps, intermingled with some of the troops from the First Corps, who, until they had become entangled in the streets of the town with the disorganized masses of the Eleventh, had preserved the orderliness of their retreat.

Hancock promptly addressed himself to the task of restoring order and forming a strong line of battle on the crest of Cemetery Hill. In this he was materially assisted by the exertions of Howard, Buford, and Warren, who, lately arrived upon the ground, rendered invaluable aid in stopping stragglers and directing them upon the formation of a line. Around Smith's brigade, as a nucleus, the rest of the Eleventh Corps was, through desperate efforts on the part of all the officers present, finally concentrated in line on the north and west faces of the extremity of Cemetery Hill. Robinson's and Double-



day's divisions were posted on the left of the Eleventh Corps, on the continuation to the south on Cemetery Ridge.

Hancock, perceiving signs among the enemy of the movement of a line of battle on the east, and recognizing the importance of the possession of Culp's Hill, to the east of Cemetery Hill, as a position, on account of its commanding the approaches from Gettysburg and communications along the Baltimore Pike and elsewhere, sent Wadsworth's division to occupy it. The batteries of the two corps were skilfully planted in positions along the line now occupied from Culp's Hill around by the way of the point of Cemetery Hill, down along its west side, and along its continuation as Cemetery Ridge. These dispositions, taken together with the fire of the batteries, which opened whenever the enemy made any show of advancing, presented a sufficiently formidable front to deter him from attempting any serious demonstration.

At 5 P. M. Howard sent the following despatch to the commanding general:

HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH CORPS, *July 1, 5 P. M.*

First. Gen. Reynolds attacked the enemy as soon as he arrived, with one division, about 10.45 o'clock, A. M. He moved to the front of the town, driving in the enemy's advance for about half a mile, when he met with a strong force of A. P. Hill's corps. I pushed up as fast as I could by a parallel road; placed my corps in position on his right. General Reynolds was killed at eleven and a quarter A. M. I assumed command of the two corps and sent word to Slocum and Sickles to move up. I have fought the enemy from that time to this. The First Corps fell back, when outflanked on its left, to a stronger position, when the Eleventh Corps was ordered back also, to a stronger position. General Hancock arrived at 4 P. M., and communicated his intentions. I am still holding on at this time. Slocum is near, but will not come up to assume command.

O. O. HOWARD.

Slocum had arrived with the Twelfth Corps, at 11 A. M., at a small place on the Baltimore Pike, called Two Taverns, about five miles from Gettysburg. Here he had halted his command to await further instructions. Finally, about 2 P. M., upon receipt of Howard's urgent calls for assistance, he started his column in the direction of Gettysburg. Williams's division, which was in advance, was,

just before reaching Rock Creek, directed to the right by a cross-road to the Hanover Road, and to prepare to attack the enemy's left, moving from the east against the troops of the Eleventh Corps, supposed to be still in front of Gettysburg. He had marched for some distance in the direction indicated, when he was recalled, intelligence having been received that the Federal troops had relinquished the town. Williams therefore countermarched to near the crossing of Rock Creek by the Baltimore Pike, and there bivouacked.

Geary's division, of the Twelfth Corps, which had followed Williams on the Baltimore Pike, continued its way along the pike to and over the crossing at Rock Creek, still following the pike, which abuts on the very rear of Cemetery Hill. Arrived there, about 5 p. m., Geary reported to Hancock with two of his brigades, his third brigade having been, by order of Slocum, left as a reserve on the right. Hancock thereupon directed him to take his command over to the left of the First Corps, to occupy and prolong the line along Cemetery Ridge. Geary, in obedience to these directions, posted his division along Cemetery Ridge, from the left of the First Corps to Little Round Top, up the slope of which he placed two regiments of the First Brigade—the Fifth Ohio and the One Hundred and Forty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Slocum, in person, did not arrive at Cemetery Hill until 6 p. m., and being the senior officer on the field, Hancock turned over the command to him, and everything being now quiet, started for Taneytown, to report to the commanding general. He arrived at Meade's head-quarters just as the general was starting for the front.

It has been mentioned that, at one o'clock, Howard had sent an urgent message to Sickles, at Emmettsburg, to push on as rapidly as possible to Gettysburg. This message did not reach Sickles until three o'clock. He at once responded to the summons, leaving two brigades to guard the approaches to Emmettsburg, and moving with the rest of his corps toward Gettysburg. Birney, with two brigades of his division, arrived at Cemetery Ridge about 6 p. m., and was massed to the rear of the ridge, between it and the Taneytown Road. Humphreys's division, owing to the fact that it had been put on the wrong road by a staff officer of Sickles's, did not reach the ridge until one o'clock in the morning of the following day.

General Lee reached Seminary Ridge about half-past four in the afternoon, just as the Federal troops were retreating through the town of Gettysburg, taking position on the hills beyond. He then



learned from prisoners and other sources that he had been engaged with two corps of the Army of the Potomac, and that the other corps, under General Meade, were approaching. Ignorant of the exact position of the rest of the Army of the Potomac, he concluded that, with the force of only four divisions, which were all the troops he had then present, and these weary from a long and bloody struggle, he ought not to hazard attacking the Federals in the strong position which they occupied on Cemetery Hill. He, however, instructed Ewell, whose troops were in the best condition of any, and occupying the best position, to carry Cemetery Hill, if possible, but not to run the risk of bringing on a general engagement before the arrival of the rest of the army.

Ewell came to the conclusion that, from his position, Cemetery Hill could not be carried, and as his troops were very much fatigued by their long march and day's fighting, he decided to await the arrival of his Third Division, Johnson's, which was reported to be near at hand, and with it capture Culp's Hill, which commanded Cemetery Hill, and which seemed unoccupied.

Johnson's division had passed the night of the 30th at Greenwood, and had moved forward during the day by the road thence to Gettysburg. Before Johnson could get into position, however, it was reported to Ewell that the enemy (probably Slocum's command) was moving on his left flank, and by the time that the report could be sifted the night had so far advanced that he relinquished his purpose of attempting to occupy Culp's Hill. Johnson, however, sent to the hill a reconnoitring party, which was attacked by Wadsworth's troops and driven away, many prisoners being captured.

During the evening Smith's brigade, of Early's division, which was posted some distance out on the York Road, reported that a body of Federal troops was approaching by that road. Early therefore despatched Gordon's brigade to keep a lookout in that direction. During the night some of this command captured an orderly bearing a despatch from Sykes to Slocum, timed midnight, stating that he was four miles from Gettysburg, and would start for that place at four o'clock in the morning.

Thus closed the first day of the battle.

The general result of the day's operations had been decidedly in favor of the Confederates. The positions of the corps of the respective armies at the time when the approach of the Army of the Potomac became known to Lee had rendered it possible for him to

issue such orders looking to final concentration as to enable him more speedily than lay within the power of his opponent to make that final concentration. The difference was not great; it was slight, in time, but it was appreciable in the results of the first day's contest. Before dark of July 1 he had fully two-thirds of his army present on the field. That portion of his force which had been present during the day had far outnumbered the force opposed to it. It consisted of seventeen brigades of infantry, fifteen of which, with seventeen batteries of artillery, had been engaged. Of the Army of the Potomac there were present twelve brigades of infantry, two brigades of cavalry, and eleven batteries of artillery, of which eleven brigades of infantry, the two brigades of cavalry, and all the batteries of artillery had been engaged.

Despite the superiority of his force, the enemy had only after a prolonged struggle, suffering great loss in killed and wounded, driven the Federal troops from their advanced position, and had compelled them to take refuge on the heights beyond the town of Gettysburg. On the left of the Federal line, the First Corps had for a long time maintained its position with such tenacity as to inflict greater loss than it sustained. This, too, to its honor be it said, it managed to do notwithstanding the untimely death of Reynolds, at the very beginning of the conflict—a loss irreparable as to command of the field, and also well calculated to impair the *morale* of any troops. No better evidence can exist as to the discipline, bravery, and determination of that corps than that, under the circumstances of repeated and prolonged assaults upon it by superior numbers, and of the loss of its accomplished leader, it undauntedly maintained its position, receiving and repulsing attack after attack from ten o'clock in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon, and even taking the initiative when opportunity was afforded. Not until this fighting had been nearly continuous for hours, until fresh troops were brought forward to oppose it, not until both its flanks were enveloped and its line of retreat seriously endangered, did this heroic corps abandon its last position. It was only in the retreat from the position on Seminary Hill that, through its entanglement in the streets of Gettysburg with the fragments of the Eleventh Corps, its loss in prisoners took place.

In considering the indubitable fact of the rout of the Eleventh Corps, it would be unfair not to take into consideration the many disadvantages under which it labored. Most unfavorably situated



as to position, with the greater portion of its troops stretched across an open plain, with little or no advantage for defence from the character of the ground, it was hurried into action before its lines were thoroughly formed. Under these circumstances it was not capable of making the organized resistance which, otherwise, it might, under more favorable auspices, have opposed to the advance of the enemy.

The Confederates, on their part, had fought with their usual courage and pertinacity. Being the attacking force, their losses in their repeated onslaughts on the Federal lines must have been very great. It is impossible to ascertain the exact amount of their losses. What is positively known, however, is that the brigades of Archer, Davis, O'Neill, Iverson, and Scales were, after the fight, mere skeletons of their previous organizations. That their success was not more fruitful of results was owing to the gallant stand made by the First Corps, to the promptness with which the line was re-established by Hancock on Cemetery Hill, and to Lee's ignorance of the exact position of the corps of the enemy that were still moving to the point of concentration.

It is desirable here to glance at the positions of the respective armies at midnight, between July 1 and July 2.<sup>1</sup>

Of the Army of the Potomac there were in position, on Cemetery Hill and Ridge, and on Culp's Hill, the First Corps, including Stannard's Vermont Brigade (which, during the evening, had joined the corps after a forced march from the defences of Washington), the Eleventh Corps, the Twelfth Corps, and two brigades of one division (Birney's) of the Third Corps. Out on the plain, and stretching away parallel with Cemetery Ridge, were the lines of the two brigades of cavalry of the ever-watchful and tireless Buford.<sup>2</sup> The remaining division of the Third Corps (Humphreys's) was making the best of its way, through the darkness of the night, on the road to Gettysburg, and was happily now near at hand. The Second Corps was on the Taneytown Road, about three miles from Gettysburg, where it had been halted by Hancock, to protect the left and rear, when he went in person to make his final report to the commanding general. The Fifth Corps was four miles back on the Hanover Road, at Bonaughtown, making a brief halt after its long march, and only waiting for the dawn to push onward to the front. The Sixth

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 16, July 1, 12 P. M.

<sup>2</sup>The cavalry situations are not shown on maps, owing to their varied and extended positions.

Corps was some hours out from Manchester, hastening along on its ever-memorable forced march to reach their comrades in battle.

Merritt's cavalry brigade, of Buford's division, was still in the neighborhood of Mechanicstown, scouting the country in that direction. Gregg was at Hanover, with two brigades of cavalry, having sent the Third Brigade (Huey's) back to Westminster, to assist in guarding the wagon trains of the army, now being collected there. Kilpatrick, after his encounter with Stuart, at Hanover, had followed him as far as Berlin, but failing to come up with him, had returned to Abbottstown, where Kilpatrick now was. Tyler, with the Reserve Artillery, except those batteries which had already gone forward by order of the commanding general, was on the road from Taneytown to Gettysburg, in the rear of the Second Corps. General Meade had just arrived on Cemetery Hill.

On the Confederate side, in the immediate vicinity of the town of Gettysburg, with a partial formation confronting Cemetery Hill and the adjacent ground, were Ewell's corps and A. P. Hill's corps. McLaw's division, and Hood's division, of Longstreet's corps, except Law's brigade of the latter, which had been left on picket duty at New Guilford, were at the crossing of the Chambersburg Road over Marsh Creek. Pickett's division of this corps had remained at Chambersburg, guarding the rear. General Lee was encamped on Seminary Ridge, near the Chambersburg Pike, laying his plans for the morrow.

In following the movements of Stuart, who had been making a cavalry raid from the rear around the right flank of the Army of the Potomac, we had left him, after his engagement with the cavalry under Kilpatrick, in which he had been forced to fall back from the town of Hanover, embarrassed with his captured wagons, and with his direct road to the north obstructed by Kilpatrick, hastening, as well as his jaded horses would permit, toward Jefferson, intending to go thence in the direction of York, and hoping ultimately to fall in with the column of Early.

This, as will be remembered, was on the night of June 30. His objective point was, of course, the army of Lee, but between it and himself interposed the Army of the Potomac, and to make matters still more serious for him, the cavalry force of Kilpatrick was proving an obstacle in his path. It was an urgent necessity with him to be able, if possible, to join some of the infantry composing Lee's army, with which, uniting himself, he could thenceforward proceed with



safety. Early, according to the best information which he could obtain, had left York and was marching to what Stuart had heard was Lee's point of concentration, at Shippensburg, but he hoped to intercept some portion of Ewell's force and accompany it to the main army. With this purpose in view, he deemed that the best plan for him to accomplish it would be to push on from Jefferson to Carlisle. On the morning of July 1 he arrived at Dover. Passing through Dillstown, he reached Carlisle on the afternoon of July 1, only to find all Ewell's troops gone and the town occupied by a Federal force under General W. F. Smith, who had been sent forward from Harrisburg by General Couch.

Stuart was by this time short of supplies, and both men and horses were thoroughly worn out from constant marching. Carlisle seemed to present an inviting opportunity of obtaining rations for his troops, of which he was not slow to attempt to avail himself. But, unfortunately for him, the presence of the force under Smith at once presented a serious obstacle to his intentions. He demanded the surrender of the town, but this being refused, he proceeded to shell it by way of enforcing compliance with his demands. While thus engaged, his operations were brought to an abrupt close by the receipt during the evening of a despatch from Lee, stating that the army was at Gettysburg, and had been engaged all day with the enemy, and ordering him to move his command at once for that place. Then, burning the barracks, which lay just outside of the town of Carlisle, Stuart at once turned his column in the direction of Gettysburg.

### III

#### THE SECOND DAY

JUST before midnight General Meade, entering at the rear of the little cemetery on Cemetery Hill, rode down its main drive, and dismounted at the little, old-fashioned lodge that stands at its entrance on the Baltimore Pike. Here were assembled General Slocum, who had been in command of the field since Hancock had left it, Generals Howard, Sickles, Warren, and other officers. From them he received reports of the condition of affairs since Hancock's departure. Learning, in answer to his inquiry, that the position was considered a good one, he replied that he was glad to hear it, for it was now too late to leave it. He then notified the generals assembled that the whole army was on the march to Gettysburg, and, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, should be there by early morning.

Shortly afterward the general, accompanied by one or two officers, walked out beyond the Baltimore Pike, among the batteries posted on the brow of Cemetery Hill. Although it was too dark to distinguish individual objects at a distance, still he could see, looking toward the north and west, the general line of the camp-fires of the enemy's troops. The general position in the first day's battle of his own troops and of those of the enemy was pointed out to him. Silently gazing out into the stillness of the night, broken only by the voices of his companions, the growl of some tired soldier as he changed his uneasy position on the ground, or by the occasional ping of the bullet fired by some restless spirit along the picket line, the general, as he planned for the morrow's struggle, doubtless reverted in mind to the trusted friend, fallen at the beginning of that day's fight on the soil of his native State, of the soldier-friend, whose untimely death had cost ten thousand men upon whom he could no longer count.

It was too dark to obtain a clear idea of the ground occupied by that portion of the army which had reached the field. General Meade therefore returned to the cemetery, where he addressed himself to the task of making preparations for the next day. Before, however, it had yet become daylight, he mounted his horse, and ac-



accompanied by Generals Howard and Hunt, and by Captain Paine, of the engineer staff, rode off to examine the lines. Riding slowly along in rear of the sleeping line of soldiers around Cemetery Hill, and along its continuation as Cemetery Ridge, and beyond, to where the land dips before it rises abruptly at the base of Little Round Top, he obtained a general knowledge of the features of the ground and of the chief accidents of its surface. As it was still dark when he had started along the lines, of course only the most salient features of the ground could be recognized. Before, however, he had finished the examination, day began to break, and he concluded it by an inspection of the right, around Culp's Hill, to the crossing of Rock Creek by the Baltimore Pike. He finally indicated on Captain Paine's sketch of the ground just gone over the position to be held by each corps, and Captain Paine thereupon, by his orders, made from the sketch, and during the morning transmitted to each corps, a tracing showing the positions. The general, after having settled upon the positions to be occupied by the respective corps, sent General Hunt for the second time to examine the lines, in order to make sure that the artillery was everywhere properly posted.

A little farm-house on the western side of the Taneytown Road, directly in rear of Cemetery Ridge, had been selected for permanent head-quarters. Near by here, between six and seven o'clock in the morning, as General Meade was seated on horseback in a field on the east side of the Taneytown Road, somewhat below the house, General Gibbon rode up, just in advance of the head of the column of the Second Corps, and reported the presence of the corps. He was instructed by General Meade to place the corps in position on Cemetery Ridge, which was pointed out, extending the line toward Round Top, and was informed that the Third Corps would connect with his left. This formation brought the right of the Second Corps on the Taneytown Road, connecting with the left of the Eleventh Corps, at a clump of woods known as Ziegler's Grove,<sup>1</sup> thus relieving the divisions of Robinson and Doubleday, of the First Corps, which had during the night been occupying this line. These two divisions were then posted in rear of Cemetery Hill, in support of the Eleventh Corps. While the Second Corps was getting into position, General Hancock, just returned from Taneytown, arrived on the field and resumed command of his corps.

The position of General Sickles, commanding the Third Corps,

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

was indicated to him in two specific ways—to relieve the division of General Geary, by occupying the line upon which he had been posted the night before by General Hancock; and to connect his right with the left of the Second Corps, prolonging his line on the ridge up to, and on to, Little Round Top, and, if practicable, to occupy it.

General Sykes, of the Fifth Corps, with Barnes's and Ayres's divisions, arrived at eight o'clock, having at daylight marched from his bivouac at Bonaughtown. Crawford's division of this corps did not arrive until about noon. The two divisions were first posted on the extreme right, south of Rock Creek, but, this position being subsequently thought to involve too great a development of the lines toward the right, they were by General Meade's orders moved across Rock Creek and massed on the Baltimore Pike, in support of the Twelfth Corps. Williams's division of the Twelfth Corps, which had been reinforced during the morning by Lockwood's brigade, two regiments from the defences of Baltimore, was at the same time moved to the left, across Rock Creek, and posted, with its right resting on Rock Creek, on the right of Geary's division of the Twelfth, which, after having been relieved on the left by the Third Corps, had been moved over to join the other division of its own corps. This new line was naturally a very strong one, and it was increased in strength by breastworks along the whole crest of the ridge.

The Artillery Reserve, under General Tyler, arrived during the morning. Thus the army, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, had now all reached the field, and those sturdy veterans, under their gallant leader, were known to be rapidly approaching. As soon as General Meade learned at Taneytown of the death of Reynolds, and that his corps was thus left without a proper commander, he had at once despatched orders to General Newton, then with the Sixth Corps, to proceed at once to Gettysburg and take command of the First Corps. This officer had in the early morning joined General Meade at the cemetery and reported to him. He had at the same time informed him that he had left General Sedgwick the night before at the head of his corps, on the direct road to Gettysburg, and that he was pushing forward as rapidly as possible.

The army, as far as assembled, was now posted as follows:<sup>1</sup> On the extreme right, on the low ground of the valley of Rock Creek, from which is a rapid ascent to the summit of Culp's Hill, with its right resting on and commanding the passage of Rock Creek, near

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 17, July 2, 8.30 A. M.



McAllister's Mills, was the Twelfth Corps (Slocum's), mostly along the crest of the rocky and wooded ridge trending southeast and descending sharply into the valley of Rock Creek. It rested in the order of Williams's division on the right and Geary's on the left, ranging up the acclivity, his left connecting with the right of Wadsworth's division of the First Corps, which occupied the very summit of the hill. On the left of Wadsworth, extending around the turn of Cemetery Hill, conformably to the ground, was the Eleventh Corps, Barlow's division, now commanded by Ames, on the right, on what is called East Cemetery Hill, Schurz in the centre and Von Steinwehr on the left, Von Steinwehr's left resting on Ziegler's Grove. On the left of the Eleventh Corps came the Second Corps, continuing the line along Cemetery Ridge to the south, Hays's division on the right, Gibbon's in the centre, and Caldwell's on the left. On the left of the Second Corps was the Third Corps, occupying the ground from Caldwell's left toward Little Round Top.

The Fifth Corps was held in reserve on the right. The Artillery Reserve and its large trains were parked in a central position between the two flanks of the army, in the rear of Powers's Hill, on a road <sup>1</sup> connecting the Baltimore Pike and the Taneytown Road. Buford, with his two brigades of cavalry, was patrolling and picketing the ground on the left and front of the Round Tops, and the Third Corps, along the Emmettsburg Pike and roads in the vicinity, keeping a vigilant watch on the right and rear of the enemy. Merritt's brigade of this division was still detached in the neighborhood of Emmettsburg. Gregg's division of cavalry, with the exception of Huey's brigade, arrived from Hanover about noon, and was posted on the extreme right flank of the army, at the intersection of the Hanover Road and the Low Dutch Road, with a line of pickets almost joining the right of the infantry line. Kilpatrick's division of cavalry, which had been at Abbottstown on the night of the 1st of July, was moving back from that place to join the right flank of the army.

While the army was coming up and going into position, General Meade personally, and through his staff, was engaged in assigning and rectifying positions, watching the enemy, and studying the field. Only after having issued all his principal orders and instructions of a preliminary kind did he establish himself at head-quarters. He then gave certain directions to his chief of staff, with respect to obtaining knowledge of the roads and country to the rear—information that

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

might be needed as the basis of instructions under specified contingencies.

The head-quarters selected for General Meade were very conveniently situated, being central to all parts of the lines and easy of access. They were in the immediate rear of the Second Corps, and in close proximity to Hancock's head-quarters. They were but a short distance from the cemetery, where Howard and Newton were to be found, a few minutes' ride from Powers's Hill, where Slocum had his head-quarters, and not far from the Third Corps and Little Round Top, which was in plain view.

Somewhere between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, when nearly all of his staff were absent on various duties, General Meade came out of the little house, and glancing around and seeing Captain Meade, one of his aides, called him. To one who was familiar with the general's manner and tones of voice in different moods he seemed in excellent spirits, as if well pleased with affairs as far as they had proceeded. It was almost the first moment since his taking command that he had had an opportunity for private intercourse with any one. After addressing some pleasant remarks to Captain Meade, he instructed him to go to General Sickles, to indicate to him where the general head-quarters were, to inquire of him if his troops were yet in position, and to ask him what he had to report.

Captain Meade rode at once down the Taneytown Road for a distance of somewhere between a quarter and a half of a mile, when he came upon what proved to be the temporary head-quarters of the Third Corps. They were in a small patch of woods on the west side of the Taneytown Road. No one but Captain Randolph, General Sickles's chief of artillery, seemed to be about. Captain Meade expressed to this officer his wish to see General Sickles, and was in reply informed that General Sickles, being very tired, having had the day before a hard day, and having also been up all night, was at that moment resting in his tent, which was pitched in the vicinity. Upon receiving this statement Captain Meade delivered to Captain Randolph the message committed to him by General Meade. Captain Randolph thereupon said that he would at once see General Sickles, went into the tent, and after a few minutes' absence, returned. He then informed Captain Meade that the Third Corps was not yet in position, that General Sickles was in some doubt as to where he should go.

It will be seen from General Meade's message, coupled with Gen-



eral Sickles's reply, that previous instructions had evidently been sent and received. This is assumed in General Meade's message and implied in the response. Captain Meade, having at the time no knowledge of the character of these instructions, was unable to attempt to rectify any misunderstanding. He had been merely told to find out whether the Third Corps was yet in position. He therefore replied to Captain Randolph that he would return at once to head-quarters to report the facts. Riding as rapidly as possible, he was in a few minutes again with General Meade, to whom he repeated what he had seen and heard. At the moment when he reached head-quarters, General Meade was still in the little inclosure surrounding the house, a number of officers having assembled there. Upon hearing what Captain Meade had to report, the general said to him in his sharp, decisive way, to ride back as rapidly as possible to General Sickles, and to say to him that his instructions were to go into position on the left of the Second Corps; that his right was to connect with the left of the Second Corps; that he was to prolong with his line the line of that corps, occupying the position that General Geary had held the night before. Captain Meade was also instructed to say that it was of the utmost importance that his troops should be in position as quickly as possible.

By the time that Captain Meade, returning at once, had again reached General Sickles's head-quarters, he found the tents about to be struck, the general just mounted, while several of his staff-officers, also mounted, were gathered around him. Captain Meade delivered his message to the general in person, whereupon he replied that his troops were then moving, and would be in position shortly, adding something as to General Geary's not having had any position, but being massed in the vicinity. He then rode off in the direction of the front.

As Captain Meade was about to retire, Captain Randolph requested that he would ask General Hunt to come out there to look at some positions he had selected for artillery. Captain Meade then rode back to head-quarters and reported to General Meade what General Sickles had said.

These, as the reader will soon discover for himself, are not unimportant details. They relate to a part of the field in which the battle of the second day was the most severe, and where the fortunes of the Federal army hung for a long time doubtful in the balance. They relate to preliminary matters which, had they been different,

as intended by the commanding general, so also would have been very different the battle of the second day.

It has been asserted by General Sickles that he had received no orders of any kind from General Meade, and that his preliminary movements had to be made on his own responsibility. It has, however, been seen that, certainly before nine o'clock in the morning, he was notified in direct and positive terms what his position was expected to be, and that his reply indicated the receipt of previous orders. It was at the time thought that General Sickles fully understood where he was to go. The character of the messages sent by him to the commanding general left no impression on the mind of the latter, that there was any misunderstanding of moment. Later in the day, when it was discovered in what an extraordinary position General Sickles had placed his corps, General Meade deemed it barely possible he had misconstrued his orders. Not until nine months after the battle, when the remarkable proceedings before the committee on the conduct of the war had developed themselves, did he come to the conclusion that his orders had been wilfully disregarded.

From reports of signal officers and others, indications appearing of an attempt of the enemy to move around the right flank of the army, General Meade, after inspection of this part of the field during the morning, thought that an opportunity might present itself of making an attack upon the enemy from that quarter. This, or any other partial attack, was entirely compatible with his policy and intention to fight a defensive battle, in view of the fact that, unless his left flank were turned, and the enemy threatened to interpose between him and Baltimore and Washington, he, much better than the enemy, who must depend upon the country for supplies, could afford to play a waiting game. He instructed General Slocum to examine minutely the ground on the right, and to report as to the expediency of making a vigorous attack with a force composed of his own corps (the Twelfth) and the Fifth Corps; the attack to begin upon the arrival of the Sixth Corps, which was to co-operate with the two other corps. General Warren, the chief engineer of the army, was detailed to aid General Slocum in his examination of the ground. General Slocum reported unfavorably as to the attack, stating that he did not think that the ground occupied by the enemy on his front presented any inducement to dislodge him, and General Warren also reported that he did not think an attack advisable from that point.



Upon receiving these reports General Meade decided to abandon the projected attack, and to postpone all offensive operations until the arrival of the Sixth Corps, or until the intentions of the enemy were more fully developed.

The Army of the Potomac, except the Sixth Corps, coming up by a forced march, having now arrived and been deployed to meet the enemy forming on the opposite hills, and now awaiting his initiative, the reader may seize the opportunity to glance at the preparations of the Confederate army for the renewal of the contest.

On the early morning of July the 2d, Ewell's and Hill's troops having all reached the field during the night, were placed in position. Ewell's was posted on the left, extending from Benner's Hill to the seminary, through the town of Gettysburg. His line thus covered the right wing of the Army of the Potomac. The order in which the corps held the ground was, with Johnson's division on the left, Early's in the centre, and Rodes's on the right. Hill's corps was formed along Seminary Ridge, with Pender's division on the left, his left resting on the seminary, Anderson's division on the right, and Heth's division, now under command of Pettigrew, held in reserve.

During the morning, as Wilcox's, the right brigade of Anderson's division, was extending its line to the right, his two right regiments, the Tenth and the Eleventh Alabama, encountered and drove back a force under Colonel Berdan, sent out by General Sickles to reconnoitre. This, therefore, at that point of time, was the extreme right of the Confederate line. It rested about opposite to Caldwell's division of the Second Corps.

Longstreet's two divisions, commanded by McLaws and Hood, left at daylight their bivouac at the Chambersburg Road crossing of Marsh Creek, and about eight o'clock halted in the fields in the rear of the seminary. Pickett's division of this corps was still at Chambersburg.

General Lee, who had carefully studied the Federal lines the day before and again this morning, sent word to General Ewell to examine the ground in his front and to prepare to assault the enemy from that point. This in the contrary sense, the reader will observe, is what General Meade contemplated doing, up to the moment when he received the unfavorable reports of Generals Slocum and Warren. It seems to have been General Lee's first intention to move the bulk of his army to this flank and to assault there. He, like General

Meade, was deterred from doing this by the unfavorable reports of subordinates. He, then returning from personal inspection of this part of the field, resolved to make the main attack well over on the Federal left. Instructions to this end were given to General Longstreet, who was ordered to move his command to the right, and, gaining the Emmettsburg Road, to envelop the left flank of the enemy. At the same time orders were sent to Ewell to co-operate in this attack by a simultaneous advance of his troops against the Federal right. General Longstreet, however, not deeming himself in sufficient force to make the attack, delayed action in the concerted movement, so as to give time for the arrival of Law's brigade, which had been left behind on picket, and thus its inception was postponed until nearly noon, at which time Law had arrived.

The morning had passed very quietly so far as sound was concerned. Occasionally there was some firing along the skirmish lines, as on either side new lines were being developed. This was varied by an occasional artillery duel, as the position of a battery was detected. General Meade was, as has been said, resting his troops, strengthening his lines, awaiting the arrival of the Sixth Corps, and watching for any offensive movement on the part of the enemy.

It was during the maintenance of this attitude on both sides that, about eleven o'clock, General Sickles rode up to head-quarters, when some conversation occurred between him and General Meade as to his position. General Meade repeated what his intention was—that he was to occupy the position in which he understood that General Hancock had the night before placed General Geary. General Sickles stated in reply that, as far as he could gather, Geary had had no position. General Meade then explained to him that he was expected to prolong the line of the Second Corps, that his right was to rest on Hancock's left, and his left on Little Round Top, which General Meade pointed out to him. Some further conversation took place, in which General Sickles said that there was in the vicinity of where his corps was some very good ground for artillery, and requested that a staff-officer of General Meade's might be permitted to go out to see to the posting of his artillery. He also inquired if he were not authorized to post his corps in such manner as in his judgment he should deem most advisable. General Meade replied, "Certainly, within the limits of the general instructions I have given you; any ground within those limits you choose to occupy, I leave to you." General Meade then directed General Hunt to accompany General



Sickles, for the purpose of examining such positions as General Sickles might think good for artillery, and of giving General Sickles the benefit of his advice.

About eleven o'clock was committed a blunder on the left which had a serious effect on the immediately ensuing movements on that part of the field. With only partial information afforded him by Generals Pleasanton and Butterfield, chief of staff, the commanding general became a party to an action the bearings of which, when he soon thereafter learned of them, he repudiated as wholly beside his intention. Buford, as has been noted, had had his two brigades of cavalry out patrolling all the left front; in fact, almost all the way to Fairfield. His command had been for a long time on constant and active duty. It had been, as the reader has seen, engaged in the battle of the day before, bringing the Confederates to their first stand. He was out of rations and forage. His horses, through loss of shoes from continuously hard work, were becoming unserviceable. Seeing the army nearly up, he thought that he might be relieved, in order to refit. He therefore sent word to this effect to Pleasanton, who in turn reported the matter to head-quarters. General Meade, having previously been informed that all the cavalry was up, and taking it for granted that Pleasanton would substitute other cavalry for Buford's, gave permission to relieve him, directing that he should collect the trains of the army and guard them to Westminster, where he could refit. Without replacing Buford's with other cavalry, Pleasanton relieved him from duty, and thus the whole left flank of the army was destitute of cavalry. General Meade did not learn of this state of affairs until shortly before one o'clock. He was exceedingly annoyed, stating emphatically that he had had no intention of denuding his left wing by stripping it of cavalry. He at once ordered Pleasanton either to recall Buford or to bring forward some other cavalry. Unfortunately, it was too late to recall Buford; he was far on his way to Taneytown. A regiment of cavalry was therefore ordered over from Gregg, on the right wing; but by the time that it arrived it was too late to be of any service in the emergency, the enemy having enveloped all the left front and the action there having begun.

About 3 P. M. the near approach of the head of the column of the Sixth Corps was reported. The whole army was now up, and as the expected attack of the enemy had not taken place, General Meade, preliminary to any offensive action that he might take, sent for his

corps commanders to assemble at head-quarters for consultation and explanation of his intentions. At 3 P. M. he sent General Halleck the following despatch, fully describing the situation at that hour:

HEADQUARTERS NEAR GETTYSBURG, July 2, 1863, 3 P. M.

MAJ. GENL. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief*:

I have concentrated my army at this place to-day. The Sixth Corps is just coming in, very much worn out, having been marching since 9 P. M. last night.

The army is fatigued. I have to-day, up to this hour, awaited the attack of the enemy, I having a strong position for defensive. I am not determined on attacking him till his position is more developed. He has been moving on both my flanks apparently, but it is difficult to tell exactly his movements. I have delayed attacking to allow the Sixth Corps and parts of other corps to reach this place and rest the men. Expecting a battle, I ordered all my trains to the rear. If not attacked, and I can get any positive information of the position of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to move to my rear and interpose between me and Washington, I shall fall back to my supplies at Westminster. I will endeavor to advise you as often as possible. In the engagement yesterday the enemy concentrated more rapidly than we could, and towards evening, owing to the superiority of numbers, compelled the Eleventh and First Corps to fall back from the town to the heights this side, on which I am now posted. I feel fully the responsibility resting on me, but will endeavor to act with caution.

GEORGE G. MEADE.

*Major General.*

Most of the corps commanders had arrived at head-quarters and entered into brief conversations, when General Warren, learning through a report just brought to him of an inspection of the lines on the left, that General Sickles was not in the proper position, communicated the fact to the commanding general. At this moment there was some cannonading and a dropping fire of musketry over on the left. General Meade at once ordered Sykes, who was at head-quarters, to march his corps over to the left as quickly as possible, saying that he himself would meet him there and see to its posting. He was about to mount his horse, when General Sickles, having been



detained, presented himself in answer to the general summons. General Meade, telling him not to dismount, said that as there seemed to be some firing on his front, he would follow him out to the line. General Sickles then rode rapidly back to his corps, General Meade following him at a short distance. On passing the left of the Second Corps, General Meade, although prepared by the report of General Warren to find the Third Corps out of position, was wholly unprepared to find it advanced far beyond any possible construction of its being on the prolongation of the line of the Second Corps. Its lines were over half a mile out to the front, to the Emmettsburg Road, entirely disconnected with the rest of the army, and beyond supporting distance. Riding rapidly in that direction, the general reached a point almost in the rear of the position of Sickles, where he was joined by that officer.

At the moment when Sickles received, through Captain Meade, the order to establish the Third Corps on the prolongation to the left of the line of the Second Corps, he was actually there. Humphreys's division of the corps was massed on the left of the Second Corps, and Birney's division was in line to the left of Humphreys's near Little Round Top. At seven o'clock in the morning, Birney had relieved the troops of Geary's division and formed his line with his left resting near Little Round Top, with his right thrown in a direct line toward the cemetery, connecting on the right with Humphreys's division, his skirmishers thrown out to the Emmettsburg Road. The corps, as thus placed, was, with the exception that Little Round Top was not occupied, posted conformably to General Meade's instructions. The two brigades of the corps left at Emmettsburg, which had been ordered up by General Meade on the preceding night, had rejoined their respective divisions. These two brigades, De Trobriand's and Burling's, had started from Emmettsburg at daylight, and marching by the direct road, unmolested on their march, and seeing no signs of the enemy, had about nine or ten o'clock in the morning struck the Peach Orchard, and through it reached the lines on Cemetery Hill.

Sickles, returning from his visit to head-quarters, accompanied by Hunt, stated to him as they rode along that he wished to throw his line forward from the position which it then occupied to some high ground in front, so as to cover the Emmettsburg Pike. Hunt, knowing that Sickles had left his artillery ammunition train to follow his forward march to Gettysburg, inferred from this remark that Sickles wished to control that road until the train should arrive.

Sickles and Hunt rode directly to the position at the Peach Orchard, and from that point Sickles pointed out the line which he proposed occupying. Between Cemetery Ridge and Seminary Ridge, just west of Little Round Top, and distant from it five hundred yards, there rises a rocky ridge which trends west to the Emmettsburg Pike at the Peach Orchard. The ridge is here intersected by another running north along the Emmettsburg Pike and fading away toward the north about where the Rogers house<sup>1</sup> stands. It was to these two ridges, presently to be more minutely described, that Sickles proposed advancing.

Hunt, after examining the position along the Emmettsburg Pike to the Peach Orchard, remarked that the right of the proposed line was out where it would not be connected with the Second Corps; that to connect it would necessitate the throwing out the left wing of that corps, and that that could not well be done unless some woods that were in front were under control, so that the enemy could not take possession of them. At his suggestion, Sickles ordered out a force to reconnoitre the woods to the front and right, to ascertain if the enemy occupied them. About this time a very heavy cannonade opening over on the right, at the cemetery, Hunt, anxious about what was occurring there, and having now finished the examination of the line along the Emmettsburg Pike, told Sickles that he would ride on, and returning to head-quarters by way of Round Top, thus incidentally finish the inspection of the proposed line. As he was leaving, Sickles inquired of him if it would be proper for him to move forward and occupy the line which he had indicated. To this Hunt replied, decidedly not; that before doing so he should wait for orders from General Meade. Hunt then continued on his way, examining the remainder of the line. He found that, while the line possessed certain favorable conditions, it would so greatly lengthen the general line as to render it impossible for the Third Corps alone to hold it, and that, in addition to this, if the enemy should hold the woods on its front, it would be difficult to occupy and strengthen the salient angle at the Peach Orchard. In brief, there were certain points of the proposed line in its favor, provided it were, as it was not, supported on both right and left; but besides exposing the left flank of the Second Corps, it was, with relation to the position of the rest of the army, wholly unsupporting and unsupported. On his way to the cemetery, General Hunt stopped at head-quarters and briefly reported to the commanding general the result of his examination of

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.



the ground, adding that, if he were General Meade, he would not order troops out there until he had personally examined the line; that its relations to the general line were such that he himself would not take the responsibility of advising further in the matter.

The force sent out to reconnoitre by General Sickles, at the suggestion of General Hunt, was composed of about one hundred men of the First New York Sharpshooters, supported by the Third Maine Regiment, all under command of Colonel Berdan. It advanced from the Peach Orchard and entered the woods beyond, where it was deployed and moved for some distance through them in a northerly direction, parallel to the Emmettsburg Pike. It soon came into contact with a force of the enemy's, which was, as already noted when speaking of the enemy's dispositions, a detachment of Wilcox's brigade, of Anderson's division, which then formed the extreme right of the Confederate army, and which was pushing out in this direction, reconnoitring preparatory to straightening the lines. After a sharp fight Berdan's force was driven back with considerable loss. This encounter was reported, about two o'clock, to General Sickles. Notwithstanding that Hunt had cautioned Sickles against moving out on his proposed line without orders from General Meade, yet, although he had received no such authority, but on the contrary, had thrice received explicit instructions as to the proper line to occupy, he determinedly, in direct disobedience of orders, began to move his line out to this advanced position.

The author has been greatly indebted for the following details of the ground to the admirable description of it by General Hunt, in his "The Second Day at Gettysburg," in the *Century Magazine*, for December, 1886:

"The ground in the immediate rear of the ridge about to be occupied, of which there is now to become as much question as of the ground along the ridge itself, seeing that the contest raged over its whole extent and ended somewhat along lines where it should have begun, renders necessary here a description of the whole area involved, as its formation is far from simple.

"From Ziegler's Grove,<sup>1</sup> Cemetery Ridge runs for nearly half a mile about due south to another clump of trees. Here it turns abruptly to the east for two hundred yards, and then, turning south again, runs directly towards Round Top for a few hundred yards, until

<sup>1</sup> A point on the Taneytown Road occupied by the right of the Second Corps and left of the Eleventh Corps.

it reaches George Weikert's house.<sup>1</sup> The ridge, so far, is, with the exception of the two small groves mentioned, smooth and unwooded, and distant from Seminary Ridge, opposite, occupied by the enemy, very nearly a mile. At George Weikert's house the continuity of the ridge is lost in a tumbled mass of rock and hill and wood, compelling an eastward bend of the Taneytown Road, and falling ruggedly towards the west for a few hundred yards in the direction of Plum Run. At the south this rough ground ends abruptly at the low spot before mentioned, from which, somewhat further on to the south, rises the base of Little Round Top. This ground is densely wooded, and between it and Plum Run lay a clearing of three hundred yards in width, a portion of the generally open country on the immediate front of Cemetery Ridge.

"Devil's Den is the space enclosed by the confluence of Plum Run and a small affluent. Plum Run flows in a southeasterly course towards Little Round Top, and then, making a bend to the southwest, receives, at a short distance from there, a small tributary, Plum Run Branch, flowing from Seminary Ridge. It is a bold, rocky hill, lying between these streams; steep, like an escarpment, on its eastern face, and prolonged in a ridge-like manner towards the west. It is five hundred yards west of Little Round Top, and lower by one hundred feet than that summit. The surface on its northern extremity consists of huge rocks and bowlders, forming numerous crevices and chasms. Plum Run valley and the slopes of both of the Round Tops are covered with bowlders.

"A cross-road between the Taneytown Road and the Emmetsburg Pike runs along the northern base of Devil's Den. From its crossing at Plum Run to the Peach Orchard is eleven hundred yards. For four hundred yards of this distance there were woods on the north side, and a wheat field on the south side of the road. Beyond this point the road continues for seven hundred yards to the Emmetsburg Pike, along Devil's Den Ridge, which on the north slopes down to Plum Run, and on the south to Plum Run Branch.

"From Ziegler's Grove the Emmetsburg Pike runs diagonally across the valley between Cemetery and Seminary Ridges, crossing Seminary Ridge two miles from Ziegler's Grove. From the Peach Orchard to Ziegler's Grove is nearly a mile and a half. For half a mile of this distance the road runs along a ridge at right angles to the ridge of Devil's Den. The salient angle is therefore formed by

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.



the intersection of two bold ridges, one starting from Devil's Den, the other defined by the course of the Emmettsburg Pike. It is distant about six hundred yards from the woods that skirt Seminary Ridge and cover the movement of troops between it and Willoughby Run, half a mile beyond, to the west.

"South of the two Round Tops the country is free of natural impediments, the stone-fencing of the land being the chief obstacle to freedom of movement."

It was about two o'clock that Sickles's advance began. Birney's left was moved forward a quarter of a mile, resting on the rocky ground directly in front of Little Round Top, his right swung around so that it faced nearly south and rested on the Emmettsburg Road, at right angles to that road, at the Peach Orchard.

Humphreys's division had since early in the morning been massed on Cemetery Ridge on the left of the Second Corps. About noon it was ordered to form line of battle with its right resting on the Second Corps and left touching Birney's right. Owing to the position of Birney's line Humphreys found it impossible to fulfil both requirements, and learning from General Caldwell, commanding the division on the left of the Second Corps, that he had no orders to advance, Humphreys reported the fact to General Sickles. He was, nevertheless, ordered to move forward and form some five hundred yards in advance. This brought the left of his line to touch Birney's line, and his right five hundred yards in advance of the left of the Second Corps, and he was authorized to call upon Caldwell for support.

The ground upon which, in consequence of this movement, General Humphreys had been obliged to take his stand was in a hollow, sloping up to the Emmettsburg Road on his front, and to Cemetery Ridge in his rear. The ground immediately beyond the ridge on his front, beyond the Emmettsburg Road, fell away to the west toward Seminary Ridge. While in this position, Humphreys's Third Brigade, Burling's, was ordered away beyond his left, in support of Birney's division. Humphreys remained in this position until about four o'clock in the afternoon, with his skirmishers out on the Emmettsburg Road. Then, in obedience to orders from General Sickles, he began to move his troops still farther to the Emmettsburg Road on his front. Sickles thus still farther increased the gap that lay between Humphreys's troops and the left of the Second Corps. Humphreys's right, in the advanced position which he now reached, was three-quarters of a mile in front of the Second Corps. Thence his

line swept along the Emmettsburg Pike, connecting with the right of Birney at the Peach Orchard, where the centre of the whole line rested at the salient angle already described, continuing beyond until the extreme left rested a quarter of a mile in front of Little Round Top, on the rocky ground of Devil's Den, with a valley between the left and the Round Tops, easy of access to the enemy. As the line was now formed, to the cost of the gallant Third Corps, it was not only disconnected from the rest of the army, and with flanks exposed, but it was less compact than the other, being over a quarter of a mile longer than the line which had been relinquished. Putting out of consideration the fact that there was a gap between it and the Second Corps of three-quarters of a mile, its length was over a mile and a quarter, as against that of the direct line between the left of the Second Corps and Little Round Top of less than a mile.<sup>1</sup>

Add to all these egregious defaults, that General Sickles did not even notify General Hancock, the commander of the Second Corps, on his right, the corps with which he had been ordered to connect, that he intended to advance. That general, with General Gibbon and others of his officers, was at the moment of the advance on the hill near the centre of his own line, looking with astonishment at the forward movement of the troops from a position which he had been informed represented in that place the line of battle. He and they were at utter loss to comprehend the meaning of the movement, but the immediate and far-reaching consequences of it, when in a few minutes the enemy's guns opened on the flank of that part of the line stretched along the Emmettsburg Pike, then became apparent to all.

At the moment when General Meade joined General Sickles the troops of the latter could hardly be said to be in any determinate position. General Meade having, on his way out to the front, in a measure taken in the situation of affairs, now asked Sickles to indicate to him his general position. When General Sickles had done so, General Meade told him that the line was not that intended to be occupied. Turning and pointing to the rear, to the unoccupied interval between the left of the Second Corps and Little Round Top, General Meade said that that was the line which he had been ordered to occupy; that he had advanced his line beyond supporting distance of the army; that the ground he was then on was neutral ground; that the enemy could not occupy it for the same reasons that his own troops could not. General Meade continued that he was fearful

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 18, July 2, 4.30 P. M.



the enemy would attack before he (Sickles) could be properly supported; that either he would lose the artillery which had been posted far to the front, or else that, if supported, the whole of the line which he had adopted would have to be abandoned; or, in other words, that he would have to fight the battle out where he was. General Sickles expressed deep regret at having occupied a position which did not meet the views of General Meade, and said that he would withdraw his troops to the line which General Meade had indicated. General Meade replied, "Yes, you may as well, at once. The enemy will not let you withdraw without taking advantage of your position, but you have to come back, and you may as well do it at once as at any other time." General Sickles had but just turned to order the execution of this movement, when the batteries opened with a terrific cannonade in front and to the left of the Peach Orchard, and General Meade, calling him back, said that, now that his line was about to be assailed, it was too late to retire, and ordered him to hold on and do the best he could, telling him that he would be supported. General Sickles then rode off. It was now between four and half-past four o'clock in the afternoon.

As the Third Corps was now posted, Birney's division was in position on the crest from Devil's Den to the Peach Orchard; Ward's brigade on the left, Graham's on the right, at the Angle, De Trobriand's in the centre, connecting them by a slender line. Smith's battery was with Ward, on the rocky hill at Devil's Den, Winslow's battery in the Wheat Field, and Clarke's on the crest in the Peach Orchard, facing south, while Randolph's was near the Angle, facing west. Humphreys's division was moving forward to take position on the crest along the Emmettsburg Road, his division in two lines, the first in line of battle, the second in line of battalions in mass. As he advanced the enemy opened with artillery, enfilading his left, and a little later with artillery on his front.

Hunt, who had immediately returned to this part of the field after his inspection at Cemetery Hill, at once sent to the Reserve Artillery for McGilvery's brigade. At the point of time when the enemy's batteries opened, he happened to be with Smith's battery on the rocky summit of Devil's Den. Smith had, after great exertions, just succeeded in getting his guns into position, hauling them by hand, one by one, over the rocks, and had opened with good effect on the advancing lines of the enemy. Hunt, as he left him to look for reinforcements, remarked to him that he would probably lose his battery.

McGilvery's brigade soon arrived, and Bigelow's, Phillips's, Hart's, and Thompson's batteries from it were ordered into position on the crest along the left centre and in the Peach Orchard, at the point of time when the enemy opened fire from a long line of guns posted along his front beyond the Emmetsburg Road.

The Confederate commanders were quick to perceive the absence of cavalry on the Federal left, and to take advantage of the fact. Scouts were at once sent out, with instructions to make their way through the woods and up to the summit of Round Top. Several Federal stragglers, who, ignorant of their position, were making their way from the trains in the rear of Round Top toward the Emmetsburg Road, in which direction they imagined the rear of their own army to be, were captured by the enemy. From information gathered from these men, and from the reports of the scouts, who very soon returned, having been upon Round Top and discovered that it was unoccupied, it was learned that there were no troops either there or in that direction. On the strength of these reports the Confederate officers on this part of the field proposed a flank movement around and the occupation of Round Top. The suggestion, however, was not favorably entertained, and the attack was at once begun.

This attack of the enemy, about to be received, was made by the divisions of Hood and McLaws, under Longstreet. We found these divisions leaving, about noon, the neighborhood of the seminary and marching to assault the left of the Federal line. There was great delay in this march, caused principally by the aim of the commanding officers to so mask the line of march behind the hills that it could not be detected by the Federal signal station on Little Round Top. The route followed was in consequence a roundabout one; there were many vexatious halts, so that it was past four o'clock in the afternoon before the troops came into position. McLaws's division, which had been leading the column, was formed on the right of A. P. Hill's corps, extending diagonally toward the Emmetsburg Road, Kershaw's brigade on the right and Barksdale's on the left, opposite the Peach Orchard, supported by Semmes's and Wofford's brigades, in reserve.

It appears that, at first, the Confederate commanders supposed that this extension of their right represented the point of extreme extension of the Union left. But, subsequently, finding that Sickles's corps curved backward, extending to Devil's Den, Hood's di-



vision, which had been marching in rear of McLaws's, was moved farther to the right, and formed line with McLaws's, with its right stretching across the Emmettsburg Road; Law's brigade on the right, Robertson's on the left, with Anderson's and Benning's brigades in support. Some twenty guns were posted in favorable positions along the line. The line thus occupied a partially wooded ridge, with open ground in front for about seven hundred yards east of the Emmettsburg Road, to the wooded heights held by the Third Corps.

The enemy, as has been said, opened with artillery fire, which continued for some time along their whole front, promptly and vigorously replied to by the Federal batteries. The order of infantry attack was for the brigade on the right, Law's, to begin the attack, the other commands successively taking it up to the left. It was nearly five o'clock in the afternoon when Hood's division advanced. Crossing the Emmettsburg Road and the open ground to the east of it, the division moved rapidly forward, under a heavy artillery fire, into the woods which here fringe the base of Devil's Den. The centre of the advance pushed straight for the summit on Devil's Den occupied by Smith's battery. General Hood falling severely wounded almost immediately after the action had begun, General Law succeeded him in command.

Law extended his own brigade well over to the right, to render this flank secure, and soon appeared in front of Round Top. Robertson's brigade found itself opposed to Ward's brigade, the extreme left of Sickles's line, strongly posted among the rocks of Devil's Den. Here ensued a desperate contest, which was at first favorable to the Federals, and Robertson was driven back. Law's movement to the right, up the slope of Round Top, had left an interval between his own brigade and that of Robertson's, so Benning's brigade had been brought up and occupied it. Law's brigade, with which were two of Robertson's regiments of Texans, which in the forward movement had become separated from their own brigade, having now a clear field as they supposed, swarmed up the northern slopes of Round Top, and then, making a partial change of front to the left, advanced to capture Little Round Top, which appeared to be unoccupied. These troops were, however, met by a murderous fire on the right flank, which compelled them to fall back and conform to the general line of advance.

This check to the enemy's confident advance on Little Round Top was administered by Vincent's brigade, of the Fifth Corps, which

had most opportunely taken position along the southern slope of Little Round Top.

When General Meade, upon reaching the field, fully realized the state of affairs, he had instructed Warren, who was among the officers who had accompanied him to the front, to ride at once to Little Round Top, see what troops, if any, were there, and to take every measure necessary for its proper defence. Officers were, at the same time, sent to hasten the march of the Fifth Corps, and with orders to the Sixth Corps, also on the march. Warren hastened away, and after riding along and examining the positions along Devil's Den Ridge, continued on to Little Round Top, which he found occupied by only two or three men of the signal corps. Warren saw at a glance that this, the key of the whole position of the army, without the possession of which the line of Cemetery Ridge would be untenable, must be occupied and held at all hazards. Looking westward toward the Emmettsburg Road, he could discern the long lines of Confederate infantry, greatly overlapping the Federal left, about to advance in line of battle. He despatched a messenger to General Meade, explaining the critical nature of the position, and asking for a division to hold it. General Meade, realizing the urgency of the situation, and fearful, although the Fifth Corps was momentarily expected, that it might not arrive in time to meet it, despatched an officer to Humphreys, who was close by, ordering him to move his division quickly to the endangered point. When General Humphreys received this order his division, with colors flying, was marching in line of battle from the intermediate position, in which he had been stationed for some hours, toward the advanced position on the Emmettsburg Road which Sickles had ordered him to occupy. Without halt he gave the order to move by the left flank in the direction of Little Round Top. He had, however, marched but a very short distance in that direction when he received word from General Meade, who had in the meantime been notified that reinforcements from the Fifth Corps had reached Round Top, countermanding the movement, and directing him to resume his march to the position assigned him by Sickles, on the Emmettsburg Road. Instantly, again without halting, the division about-faced and retraced its steps over the ground which it had just passed, and then, moving by the left flank, marched to the Emmettsburg Road. The whole movement was so admirably executed as to elicit praise from all who witnessed the promptness and skill of the gallant commander, and the steady bearing of the



troops, who, although subjected to an annoying artillery fire, moved with the precision of parade.

Humphreys now formed his division along the Emmettsburg Road, Carr's brigade being in the front line, connecting on his left with Graham, his right being near the Rogers house,<sup>1</sup> with Brewster in his rear. Seeley's battery was posted on his left, to the left of the Smith house,<sup>1</sup> and Turnbull's battery, from the Artillery Reserve, to the right of the house. Seeley and Turnbull were no sooner posted than they became engaged with the enemy's artillery opposite to them along Seminary Ridge. Gibbon at the same time sent to Humphreys's right two regiments from Harrow's brigade, which were posted near the Codori house,<sup>1</sup> along the Emmettsburg Road, and also moved forward Brown's battery, to the right and rear of these regiments, in the endeavor to protect this flank.

Warren, either while on his way to Round Top or after having been there and gone in search of reinforcements, met Sykes, who had preceded the advance of his corps from the right and had explained to him the importance of having troops at once on Round Top. The head of Barnes's division of the corps soon appearing, Sykes had detached Vincent's brigade from that division, to march at once for the point. Vincent, leaving the column, and passing around the eastern foot of Little Round Top, and then into the gorge between the Round Tops, suddenly appeared on the southern slope of Little Round Top just as Law's men were advancing up it.

Warren, on the summit of Little Round Top, alone with the signal men, could hear and see the battle raging at the Peach Orchard and along Devil's Den Ridge. He noticed the bullets beginning to strike near him, and beyond all else of interest saw, amid the eddying whirl of conflict, the general steady approach of the Confederate line. Observing a column of troops passing along the northern foot of Little Round Top, with a final word of encouragement to the signal men to remain and continue to wave their flag, so as to persuade the enemy of the presence of troops there, he dashes away in the hope of obtaining succor. He comes up with the rear of Weed's brigade, of Ayres's division of the Fifth Corps, on its way to the front. He explains in a few rapid words to Colonel O'Rorke, commanding the One Hundred and Fortieth New York, one of the regiments of this brigade, the urgent necessity of the case. O'Rorke without hesitation moves up the rear of the hill. Warren, riding on to the head of the brigade,

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

and halting it, sends to Weed, and explains to him also the situation. Weed countercharges, and, following O'Rorke, quickly moves with Hazlett's battery and the rest of the brigade toward the summit of Little Round Top. O'Rorke is just in time; a desperate hand-to-hand conflict takes place on the very crest of the hill. The Confederates are hurled back, and Little Round Top is secured; not, however, without severe loss to the defenders, for O'Rorke and many officers and men of his regiment have been killed.

Vincent also, on the left of O'Rorke, had been engaged in a deadly struggle. The right of his line, a little in advance of Little Round Top, not being well protected, was at first driven back, until the arrival of O'Rorke checked the enemy. On Vincent's left the fighting had been at close quarters. Repeated charges and counter-charges had been made by the contending sides, but finally the enemy had been compelled to retire, and Vincent had firmly established his line across the space intervening between the Round Tops and up the southern slope of Little Round Top, connecting on his right with Weed's brigade, the troops of which were now all up and occupying the crest of the hill. Repeated efforts were made by the enemy to carry this important point, without avail, and he was finally obliged to draw off.

In this bloody struggle Vincent was mortally wounded, and Weed and Hazlett, with many other brave and valuable officers, were killed. Warren, who had remained at this point until its possession was secure, was slightly wounded.

Ward's brigade and Smith's battery, in its precarious position on the rocky summit of Devil's Den, together with De Trobriand's brigade on their right, supported by various regiments of Burling's brigade, sent by Humphreys to reinforce Birney, have done desperate fighting and thus far held their ground. Anderson, on the Confederate side, has been brought up on Robertson's left; he again and again assaults De Trobriand, but is repulsed with severe loss, Anderson himself being desperately wounded. The arrival of Benning, however, has enabled Robertson's men to reform, and the whole line again advancing, Ward and De Trobriand are gradually forced back, some guns (three in number) of Smith's battery falling, as Hunt had predicted, into the hands of the enemy. Tilton's and Sweitzer's brigades, of Barnes's division of the Fifth Corps, have been placed by Sykes in support of Birney's line. These brigades have advanced across the Wheat Field and relieved Birney's troops.



On the Confederate side McLaws's division has, in its turn, taken up the attack. Kershaw's brigade has moved out, followed by Semmes, exposed to the heavy fire of McGilvery's guns. He has directed his column to the heights held by Tilton and Sweitzer, although he has had to detach some of his regiments to attend to the Federal batteries posted along the Peach Orchard road. Barksdale has made a determined assault on Graham, at the angle at the Peach Orchard. The contest has been fierce and stubborn all along the line, but the angle has been broken in, Graham's brigade routed, Graham himself being wounded and a prisoner, the enemy is advancing, and the Third Corps, notwithstanding its heroic fight and stubborn resistance, is being swept from the field. The batteries on the Peach Orchard crest are, now that the angle is broken in, taken in flank and forced to withdraw. A brief stand is made, some two hundred and fifty yards to the rear. Officers, men, and horses fall by the score. The enemy presses on and all the batteries, except Bigelow's, are withdrawn further to the rear; guns are abandoned on the field, from sheer inability to get them away on account of loss in men and horses, many being drawn off by hand.

Bigelow's Ninth Massachusetts Battery makes a final stand near the Trostle house,<sup>1</sup> with prolonges fixed, desperately cut up, ordered by McGilvery to hold the ground at all hazards, so as to cover the retreat of the troops to another line. Sweeping the ground to the front, he retards the advance of the enemy, while a line of artillery, hastily collected by McGilvery from the serviceable batteries, reinforced by Dow's Maine battery, from the reserve, is formed in front of the woods east of Plum Run. Unsupported by infantry, this line, consisting of about twenty-five pieces all told, checks the pursuit, covers the abandoned guns, and supports the movement of Humphreys in retreat on the right. This being accomplished, scarcely anything remains of the devoted artillerists in the front, who have rendered it possible to form a second line, and have saved the Union front from being seriously broken.

Out of the complement of the battery one officer was killed, one mortally wounded, Bigelow also wounded; two sergeants were killed and four wounded, and two men were missing; the whole loss of the battery from the beginning to the end of the afternoon being twenty-eight men and eighty horses. Yet, despite this severe loss, the artillerists managed to drag two of their guns off the field.

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

It has long before this time become evident to General Meade, who has remained in the vicinity of the Third Corps, that Sickles will be forced back. He has already ordered Hancock to send a division to report to Sykes. Hancock sends Caldwell, who promptly moves with his four brigades and reaches the field after Birney's division has been driven back, and just as Sweitzer and Tilton are being overwhelmed and pressed to the rear. Caldwell's leading brigade, Cross's, is formed on the edge of the Wheat Field, and Kelly's brigade coming up on his right, together they charge through it under a severe fire. A fierce fight ensues, Colonel Cross is killed, and, notwithstanding the heroic behavior of the troops, they are brought to a stand. Brooke and Zook are now put in, Brooke following the previous direction of Cross's regiments and relieving them, and then gallantly charging, driving before him Semmes's brigade, which has come up on Kershaw's right; Semmes is killed, and the ridge is once more in possession of the Federals. Zook's troops come up on the right, Zook himself has been killed, and Brooke takes command of the whole line. Everything else, however, is gone, and alone he is fiercely assailed, front, right, and left, and the line of his retreat threatened. At the same time Wofford's brigade, which, following Barksdale, has passed his right and is closing in on that flank, makes, in concert with the rest of the Confederate line, a determined onslaught on Brooke. Finding himself entirely unsupported, Brooke, skilfully handling his men to the last, relinquishes his ground, although stubbornly fighting step by step in retreat, and gradually falls back across Plum Run. Farther to the left, Ayres, who with his two brigades of regulars has advanced in front of Little Round Top, covering the valley between that point and Devil's Den, is also, after severe loss, compelled to fall back. The repeatedly contested ground is covered with thousands of the dead and wounded of both sides.

Farther to the right, on the extreme right of the Third Corps, Humphreys has as yet maintained his position, but now that the angle at the Peach Orchard is lost, and all support on his left gone, he finds himself assaulted on this flank by Barksdale. General Sickles has been wounded and General Birney commands the corps. Birney sends word to Humphreys, to retire the left of his line toward Little Round Top to connect with a new line to be formed in that direction. Humphreys having, as noted, nothing to support his left, is now, in beginning this manoeuvre, attacked on his front and right



by Hill's troops, who have advanced to assist Longstreet's assault. Humphreys is loath to yield the ground, but he is compelled by orders and necessity to fall back. Slowly and sullenly his men retire, assailed on both flanks and in front. The two regiments of Harrow's brigade, sent by Gibbon to the Rogers house<sup>1</sup> to protect Humphreys's right, are also overpowered and driven back, each of them losing its commanding officer and many of its men. The entire advanced line has now recoiled before the enemy.

The Confederates, fiercely following up their success, advance their whole line. The Federal true left, at Little Round Top, has, however, been by this time made secure, and a new line, departing from that point, has been formed on the eastern side of Plum Run. Crawford's division of the Pennsylvania Reserves, of the Fifth Corps, has come up, Fisher's brigade being sent to the extreme left, on Round Top, and McCandless's, under the immediate direction of Crawford, charges down the slope of Little Round Top and across the open space to the eastern edge of the Wheat Field, just as the Confederates, exhausted by their long and continuous fighting, retire from the advanced position gained by them to the western side of the Wheat Field.

At this time the Sixth Corps, after its memorable march of thirty-four miles, appears on the field, and Sedgwick promptly moves to the support of the left centre. Nevins's brigade, of Wheaton's division, being on the lead, forms line on the right of Crawford's Pennsylvania Reserves, and takes part in their advance, driving back the enemy and recovering some of the abandoned guns. To the right of this point is the formidable line of artillery established by McGilvery of some twenty-five guns, gathered from all quarters and massed on the east side of Plum Run, whose fire does great execution among the troops assaulting Humphreys in his retreat.

There is still, however, an open space between the extreme right of the left wing and Hancock's left. General Meade, after having seen the new line firmly established along Plum Run Ridge, rides along this open part of the field. He has already sent to Slocum, on the extreme right, directing him to send a division to the left. In the meantime he orders Hancock to send another brigade to the assistance of the Third Corps, and shortly after the wounding of Sickles instructs him to assume command of that corps. Hancock orders up Willard's brigade, of Hays's division, and, personally leading it

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

out beyond McGilvery's guns, places it in position. Willard almost immediately comes into action with Barksdale, whom nothing heretofore has seemed able to stop, but who is finally brought to a stand. A fierce combat at close quarters ensues; Willard and many of his men are killed, but the further advance of the enemy on this part of the field is stayed. Barksdale also has fallen at the head of his brigade.

The Twenty-first Mississippi, of Barksdale's brigade, was the only Confederate regiment that succeeded in crossing Plum Run. This regiment had become separated from the brigade as it closed in on Humphreys, and had taken part in the attack on Bigelow's battery. As the remnants of that battery were being withdrawn from the field, the regiment pressed closely after them, crossed Plum Run, and charged and captured Watson's battery, the left battery of the new line that McGilvery had formed. The regiment was, however, only able to hold it for a short time, for Lieutenant Peeples of the battery placed himself at the head of the Thirty-ninth New York, one of Willard's regiments which had been left in reserve, charged and recovered it.

Slocum, in obedience to General Meade's call for reinforcement, takes Ruger's division and Lockwood's brigade out of his line and sends them, under command of General A. S. Williams, over to the left. Williams promptly moves over by the most direct route, and as his leading brigade, Lockwood's, of only two regiments comes on the field it is quickly posted, General Meade himself riding at its head and moving forward with it through and beyond McGilvery's guns. This small brigade charges the enemy, driving him back and recovering several guns that had been abandoned for want of sufficient force to carry them off the field.

Hancock, after seeing Willard well engaged, rides farther to the right, when he suddenly perceives a force of the enemy making its way unopposed to gain the crest of Cemetery Ridge. This is Wilcox's brigade of Anderson's division, which, after having assisted in driving Humphreys back, is now triumphantly making for the ridge. Hancock, prompt to recognize the situation, calls upon the First Minnesota, one of his own regiments, which is just coming up, and orders it to charge the advancing brigade. Gallantly responding, the regiment hurls itself on the approaching column and, although with fearful loss of officers and men, wins the ground.

Yet there still remains the gap in the line to the left of the Sec-



and Corps. Gibbon, temporarily in command of the corps, has moved Harrow's brigade to his left, slightly bent to the rear, in order to protect this exposed flank and cover this ground originally held by Caldwell. General Meade has been nearly continuously on the field, making the most strenuous exertions for establishing the line, in person bringing up and placing reinforcements, exposing himself in the reckless manner dictated by the emergency, during which he has his faithful old horse Baldy shot under him. He is now returning from head-quarters, to which he has been for a brief period, and while there having ordered Newton to bring up Robinson and Doubleday quickly to occupy the gap in the line to the left of the Second Corps. For a few minutes affairs seem critical in the extreme. The Confederates appear determined to carry everything before them. A vigorous attack is made by them at various points along the whole front. Gibbon's line becomes heavily engaged along his whole front, while on his left, as we know, there is the space still unoccupied.

At this gap, waiting for the coming of Newton, surrounded only by a few of his aides and orderlies, stands Meade. The crash of musketry and the shouts of the contending troops resound on all sides, and the air seems filled with shot and shell. At this moment Meade sees at a short distance off a line of the enemy making straight for the gap. Will nothing stop these people? He glances anxiously in the direction of the cemetery, whence succor should come. It will be a disaster unless something can stop these troops, if only for a brief space of time. The general realizes the situation but too well. He straightens himself in his stirrups, as do also the aides who now ride closer to him, bracing themselves up to meet the crisis. It is in the minds of those who follow him that he is going to throw himself into the breach—anything to gain a few moments' time. Suddenly some one cries out, "There they come, general!" and, looking to the right, Newton is seen galloping in advance of Doubleday's division, followed by Robinson. In close column by division, at a sharp double quick, with muskets at a right shoulder, the two divisions sweep down the Taneytown Road, swing around to the right, and as, amid the wildest excitement and shouting, they press forward to the line of battle, Meade rides ahead with the skirmish line, waving his hat, saying to those about him, "Come on, gentlemen," and some one remarking that it seemed at one time pretty desperate, it is pleasant to hear him reply in his hearty way: "Yes, but it is all right now, it is all right now."

A sharp fusillade follows. The Confederates, exhausted by their long, brave, and fruitless struggle for the mastery, are unable to make head against these fresh troops. The Federal lines advance, the enemy is driven back across the Emmettsburg Road, all the guns that have been abandoned are recovered, and as darkness comes over the scene the musketry firing gradually dies away.

It was, as we now know, General Lee's intention to make a simultaneous attack on both flanks of the Union army. Instructions had been sent to Ewell to have his command in readiness to advance when he heard Longstreet's guns open for his assault on the Union left wing and flank, making thus in his favor a diversion which was to be converted, if opportunity should offer, into a real attack. In conformity with this plan Johnson had been placed on the extreme left of the Confederate force, facing Culp's Hill to the west, and a number of guns had been placed on Benner's Hill, the only available place for artillery on the direction of the Confederate lines there. At about four o'clock in the afternoon, when Longstreet's artillery was for the first time heard on the Confederate extreme left, the artillery opened there and continued to fire for over an hour. It was so effectively replied to by the Federal batteries on Cemetery Hill that by the end of this time it was silenced and forced to take cover, after having suffered great loss in men, horses, and in many pieces disabled.

It was not until nearly sunset that Johnson advanced to the attack of the Federal right. The ground over which he must pass is very difficult, heavily wooded, and covered with rocks and bowlders. Over this the division, formed with Jones's brigade on the right, Williams's next on his left, Steuart's next on his left, and Walker's concluding the left of the line of attack, moved forward to the assault. They had not proceeded very far, however, when active demonstrations on the part of Gregg's cavalry, covering the right flank of the Army of the Potomac, compelled the halting and detachment of Walker's brigade to look to the safety of the assaulting columns, through which necessity that brigade became neutralized for the attack.

It will be remembered that during the height of the battle on the left Slocum had sent Ruger's division and Lockwood's brigade, under A. S. Williams, from his right over to support the left, and that Lockwood's brigade had rendered efficient service in aiding in the final repulse of the enemy. Ruger's division, as their services proved not



to be needed, had only crossed the Taneytown Road when they were halted.

Shortly after these troops moved out Slocum had ordered Geary, with two brigades, to follow Williams, leaving his Third Brigade, Greene's, to hold the right flank. Geary, for some unaccountable reason, instead of proceeding on the direct road to the left wing, following Williams in the direction of the firing, had crossed Rock Creek and marched down the Baltimore Pike. Fortunately he was halted before going very far, remaining where he was for the night.

On Greene principally, who held the line of works centring at Culp's Hill, the left of the line of the Twelfth Corps, connecting on his left with Wadsworth's division of the First Corps, had devolved the arduous task of guarding the right flank of the army. How admirably this duty was performed the sequel will show. When the position was first occupied by the Twelfth Corps, quite a substantial line of breastworks had been erected. These works were now about to prove of great value. Greene was ordered to occupy, with his one remaining brigade, the whole of the works previously occupied by the entire Twelfth Corps. He had scarcely extended his lines so as to cover the vacated position of Kane's brigade, which had been on his right, when the attack of the enemy on him began. As soon as it began he sent to Howard and Wadsworth for reinforcements.

Johnson, moving forward with his three brigades, marched down the slopes of the hill which he had occupied to the bed of Rock Creek, driving before him the Federal skirmishers, and at about seven o'clock in the evening charged the position of Culp's Hill. Between this time and nine o'clock determined assaults continued to be made, every one of which was gallantly met and repulsed with heavy loss to the assailants, inflicted by the troops of Greene and those of the First Corps, occupying the northeastern line of Culp's Hill on his left. Jones on the right, Williams in the centre, were each time driven back, leaving many dead and wounded to mark their line of advance. General J. M. Jones was severely wounded in one of these repulses.

Steuart, on the left of the assaulting columns, met with more success than these. Concealed and sheltered by woods and rocks, and under cover of night, he worked his way around to his left until he chanced upon the unoccupied works of Williams's division, which at the point where Steuart struck them were perpendicular to the general line. This success seriously menaced for a time the integrity of the right flank of the Federal line. It was, however, reversed by

General Greene, who, handling his small command with great skill, swung his right regiment to the rear, and presenting a firm front to Steuart, prevented him from making any further advance. About ten o'clock at night Kane's brigade returned and took position on the right, further strengthening this flank.

Howard and Wadsworth had promptly responded to Greene's call for reinforcements, each of them sending three regiments. These rendered valuable aid in repulsing the assaults described, and in relieving those regiments of Greene's whose ammunition had become exhausted. When the fighting closed, Greene held intact all the works of his own brigade, and with Kane's returned brigade, had occupied a new line on his right, perpendicular to his main line, and parallel to the breastworks taken and held by Steuart's troops.

As soon as Johnson had become fully engaged, just before dusk, Early, who with his division was occupying the line between Johnson and the town of Gettysburg, opposite Cemetery Hill, ordered Hays's and Avery's brigades to advance and carry the works on Cemetery Hill. Gordon's brigade was moved forward to support these two brigades. Smith's brigade of this division was still detached, on the left of the Confederate army. Hays and Avery, exposed to a heavy fire from the batteries on Cemetery Hill, advanced in splendid order, passed over the ridge in their immediate front, across a hollow between that and Cemetery Hill, and finally up the slope of Cemetery Hill, easily brushing aside the troops of Ames's division of the Eleventh Corps, and after surmounting all difficulties, reached the crest of the hill, and in an instant were in among the guns of Wiederich's battery, spiking the left section of Ricketts's battery, on Wiederich's right. A fierce hand-to-hand fight here took place, the officers and men of the batteries, using handspikes, rammers, pistols, and even stones, succeeding at last in checking the enemy sufficiently long to enable reinforcements to come to the rescue. Colonel Avery, commanding one of the Confederate brigades, was mortally wounded in this assault.

The reinforcements which so opportunely arrived were Carroll's brigade of the Second Corps, which had been sent by Hancock to report to Howard. As the firing died away on Hancock's front, and as he was riding to the right of his command on the Taneytown Road, he caught the sound of continuously heavy firing on Cemetery Hill, seeming to him to be coming nearer and nearer. Without hesitation, without waiting for instructions, he at once ordered Gibbon to send



Carroll's brigade over to the right, to report to Howard. Carroll had promptly drawn out from the line, and moving by the right, on the double-quick, had soon, as narrated, covered the rear of the captured position on Cemetery Hill. Although it was quite dark, and difficult to distinguish friend from foe, he had, without loss of time, formed his command in column of regiments, charged on the victorious enemy, and after a sharp struggle, had driven back and down the hill the brigades of Hays and Avery, had retaken the captured guns, and advancing to the stone wall at the foot of the hill, had reformed the broken lines. General Meade's attention also had been attracted by this firing. Receiving word from Howard of the approaching attack on the right, and of the need of reinforcements, he ordered Newton to send Robinson's division at once back to the cemetery. He himself rode rapidly over there, and was on McKnight's Hill<sup>1</sup> at the time of the attack, sending a message to the troops engaged on Cemetery Hill to hold fast, that reinforcements would soon be there. Robinson's division shortly afterward filed through the cemetery to the Baltimore Pike, beyond which the contest had been raging; but Carroll's men had already done the work required.

This closed the fighting for the day, for although it had been arranged that Rodes's division, posted in the town of Gettysburg, on the right of Early, should co-operate in the assault, by the time he had drawn his troops out of the town, had formed them, and was ready to advance, Early had already assaulted and been repulsed from Cemetery Hill. By that time it was so late that it was not deemed advisable to continue the action, and Rodes's troops were recalled.

When it was found that the services of Ruger's division were not needed on the left, Williams had ordered it to return, as quickly as possible, to the right and reoccupy the line they had vacated. It was about dusk when Ruger received this order and moved over. On crossing the Baltimore Pike and entering the woods to gain his old line, his skirmish line that Ruger had sent out well in advance to reconnoitre, fearing that the enemy may have crept in during his absence, were fired upon and driven back. It was then discovered by Ruger that all that part of the breastworks on the left of his original position were in possession of the enemy, as also were those farther to his left that had been occupied by Geary. That part of the breastworks on the right and extending to Rock Creek were still un-

<sup>1</sup> Not shown on map.

occupied. These he at once took possession of. Owing to the darkness and the difficult character of the ground, it was deemed too late to attempt to drive the enemy out that night. Ruger then placed his division along a slight crest to the east of the Baltimore Pike, so as to prevent the enemy making any farther advance toward the turnpike. It was after midnight before these arrangements were completed. About one o'clock next morning, Candy's brigade of Geary's division returned and took position on the right of Kane's brigade, which, it will be remembered, had already returned and been posted in support of Greene's right; the line as here formed extended perpendicularly almost to the Baltimore Pike, at which point Candy's right rested.

To bring the history of the movements of both armies down to midnight of July 2 it will be necessary to return to Stuart's Cavalry, which, in obedience to Lee's orders to join the main army, retiring on the evening of July 1 from in front of Carlisle, continued their movement toward Gettysburg. On the receipt of Lee's orders, Stuart had despatched word back to Hampton, whose brigade had not yet come up, to turn his command southward and proceed ten miles in the direction of Gettysburg. This order met Hampton at Dillsburg. Having covered the allotted distance, he halted for the night. On the morning of the next day, July 2, he continued on to Hunters-town, and was moving thence toward Gettysburg, to take position on the left of Lee's army, when he learned of the approach of a body of Federal cavalry moving on Hunterstown, and was directed by Stuart to return and meet it. It proved to be Kilpatrick's division of cavalry, which having, on the morning of July 2, returned from Abbottstown to the right flank of the army, had been again sent out in the direction of Hunterstown to endeavor to get in the rear of Lee's army and damage his trains. Custer's brigade, in the advance, came in contact with Hampton, and quite a sharp fight between the two followed, lasting well into dark. Judging from the official reports of the action, it would seem that both sides claimed the advantage in the engagement. However that may be, Kilpatrick was ordered during the night to return to Two Taverns, which place he reached at daylight of July 3, Hampton remaining at Hunterstown during the night. Toward the afternoon of July 2, Stuart, with Fitz Lee's and Chambliss's brigades, took position on the extreme left flank of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Gregg's division of Federal cavalry, moving on the Hanover Road



toward Gettysburg, in the afternoon of the 2d of July, threatened to such good effect, as we have seen, the left flank of Ewell's corps, about to attack Culp's Hill, as to cause the detachment of Walker's brigade from the attacking column to keep him in check. During the night Gregg moved across to the Baltimore Pike, and took position on that road, at its junction with the —— Road. Merritt's brigade of regular cavalry moved during the 2d of July from Mechanicsville to Emmetsburg.

Robertson's and Jones's brigades of cavalry, which had been left by Lee south of the Potomac, had, in default of the presence of Stuart's Cavalry, been ordered to the front by Lee, on the 1st of July, and were now on their way up the Cumberland Valley, as by the 3d of July they had reached Cashtown. Imboden's brigade of cavalry was advancing from Chambersburg to Gettysburg. Thus by the night of July 2 the whole of the available Federal and Confederate cavalry had either closed in or was closing in on Gettysburg, the major portion of each being actually on the field.

When the action finally ceased, and comparative quiet reigned, General Meade summoned his corps commanders to head-quarters, in order to obtain from them information as to the condition of their respective commands, and to confer with them as to what action, if any, should be taken on the following day.

It was after nine o'clock before the corps commanders had assembled in the one little room which had served the original occupants of the house for all purposes of living. Here, in these close quarters, were a bed, a table, and a few chairs and other appurtenances, on which sat or reclined, as convenience dictated as most restful, Generals Sedgwick, Slocum, Hancock, Howard, Sykes, Newton, Birney, A. S. Williams, and Gibbon. As officer after officer arrived, each in turn reported what had taken place on his immediate front during the day, and the extent of his losses so far as they could be obtained. The result of the day's fighting having been thus ascertained, a general conversation ensued, in which the position of the army, the probability of an attempt on the part of General Lee to make a flank movement around its left, and the dispositions which, in that event, should be made, were thoroughly discussed. The conversation had taken a very wide range, and continued for a long time, when General Meade finally summarized the points to be decided and submitted them in the form of a series of questions. These were as to whether or not, under the existing circumstances, it would be more

advisable for the army to remain in the position which it then held or to retire to one nearer its base. Again, if it were decided to maintain its position, should the army attack, or should it await the attack of the enemy. And, in the latter event, for how long should the army await the enemy's attack. Commencing with General Gibbon, the youngest in rank, each officer replied in succession. It was the unanimous opinion that the army should maintain the position then held and await further attack before assuming the offensive. This opinion agreed entirely with General Meade's own views as to the proper course to adopt. He did not take a prominent part in the discussion. He had clearly stated what his instructions had been and the conclusion to be drawn from the results of the day's fighting. He had from the first felt that the enemy would again attack. In consequence of this, and while the conference was still progressing, he sent the following despatch to General Halleck, which clearly shows what he had resolved to do:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 2, 1863, 11 P. M.*

GENERAL HALLECK:

The enemy attacked me about 4 P. M. this day, and after one of the severest contests of the war, was repulsed at all points. We have suffered considerably in killed and wounded; among the former are Brigadier General Paul Zook, and among the wounded, Generals Sickles, Barlow, Graham, and Warren slightly. We have taken a large number of prisoners. I shall remain in my present position to-morrow, but am not prepared to say, until better advised of the condition of the army, whether my operations will be of an offensive or defensive character.

GEORGE G. MEADE,  
*Major General.*

The confidence of all as to the ability of the army to hold its position against any direct attack of the enemy was manifest. There was universal satisfaction when, at the close of the vote in favor of the army's maintaining its position, General Meade said quietly, though decidedly: "Such then is the decision." It was after midnight before the conference broke up and the officers departed for their several head-quarters. As they were leaving, General Meade had a few moments' conversation with General Gibbon. During the course of their remarks reference was made to the majority of



## IV

### THE THIRD DAY

WHEN Slocum and Williams, after the meeting of corps commanders had broken up, had returned, after midnight, to their respective commands on the right, they learned for the first time of the enemy's occupation of the Twelfth Corps's vacated lines. Slocum at once notified General Meade of the facts, when he was ordered to dislodge the enemy in the morning. Orders for an attack at day-break, to regain the lost portions of the lines, were then issued.

On the southern slope of Culp's Hill, nearly at right angles to Rock Creek, is a narrow swale running from Rock Creek, about the middle of which a sharp indentation pierces the hill, forming to the eastward of it a well-defined spur of the hill. The crest of this spur had been, until the evening of the second day's battle, occupied by Ruger's troops, his left joining Geary's right on the main hill, and his line extending in a semicircle around and over the swale, until his right rested on Rock Creek, the swale penetrating his line from the rear. The enemy having, upon the withdrawal of Ruger's troops for reinforcement of the left wing, occupied the position on the spur, the morning of the 3d of July dawned upon an entirely different disposition of the troops on this part of the field. Geary's line, which had been along the main hill in the direction of the prolongation of the spur, was now extended and sharply refused on the ridge west of the indentation on the hill, while Ruger's troops, consisting as before of McDougall's and Colgrove's brigades, had formed in the order named, from left to right, a line slightly concave to the enemy's position, entirely south of the swale, with their left resting almost on the Baltimore Pike and their right on Rock Creek.<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Muhlenberg, chief of artillery of the Twelfth Corps, stationed his own and Lieutenant Kinzie's batteries, supported by Lockwood's brigade, southwest of the Baltimore Pike, commanding the enemy's position, the low ground in the descent of the swale to Rock Creek, and enfilading for some distance the line of the bed of the creek. To the southeast of these two batteries were posted, on Powers's Hill,

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 19, July 3, 4.30 A. M.

Knapp's battery, under Lieutenant Atwell, and on McAllister's Hill,<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Winegar's battery, both facing north, thus making a cross-fire at right angles with the line of fire of the two other batteries, and commanding, across the swale previously described, those portions of the Twelfth Corps's lines held by the enemy. These two hills, Powers's and McAllister's,<sup>1</sup> are marked tops lying side by side, just west of Rock Creek, about a quarter of a mile distant from each other and about two-thirds of a mile from the enemy's position. To guard against any movement of flanking by the enemy, Neill's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, which had been sent by General Meade to Powers's Hill on the previous evening, was thrown across Rock Creek, on the prolongation of Ruger's line.

The enemy during this time was not idle. Ewell had reported his success to Lee, and the latter, encouraged by his view of the result of the day's operations, had determined to continue his efforts to carry the position of the Army of the Potomac. Ewell was, therefore, ordered to resume at daylight the attack from Johnson's front, and was given to understand that a simultaneous attack would be made by Longstreet on the right wing. Now that Stuart had come up with his cavalry, Walker's brigade, which had been protecting Johnson's left flank, became available for his operations and was returned to him, and Daniels's and O'Neal's brigades, of Rodes's division, were brought over from their position in the town of Gettysburg to strengthen him, as was also Smith's brigade, of Early's division, for the same purpose.

It is desirable now to glance at the general position of both armies in order to note changes that have taken place consequent upon the battle of the previous day.

On the Federal side, on the extreme right, the Twelfth Corps has resumed its position, except where the enemy partially occupies its former lines. On its left Wadsworth's division, of the First Corps, still holds its line around Culp's Hill. On Wadsworth's left is Carroll's brigade, of the Second Corps, holding the stone wall at the foot of Cemetery Hill, so gallantly recovered by it from the enemy on the previous evening. The troops of Ames's division, of the Eleventh Corps, are distributed on Carroll's right and left. To the left, again, are Schurz's and Steinwehr's divisions, of the Eleventh Corps, in their original positions around Cemetery Hill, resting their left on the

<sup>1</sup> McAllister's Hill is one-quarter mile northeast of Powers's Hill; name not shown on map.



Taneytown Road. Hancock, with Hays's and Gibbon's divisions, of the Second Corps, continues the original line along Cemetery Ridge. But where Caldwell's division of this corps stood the day before we now find Newton, with Doubleday's division, of the First Corps. On the left of Newton, continuing the direct line toward the Round Tops, comes McGilvery's artillery of thirty-nine guns, his line having been moved back from the position of the evening before, on Plum Run Ridge, whence he had helped to stem the advancing tide of the Confederates. Caldwell's division, of the Second Corps, was posted in rear of McGilvery's guns. Next in order came Torbert's brigade, of Wright's division of the Sixth Corps, which, at Newton's request, Sedgwick had just sent to strengthen this part of the line. On the left of this brigade is the Fifth Corps, with Bartlett's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, posted between the divisions of Barnes and Ayres, continuing the line on to Round Top. In advance of these, McCandless's brigade of Pennsylvania reserves, of the Fifth Corps, and Nevin's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, still hold the ground to the Wheat Field. On the extreme left, with its right on Big Round Top, its line facing south, at right angles to the general position of the army, posted athwart, and guarding the approaches to the rear by the Taneytown Road, is Wright, with Grant's and Russell's brigades, of the Sixth Corps. The other two brigades of the Sixth Corps, Shaler's and Eustis's, were in reserve on the left. Robinson's division, of the First Corps, is in reserve on the right, back of Cemetery Hill, ready, if needed, to support the Twelfth Corps on its front. What remains of the Third Corps is held in reserve near the left centre.

Gregg's and Kilpatrick's divisions of the cavalry are on the extreme right flank of the army, the former on the Baltimore Pike, at the crossing of White Run, the latter at Two Taverns.

The corps of the Confederate army held the same positions relatively to each other as on the preceding day. Longstreet was on the right flank, with McLaws's and Hood's divisions, the latter now under Law, holding the advanced ground at the Peach Orchard and toward Devil's Den, from which they had driven Sickles. Pickett's division of this corps had come up during the previous afternoon, and was now bivouacked in the rear of the Confederate right centre preparatory to taking its place for its ever-memorable assault. A. P. Hill's corps holds the centre and Ewell's the same position as before, on the left.

Stuart, with Hampton's, Fitzhugh Lee's, Chambliss's, and Jenkins's brigades of cavalry, was moving out to the left; Robinson's and Jones's brigades of cavalry were moving toward Gettysburg from Cashtown.

As soon as it was light enough to see, or about four o'clock in the morning, Muhlenberg opened with his artillery and subjected the enemy to a damaging fire, which continued about an hour. Geary was then about to advance, when Johnson, who, it seems, was also ready to advance, made a vigorous attack all along his line. Its force fell chiefly on Greene's and Kane's brigades, whom Stuart furiously attacked, and was repulsed with great loss to the enemy. Lockwood's brigade was then brought up and reinforced Greene's lines. Johnson's right, to which point Daniels's brigade was directed as a support to Jones, found the position on its front so strong that no serious attempt was made to assault it. In front of Geary, however, where the enemy thought that opportunity offered to make a lodgment, the fight continued for hours. Stuart and Walker again and again assaulted, but were always repulsed with heavy loss. The breastworks on the Federal side so well protected the men that their loss was comparatively slight.

About eight o'clock General Meade sent Shaler's brigade, of the Sixth Corps, to the support of the Twelfth Corps. Shaler, coming promptly on the field, relieved the regiments of Kane's brigade, and Walker being forced to retire, General Johnson ordered Daniels over from his right. Daniels, Stuart, and O'Neal then again assaulted, their men coming up to within a short distance of the breastworks.

The regiments of Candy's brigade moved to the rear of Greene, having relieved his tired men, and the enemy was again driven back. Although persistently maintaining the attack, and in the effort sacrificing many men, Johnson had not been able to gain a foot of ground. Ruger pushed out into the woods some of the regiments of McDougall's brigade, on his left, taking the enemy in flank as he advanced, inflicting heavy loss on him, and materially assisting in repelling the assault.

About ten o'clock Ruger received orders to try the enemy, with two of his regiments, on the right of the line of breastworks to the left of the swale, and if practicable to force him out. Through an unfortunate mistake in transmitting orders, it was attempted to carry the position with these two regiments without first feeling the strength of the enemy. In consequence, the two regiments selected, the



Second Massachusetts and the Twenty-seventh Indiana, crossing the swale on their front under a murderous fire, their officers leading and cheering on the men, charged up the slope to the breastworks. Their ranks, however, before reaching there, had been so thinned by the sweeping fire of the enemy, Daniels's brigade, occupying the elevated and strong position on the spur of the hill, that it was impossible to dislodge him, and the two regiments, after having sustained enormous losses in officers and men, were ordered to retire. Colonel Mudge, of the Second Massachusetts, was killed in this charge.

In the meantime, upon Ruger's advancing the left of McDougall's brigade, it found the enemy had withdrawn from the stone wall on the summit; this they at once occupied. Geary and Ruger then pushed forward their whole line and forced the enemy out of the breastworks to the eastward. The Twelfth Corps now reoccupied and re-established their old line, the enemy retiring from under fire to Rock Creek.

Soon after Johnson's attack had begun, General Ewell had heard not only that Longstreet's attack on the left wing of the Federal army had not taken place, but that it would not take place for several hours. It was then, however, too late to recall Johnson, and his assault was allowed to proceed. Ewell now concluded that, as it had proved impossible to carry the strong position in his front, while, with no diversion in his favor, the enemy was at liberty to concentrate against him, he must desist from the attempt. Moreover, the Federal cavalry was now engaged in making strong demonstrations on his left, and already he had been obliged to detach Smith's brigade and one of Walker's regiments to oppose this advance. It was for these to him apparently good and sufficient reasons that Ewell then ordered the discontinuance of the attack from his front.<sup>1</sup>

During the morning, while the attack just described was in progress, General Meade remained on the far right of the line, occasionally riding to various parts of the field, re-forming the troops and strengthening their positions. It was about this time that he took

<sup>1</sup> This is as far as Colonel Meade had prepared his account of the battle of Gettysburg at the time of his death, and the narrative which follows, of the subsequent events of the battle, has been written by the editor. The testimony of General Meade given before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, and the private correspondence of Colonel Meade with various officers present at the battle are the main sources from which the editor has drawn his information. For the use of the facts thus furnished the editor is alone responsible.

the first opportunity that had offered since the beginning of the battle to write the following short note to Mrs. Meade:

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
GETTYSBURG, 8.45 A. M., *July 3, 1863.*

All well and going on well with the Army. We had a great fight yesterday, the enemy attacking and we completely repulsing them; both Armies shattered. To-day at it again, with what result remains to be seen. Army in fine spirits and every one determined to do or die. George and myself well. Reynolds killed the first day. No other of your friends or acquaintances hurt.

About 9 A. M., the two following circulars were issued and forwarded to each corps:

*July 3, 1863, 9.15 A. M.*

Circular.

The Commanding General has observed that many men when their commands are not actively engaged, have their arms and equipments off. He therefore directs that Corps Commanders keep their troops under arms and in all respects equipped to move at a moment's notice.

*July 3, 1863.*

Circular.

The Commanding General directs that Corps Commanders cause all their stragglers and men absent from the ranks to be sent for and brought up. The utmost exertion is to be made by all, and every man must stand to the work.

The Ordnance officers should be required to see that all the arms and equipments scattered over the field are picked up and sent to the rear in the empty ammunition wagons.

To General French, who had come from Harpers Ferry with 7,000 men and who on July 1 had been halted by General Meade at Frederick City, Maryland, owing to the fact that he could not come up in time for the then expected battle, instructions were sent, through the chief of staff, from which the following is an extract: "The enemy attacked us vigorously yesterday and was repulsed on all sides. The conflict is apparently renewed to-day and we have re-



tained our position. Should the result of to-day's operation cause the enemy to fall back towards the Potomac, which you would probably learn by scouts and information from Hagerstown, etc., before you would be advised from here, he [Gen. Meade] desires that you will re-occupy Harpers Ferry and annoy and harass him [the enemy] in his retreat. It may be possible for you now to annoy and cut his communication with any cavalry or light marching infantry you have, of this you can judge. If the result of to-day's operation should be our discomfiture and withdrawal you are to look to Washington and throw your force there for its protection. You will be prepared for either of these contingencies should they arise."

To General Couch, at Harrisburg, who commanded the Volunteer force, which had been collected for the defence of that place, the following despatch was also sent from head-quarters: "I presume you are advised of condition of affairs here by copies of my dispatches to the General-in-Chief. The result of my operation may be the withdrawal of the rebel army. The sound of my guns for these three days, it is taken for granted is all the additional order or notice you need to come on. Should the enemy withdraw, by prompt co-operation we might destroy him. Should he overpower me, your return and defence of Harrisburg and the Susquehanna is not at all endangered."

By ten o'clock in the morning of the 3d it could be plainly seen, from the Union lines, that the enemy were massing their artillery along Seminary Ridge from the town of Gettysburg to the Peach Orchard. To meet this move General Hunt, chief of artillery, placed in position along Cemetery Ridge all the batteries that the ground could hold, and, beginning on the right, instructed the chiefs of artillery and battery commanders to withhold their fire for fifteen or twenty minutes after the enemy had commenced, and then to concentrate with all possible accuracy on those batteries which were causing the greatest damage and to fire slowly, so that when the enemy's ammunition was exhausted their own would still be sufficient to meet the anticipated assault.

General Meade discussed with General Hancock the probability of an attack by the enemy on the centre of the Union line, and decided, in the event of such an attack being made and repulsed, to advance the Fifth and Sixth Corps against the enemy's flank.

After the affair on the right of the line had been settled, General Meade returned to his head-quarters, and, at the urgent solicitation

of General Gibbon, visited the latter's head-quarters in the field just south of his own, where he partook of a hasty breakfast.

Immediately afterward he visited General Hay's division and then rode down the line to Round Top, stopping on the way at Generals Newton's and Sedgwick's head-quarters. From Little Round Top, in company with General Warren, he examined the enemy's lines and observed their long line of batteries and the massing of their troops, sure indications of the attack that was to follow. He immediately after returned to his own head-quarters.

Every movement that the enemy might make had been considered, every contingency anticipated and prepared for. Thus it has been seen that the independent forces at Frederick City, Maryland, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, under General French and General Couch, respectively, which were to act in conjunction with the Army of the Potomac, had been advised of the condition of affairs, and instructed how to act. The Union lines had been inspected, the positions strengthened, and circulars containing instructions for getting the troops well in hand sent to the various corps commanders. Instructions had also been given on the previous day, through the chief of staff, to obtain information in regard to the roads and country to the rear, so that the army could be moved quickly in case it was manoeuvred out of its position by a flank movement of the enemy. Such a flank movement of the enemy to their right toward the Potomac, it may be remarked in passing, was the one Longstreet had actually advised Lee to make, and the one that Meade afterward said was sound military sense and the step he at the time feared Lee would take. It has also been seen that on the previous night, in conversation with General Gibbon at the close of the meeting of the corps commanders, General Meade expressed the opinion that if Lee attacked him tomorrow, he (Lee) would try the centre. During the morning he had seen the movements of the artillery along Seminary Ridge, and at noon he had seen from Little Round Top the massing of the enemy's forces opposite the centre of his line.

The two armies at this time, 1 P. M., held the same position as in the early morning, excepting as follows:<sup>1</sup> On the Confederate side, Pickett had moved up under cover of the ridge that extends along the Emmettsburg Pike, and the artillery had been concentrated along Seminary Ridge about the centre of the Confederate line. On the Union side, part of the Twelfth Corps, on the right, after the repulse of Johnson, reoccupied their original position as on the day be-

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 20, July 3, 1 P. M.



fore, and the artillery had been placed in position along Cemetery Ridge.

About one o'clock, just after General Meade had returned to his head-quarters from Little Round Top, the enemy opened fire along their whole front with all the artillery which they had concentrated along Seminary Ridge. The Federal artillery withheld its fire for a few minutes until it was able to locate the position of the enemy's batteries, and then replied with every gun which could be brought to bear from Cemetery Ridge. This cannonade lasted almost two hours. The enemy's fire was directed mainly at the left centre of the Union line. The intensity and fierceness of the cannonade, the hail of shot and bursting shell which swept and tore along Cemetery Ridge proper, and the damage done thereby beggar description; while even back of the ridge in the rear, where the reserves were posted, immense havoc was wrought by that portion of the enemy's fire which was high and had cleared the crest. Here it was that the little farm-house, General Meade's head-quarters, just under the crest of the ridge, and in rear of the left centre, the point at which the enemy's fire was directed, received too its share of destruction. One shell burst in the yard among the staff horses tied to the fence, another tore up the steps of the house, another carried away the supports of the porch, one passed through the door, another through the garret, and a solid shot barely grazing the commanding general as he stood in the open door-way, buried itself in a box by the door at his side.

The little building was so exposed that it was deemed best to avoid, if possible, the needless danger from flying splinters of wood or falling timber, and accordingly the general and his staff withdrew to the fenced yard in the immediate rear, where the work of directing the battle was resumed. At this juncture an amusing incident occurred, typical of the lighter vein which often comes to brave men in battle. During this rain of Confederate shell, and while Meade, deep in thought, was walking calmly up and down this little backyard between the house and the Taneytown Road, he chanced to notice that some of his staff, during the enforced inactivity while awaiting the pleasure of their general, were gradually, and probably unconsciously, edging around to the lee side of the house. "Gentlemen," he said, stopping and smiling pleasantly, "are you trying to find a safe place? You remind me of the man who drove the ox-team which took ammunition for the heavy guns on to

the field of Palo Alto. Finding himself within range, he tilted up his cart and got behind it. Just then General Taylor came along, and seeing this attempt at shelter, shouted, 'You damned fool, don't you know you are no safer there than anywhere else?' The driver replied, 'I don't suppose I am, general, but it kind o' feels so.'

During all the time of the cannonade orders were being sent from head-quarters to take troops from every part of the line from which they could be spared and to place them in reserve for the support of that part of the line which the enemy's artillery fire indicated was about to be assaulted.

A staff-officer was sent to General Slocum, who commanded the extreme right of the line, with a message directing him to make his line as thin as possible and to send all the troops he could possibly spare to reinforce and strengthen that part of the line extending to the left of Cemetery Hill. Robinson's division of the First Corps, which had been held in reserve behind Cemetery Hill, was moved into the line on the right of the Second Corps. Shaler's brigade of the Sixth Corps, which had been moved in the morning to the support of the Twelfth Corps, was returned to the rear and left of the Second Corps, and held in reserve. Sherrill's brigade of the Second Corps, which was being held in reserve, was thrown forward into the line of the Second Corps. Two brigades of the First Division of the Third Corps, which were held in reserve on the left of the line, were moved to the right, and held in reserve in the rear of the left of the Second Corps. Three brigades of Humphreys's division of the Third Corps were moved over from the left into the line in reserve on the left of the First Corps. Eustis's brigade of the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, which formed part of the line at the foot of Little Round Top, was moved to the rear of the Second Corps, in reserve. Russell's brigade of the Sixth Corps was moved from the extreme left to the rear of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. Bartlett, with two brigades of the Sixth Corps which formed part of the line of the Fifth Corps, was thrown forward to the Wheat Field.

The firing being still unabated and it being evident that no staff-officer could reach head-quarters from any of the corps commanders, it was deemed advisable to retire to a point where communication between it and corps commanders could be had with greater certainty, and accordingly it was moved to a barn several hundred yards down the Taneytown Road. While here, one of the enemy's shells ex-



ploded, a fragment of which struck General Butterfield, the chief of staff, who immediately left the field and did not return that day.

General Meade and staff remained at this point a short time, and then removed to General Slocum's head-quarters on Powers Hill.

When the cannonade had continued for over an hour, and General Meade had become fully satisfied of its object, he directed the artillery to cease firing, not only in order to save its ammunition but also at the same time to make the enemy believe that they had silenced his guns and so lure them on to the assault.

Meanwhile, before this order had reached them, General Hunt, chief of artillery, had himself given orders to cease firing. It is necessary to go back somewhat to explain how Hunt came to give these orders.

It will be recalled that at 10 A. M., before the Confederate batteries had opened, General Hunt, starting on the right of the Union artillery, had given orders to withhold its fire for fifteen or twenty minutes after the enemy had commenced. He had just given his orders to the last battery on Little Round Top, when the enemy opened with all his guns. Hunt then rode to the artillery reserve to order fresh batteries and ammunition to be sent up to the ridge as soon as the enemy's cannonade should cease. He then returned to the ridge and inspected the batteries. The fire had been steady and deliberate, and had lasted for a long time, and when, on inspecting the chests, he found that the ammunition was running low, he hastened to General Meade to advise its immediate cessation and to make preparation for the assault which he also believed would certainly follow. Arriving at the old head-quarters, he found them abandoned and was told that General Meade had gone to Cemetery Hill, but being unable to locate him there, he at once rode back along the ridge, himself ordering the firing to cease. He then went to meet the fresh batteries which he had ordered up, and, encountering Major Bingham, of Hancock's staff, was informed that General Meade's aides were seeking him with orders to "cease firing," which, as we have seen, he had anticipated.

Shortly after the Federal artillery slackened its fire, the enemy ceased firing, and then at about 3 P. M. began the memorable assault, "Pickett's charge." The attacking force, its front extending over a mile, consisted of about eighteen thousand men, and was composed of Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps and various brigades from Pender's, Heth's, and Anderson's divisions of Hill's

corps. It was directed against the left centre of the Union line, the centre striking the Second Division on the left of the line of the Second Corps.

Just as this attack was commencing, after he had made all his arrangements for the disposition of the troops to reinforce the line for the anticipated attack, and while he was on Powers Hill or just started on his way to the front to assume immediate command, if necessary, General Meade was told by Captain Dewey, who had been sent by General Hays, that the enemy were advancing in great force. He at once despatched two staff-officers to the left of the line to hurry those brigades of the Sixth Corps which had already been ordered up, and then, going straight to the front, arrived on the crest at the point where the enemy were making their attack, and rode among the batteries and troops encouraging the men by his voice and presence. He remained on the ridge throughout the attack, and until the enemy was repulsed. The reinforcements which had been concentrated were thrown in along the line as they were needed, and after a terrible and protracted struggle, culminating in a bloody hand-to-hand encounter, the enemy was repulsed and driven back with heavy loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners. During this fight General Hancock, commanding the left centre of the line, was severely wounded and taken off the field, as was also General Gibbon, commanding the Second Corps.

Meanwhile, during the time of Lee's assault, General Gregg had won an extremely important cavalry engagement with General Stuart on the right of the Union line of battle. While Stuart was proceeding toward the Baltimore Pike, where he hoped to create a diversion in aid of the Confederate infantry, and, in case of Pickett's success, to fall upon the retreating Federal troops, he encountered Gregg, who was guarding the right flank of the Federal army, and was well out in the path of Stuart's movement. The contest was fast and furious, with the result that Stuart was compelled to fall back.

Immediately after the repulse of Pickett's assault General Meade rode over to Cemetery Hill to see the state of affairs. On his way back at what is called Ziegler's Grove, a point on the line between the Second and Eleventh Corps, the soldiers and officers commenced to cheer him and made such a demonstration that he crossed over the line of battle, and accompanied by his staff and a large crowd of mounted officers who had gathered about him, rode down in front of



the Union line all the way to Round Top. Every man on the Union line mounted the breastworks, and it was one continuous ovation the whole way down, and, strange to say, not a shot was fired by the enemy, although the cavalcade was in easy range.

It is quite imperative to call attention here to the great loss to the commanding general in the death of Reynolds on the first day, and the wounding of Hancock on the third. These two generals had no equals in the Army of the Potomac, and their loss could not be repaired. They were soldiers of marked ability, and, thoroughly understanding the temperament of their troops, could perform prodigies of war when the occasion demanded. They were quick to see and report the situation of the moment, and being in perfect sympathy and accord with General Meade, and having his full confidence, their loss greatly hampered the subsequent movements of the army and the execution of his intentions and plans.

General Meade's purpose in going to the left of the line to Round Top, as he explained in his testimony given before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war, nine months after the battle, was as follows: "As soon as the assault was repulsed, I went immediately to the extreme left of my line, with the determination of advancing the left, and making an assault upon the enemy's lines. So soon as I arrived at the left I gave the necessary orders for the pickets and skirmishers in front to be thrown forward to feel the enemy, and for all preparations to be made for the assault. The great length of the line, and the time required to carry these orders out to the front, and the movement subsequently made, before the report given to me of the condition of the forces in the front and left, caused it to be so late in the evening as to induce me to abandon the assault which I had contemplated."

The length of time required to carry and execute the orders as above referred to was probably due to the fact that the brigades of the various corps had become more or less separated and the men had become utterly worn out and exhausted.

The Fifth and Sixth Corps were on the left of the Union line, and about the time of the repulse of Pickett's assault their brigades occupied the following positions:

The Fifth Corps held the Round Tops. The First Brigade of the First Division was on Big Round Top, extending toward Little Round Top. The Third Brigade of the Third Division was on Little Round Top, on the right of the First Brigade of the First Division.

The Third Brigade of the Second Division was on the north slope of Little Round Top, on the right of the Third Brigade of the Third Division. To the right of the Third Brigade of the Second Division came a brigade of the Sixth Corps, and to the right of it was the Second Brigade of the First Division of the Fifth Corps. The First and Second Brigades of the Second Division of the Fifth Corps were in the rear of Little Round Top, in reserve. The Third Brigade of the First Division was in the rear of the right of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. The First Brigade of the Third Division was out in front, toward the Peach Orchard.

The Sixth Corps was theoretically in reserve, but, like many of the corps in the line, its brigades occupied various positions on the field. The Second Brigade of the Second Division held the extreme left of the Union line from Big Round Top to the Taneytown Road. The First Brigade of the First Division was on the line between the the Third Brigade of the Second Division and the Second Brigade of the First Division of the Fifth Corps. The Third Brigade of the First Division was on the Taneytown Road in rear of the Fifth Corps, in reserve. The Second Brigade of the First Division and the Third Brigade of the Third Division were out in front of the Wheat Field. The First and Second Brigades of the Third Division were in the rear of the Second Corps, in reserve. The Third Brigade of the Second Division was on the extreme right of the Union line on Rock Creek.

This separation of the brigades was due to the numerous movements of the troops during the battle. Many of the troops had been moved from one part of the line to another, having been put in action in two different parts of the line on the same day. This handling of the troops brought forth from those present the admiring comment that such tactics had never before been seen in the Army of the Potomac.

Notwithstanding the fact that the contemplated assault had been abandoned on account of darkness, the pickets and skirmishers continued their advance, but soon found that the enemy was in force.

At 8.35 P. M. on the evening of the 3d, General Meade sent his report to Major-General Halleck, at Washington, from which the following is an extract:

"After the repelling of the assault, indications leading to the belief that the enemy might be withdrawing, an armed reconnoissance was pushed forward from the left, and the enemy found to be in force. At the present hour all is quiet. My cavalry have been



engaged all day on both flanks of the enemy, harassing and vigorously attacking with great success, notwithstanding they encountered superior numbers both of cavalry and infantry."

The "armed reconnoissance" above referred to on the left of the Federal line had effectually demonstrated the fact that the enemy were not only far from demoralized, but were, in fact, in strong force, and had not yet decided to give up the field. General Meade did not believe that Lee would attack him again, but was as yet uncertain whether he (Lee) would assume a defensive attitude and await an attack from him, or whether he would withdraw down the Cumberland Valley, holding strongly the mountain passes which he (Meade) understood had been fortified.

As the old head-quarters house, which had been abandoned during the cannonade in the afternoon, was now being used as a field hospital, General Meade and staff moved down the Taneytown Road about a quarter of a mile and slept among the rocks in the open. Toward two or three o'clock in the morning it commenced to rain violently and continued all day.

## V

### THE FOURTH DAY

At daybreak on the morning of July 4, the reports that came in showed that the enemy had disappeared from the front of the extreme right of the line, but that he still was in force on the left and left centre. General Slocum, in command of the right, was immediately directed to advance his corps, and ascertain the position of the enemy. Likewise, General Howard, in the centre, was directed to push into Gettysburg to see whether the enemy still occupied the town.

At the first sign of the enemy's withdrawal and before anything definite was known of their intention, the following order was sent to General French at Frederick City in order to gain time in case the enemy were actually withdrawing:

"The Major General Commanding directs that you proceed immediately, and seize and hold the South Mountain passes with such forces as in your judgment are proper and sufficient to prevent the enemy's seizing them to cover his retreat. With the balance of your force re-occupy Maryland Heights and operate upon the contingency expressed yesterday in regards to the retreat of the enemy. General Buford will probably pass through South Mountain tomorrow P. M. from this side."

At 5 A. M. after the enemy retired from the town of Gettysburg, General Barlow, who had been wounded in the first day's fight and left in the town, and whose opportunities for judging were considered of the best, sent word to General Meade that he believed their withdrawal was nothing more than a feint.

At 7 A. M. the following despatch was sent to Major-General Halleck, at Washington:

"This morning the enemy has withdrawn his pickets from the positions of yesterday. My own pickets are moving out to ascertain the nature and extent of the enemy's movement. My informa-



tion is not sufficient for me to decide its character yet, whether a retreat or manœuvre for other purposes."

At 8.30 A. M. the following despatch was sent Major-General Couch, at Harrisburg:

"The enemy has withdrawn from his positions occupied for attack. I am not yet sufficiently informed of the nature of his movement. He was repulsed yesterday in his attack upon me. You will, therefore, be governed by the instructions heretofore sent you. Until I get further information I cannot decide as to the character of the movement or the enemy's intentions."

After General Slocum and General Howard had pushed forward their lines to ascertain the position and intention of the enemy, they reported that he had retired from the circular position which he had occupied around the right of the Army of the Potomac, and had taken up a position about parallel to the left and left centre of the Union line. It now appearing that the enemy was not retreating, General Meade sent the following to General French at 10.20 A. M.:

"More recent developments indicate that the enemy may have retired to take a new position and await an attack from us. The General countermands his dispatch requiring you to re-occupy Maryland Heights and seize the South Mountain passes, resuming the instructions contained in the dispatch of July 3rd, making your movements contingent upon those of the enemy."

At this juncture, in order to learn the condition and position of the troops after the past three days' hard fighting and manœuvring, and to get them in shape for subsequent movements, circulars were sent to all the corps commanders directing them as follows:

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

Corps Commanders will report the present position of the troops under their command in their immediate front—location, etc., amount of supplies on hand and condition. The intention of the Major General Commanding is not to make any present move, but to refit and rest for to-day. The opportunity must be made use of to get the commands well in hand, and ready for such duties as the General may direct. The lines as held are not to be changed without orders; the skirmishers simply being advanced according to instructions given to find and report the position and lines of the enemy.

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

Corps commanders will retain their men in camp and hold their present lines ready for any movement. The movement of skirmishers to the front is not intended to change the positions or less vigilance of the troops.

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

General Head-Quarters, until further orders, are established on the Baltimore pike, about a mile below the point occupied by Maj. Gen. Slocum, during the recent engagement, as his Head-Quarters. Corps Commanders will send an orderly with the bearer of this circular to acquaint himself with the exact location of Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

Corps Commanders will at once call upon their regimental commanders for a statement of the colors that have been taken from the enemy in front of Gettysburg, and all such colors will be sent to these Head-Quarters, as required by existing orders. If any colors have been sent to the rear or otherwise passed out of the possession of regimental commanders, such commanders will be called on for an immediate explanation of their disobedience of orders, and they will take immediate measures to have the colors returned to their custody and sent to these Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

Corps Commanders will detail burial parties to bury all the enemy's dead in the vicinity of their lines. Correct accounts of the numbers buried will be kept, and returns made through Corps Head-Quarters to the Asst. Adj't Gen'l. The arms, accoutrements, etc., will all be collected and turned over to the Ordnance officers. Reports of the number and kind of each picked up will be reported to these Head-Quarters.

*July 4, 1863.*

Circular.

A return of the small arm ammunition on hand per man in each Corps is required. As the number of rounds of artillery ammunition



per gun. Corps Commanders will make their return without delay. Corps commanders will cause their Ordnance officers to gather the ammunition from the wounded and killed and replenish their supplies therewith.

At 12 N. General Meade again reported to Major-General Halleck:

"The position of affairs is not materially changed from my last dispatch 7 A. M. The enemy apparently has thrown back his left, and placed guns and troops in position in rear of Gettysburg, which we now hold. The enemy has abandoned large numbers of his killed and wounded on the field. I shall require some time to get up supplies, ammunition, etc., rest the army, worn out by long marches, and three days' hard fighting. I shall probably be able to give you a return of our captures and losses before night, and return of the enemy's killed and wounded in our hands."

During portions of the day it rained very violently, so violently, in fact, as to interrupt any very active operations that might have been made if any had been designed.

Nothing very definite having developed of the enemy's position and intended movements, General Meade (after a consultation with some of his corps commanders in the evening) directed General Warren to make a reconnoissance to ascertain the intentions of the enemy, and also sent General Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth Corps on the left of the line, the following order:

"The Major General Commanding directs that you hold your Corps in readiness to cover a reconnoissance by Brig. General Warren, such portions of it to be used as may be necessary, the object of the reconnoissance being to find out the position and movement of the enemy. Be ready at four and a half o'clock A. M. tomorrow."

Referring to the matter of consultations with his corps commanders, General Meade, before the committee on the conduct of the war, testified as follows:

"I had one on the night of the 4th of July, as to a plan of action in reference to pursuing the enemy. I never called those meetings councils; they were consultations, and they were probably more numerous and more constant in my case, from the fact that I had just assumed command of the army, and felt that it was due to myself to have the opinions of high officers before I took action on matters which involved such momentous issues."

At 10 P. M., and after all arrangements had been made as far as

possible for the day following, General Meade made a third report to General Halleck.

"No change of affairs since despatch of 12 noon. I make a reconnoissance tomorrow, to ascertain what the intention of the enemy is. My cavalry are now moving towards the South Mountain pass, and should the enemy retreat I shall pursue him on his flanks. A proposition made by Gen. Lee under flag of truce to exchange prisoners, was declined by me."

For over a year preceding the battle of Gettysburg Lee had enjoyed unhampered supreme command of the Army of Northern Virginia. At the moment of the battle he was conducting an invasion and was comparatively unrestricted as to the movements of his army, which was living off the country and sending home supplies. His troops were flushed with the pride of a successful campaign and confident of victory. On the other hand, Meade, the fifth to lead the Army of the Potomac, had been in command but three days before the battle. He was confronted with the double task of opposing the enemy and defending the capital of the country. His army was the only defence of the great cities of the North, he could look for no reinforcements, and he supposed his enemy to be his equal if not superior in numbers. His troops had confidence in themselves, but at the time he took command they were still laboring under the depressing effects of several defeats due to poor leadership. It can be fairly assumed that the slightest success on the part of Lee would have been successfully used to obtain recognition of the Confederacy from the powers abroad. The issue at stake was momentous; and, as General Meade expressed it in his letter of June 29, "a battle will decide the fate of our country and our cause."

General Meade testified before the congressional committee on the conduct of the war that his plan on the second day of the battle was as follows:

"I beg leave to say, in connection with this subject of attacking or receiving an attack, that I do not hesitate to say that it was my policy and intention to act upon the defensive, and receive the attack of the enemy, if practicable, knowing that the enemy would be compelled either to attack me or to retire from his position; that it was not within his power to wait any length of time in my front and manœuvre, and that the chances of victory on my side were greater if I acted on the defensive than they would be if I assumed the offensive." In



his next letter to his wife, on the 5th of July, he writes: "They [the enemy] waited one day [the 4th] expecting that, flushed with success, I would attack them, when they would play their old game of shooting us from behind breastworks—a game we played this time to their entire satisfaction."

In a word, Meade's masterful and rapid advance, and the defensive policy which he then assumed and to which he unswervingly adhered, gave Lee no alternative but to assume the offensive and overcome the Army of the Potomac, or else to retreat and admit himself defeated.

## VI

### THE MARCH FROM GETTYSBURG

At about three o'clock on the morning of July 5 the Sixth Corps, on the left of the line under General Sedgwick, began to break camp in preparation for the reconnoissance under General Warren, which had been arranged for on the evening before. At daylight the pickets of the Sixth Corps advanced to the front toward the right of the enemy's line, and on reaching the Emmettsburg Pike, found that he had withdrawn.

As soon as it was light enough to distinguish objects in the distance, reports began to come in from the signal stations along the line that many of the points which the day before had composed the enemy's front and reserve line could be distinctly seen and that there was no indication of the enemy anywhere except farther to the west. At that point could be seen quite a large body of troops apparently drawn up in line of battle extending from the Chambersburg Pike toward the Hagerstown Road.

Scouting parties were then sent out from along the whole line, who soon reported that the enemy had evacuated his former position.

Before it could be positively determined what the intentions of the enemy were, whether to retreat to the Potomac or simply to the mountains, and desirous of taking advantage of any time that might be gained, General Meade, through his chief of staff, at 7 A. M. sent to General French at Frederick City the following order:

*July 5, 1863, 7 A. M.*

MAJ. GEN. FRENCH,

The enemy appear to be in full retreat, and you can act upon the contingencies provided in previous dispatches.

After the advance of the pickets and skirmishers of the Sixth Corps, the First Division, followed by the others, crossed the valley in their front, and occupying the position held by the enemy the day before, opened fire with their artillery upon a body of the enemy



on their right. The latter force soon disappeared without replying, retreating to the rear.

Owing to information which he had previously received that the passes at Fairfield and Cashtown had been fortified by the enemy, and were of such a character that a small force could hold a large body in check for a considerable time, General Meade had made up his mind that a more rapid movement of his army could be made by the flank through the Boonsboro Pass than to attempt to follow on the road which the enemy himself had taken. In order to be fully prepared to move as soon as he could determine that the enemy were in full retreat for the Potomac, he directed that the following order for the movement of the various corps by way of Middletown and South Mountain toward Hagerstown should be drawn up, but not issued:

*July 5, 1863.*

Circular.

The following movements of troops are ordered:—

The 1st, 6th, and 3d Corps by Emmetsburg direct road to Mechanicstown, Lewistown, Hamburg, to Middletown.

The 5th and 11th Corps by the left hand Taneytown road through Emmetsburg, Cregerstown, Utica, High Knob Pass, to Middletown.

The 12th and 2d Corps via Taneytown, Middleburg, and Woodsborough, through Frederick, to Middletown.

The trains will move with their corps, those at Westminster crossing to Middletown via Frederick. The Artillery Reserve follow via Taneytown and Middleburg. Head-Quarters will be at Cregerstown to-night. The army will assemble at Middletown p. m. of the 7th inst.

Head-Quarters train will move at once. All trains not filled with ammunition and supplies will be sent to Frederick. The Commissary and Quartermaster depots and supplies at Westminster will be transferred to Frederick.

The Commandant of the Cavalry Corps will detail a regiment to report to the Provost Marshal General, for the temporary duty of driving up all stragglers, and collecting all captured property, arms, ammunition, etc., on the recent battle field.

The Medical Director will establish a General Hospital at Gettysburg for the wounded that cannot be moved with the army.

For the movement, and until the concentration at Middletown,

General Sedgwick will, without relinquishing command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the right—1st, 6th, and 3d.

General Slocum will, without relinquishing command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the left, 12th and 2d.

General Howard will, without relinquishing the command of his Corps, assume command and direct the movements of the Corps forming the centre, 5th and 11th.

Staff officers will be sent to report at Head-Quarters each night on all marches.

The Battalion of Regular Engineers and other Troops at Westminster will proceed to Middletown via Frederick.

By command of Major General Meade,  
(Sd.) S. WILLIAMS,  
*Asst. Adjt. General.*

ADDENDA TO ORDER OF MARCH OF JULY 5TH, 1863.

The Artillery Reserve will accompany the 2d and 12th Corps, and will be assigned by Major General Slocum to an appropriate place in the column.

From the reports of his officers General Meade was now thoroughly convinced that the enemy was actually retiring. He believed that he was passing into the Cumberland Valley but did not feel certain that he was in full retreat for the Potomac or sure of what his future movements would be. Nor was he entirely aware of the extent of the injury he had inflicted upon him at Gettysburg though satisfied that he had been severely punished. Accordingly he directed General Sedgwick, in the following order, to advance along the Hagerstown Road and to pursue him with vigor, and at the same time dispatched a cavalry force to follow the column that was retreating along the Chambersburg Road.

*July 5, 1863, 12.30 P. M.*

GENERAL SEDGWICK,

All the information I can obtain proves withdrawal of enemy through Cashtown and Fairfield Road. Push forward your column in W. direction; find out his force; if rear guard it will be compelled to retire; if not you'll find out. Time is of great importance, as I



can't give orders for a movement without explicit information from you. General Sykes will cover your withdrawal if necessary, and General Warren, who carries this, will read it to General Sykes.

Early in the afternoon General Meade sent the following report to General Halleck:

*July 5, 1863.*

MAJOR GENERAL HALLECK,

The enemy retired under cover of the night and heavy rain in the direction of Fairfield and Cashtown. All my available Cavalry are in pursuit on the enemy's left and rear. My movement will be made at once on his flank via Middletown and South Mountain Pass. I cannot give you the details of our capture in prisoners, colors and arms. Upwards of twenty battle flags will be turned in from one Corps. I cannot delay to pick up the debris of the battle field and request that all those arrangements may be made by the Departments. My wounded, with those of the enemy in our hands, will be left at Gettysburg. After burying our own, I am compelled to employ citizens to bury the enemy's dead. My Head-Quarters will be to-night at Cregerstown. Communication received from Gen. Smith, in command of 3,000 men, on the march from Carlisle towards Cashtown. Field returns last evening give me about 55,000 effectives in the ranks, exclusive of Cavalry, baggage guards, ambulance attendants, etc. Every available reinforcement is required and should be sent to Frederick without delay.

Under date of the 4th of July Meade announced to the army in a general order the victory over Lee.

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *July 4, 1863.*

General Orders, No. 68.

The Commanding General, in behalf of the country, thanks the Army of the Potomac for the glorious result of the recent operations.

An enemy superior in numbers and flushed with the pride of a successful invasion, attempted to overcome and destroy this Army. Utterly baffled and defeated, he has now withdrawn from the contest. The privations and fatigue the Army has endured, and the heroic courage and gallantry it has displayed will be matters of history to be remembered.

Our task is not yet accomplished, and the Commanding General

looks to the Army for greater efforts to drive from our soil every vestige of the presence of the invader.

It is right and proper that we should, on all suitable occasions, return our grateful thanks to the Almighty Disposer of events, that in the goodness of His Providence He has thought fit to give victory to the cause of the just.

By command of Major General Meade.

Official.

S. WILLIAMS,

*Asst. Adjt. Gen.*

Later in the afternoon of the same day General Meade received a report from General Sedgwick that he was following the enemy's rear-guard as rapidly as he could, but that he had reason to believe, from reports of prisoners, that the main body of the enemy was in the vicinity of Fairfield Pass, and that it was not improbable that another engagement might be had in those mountains. Under these circumstances, and as a matter of security, and also being willing to meet such a movement on the part of the enemy, General Meade directed that two Corps, the Third and Fifth, be immediately moved in the direction of General Sedgwick, in order to assist him if he were attacked, or to reinforce him if he required reinforcement. After he had given this order he learned that the previous order, for the movement of the whole army, which he had prepared but withheld awaiting developments, had been issued by his chief of staff, General Butterfield, without his authority. Officers were immediately sent, who arrested the progress of the Third and First Corps, which had not moved very far, and detained them in case General Sedgwick should require support. The other corps he allowed to move on, knowing that they could not get very far that day, and that they could be recalled if the information obtained through General Sedgwick's operation should require it.

Later, at 6 p. m., the following report was sent to Major-General Halleck:

"I send copies of all my dispatches since yesterday a. m. My army is all in motion. I shall be at Frederick to-morrow night. I desire the forces mentioned in your dispatch to Gen. French to be thrown to Harper's Ferry by rail as soon as possible, and shall so instruct Gen. French. It is of importance to get possession of South Mountain passes and Maryland Heights."

Meanwhile, General Sedgwick with the Sixth Corps, in accord-



ance with the order sent him at 12.30 P. M., followed up the enemy along the Hagerstown Road. The First Brigade of the First Division was in the lead, marching in line of battle, covered by a heavy line of skirmishers, when, having gone about six miles and being about two miles from Fairfield, they came upon the rear-guard of the rebel army, which was posted so as to protect the passage of its trains. A sharp engagement ensued, resulting in the capture of about two hundred and fifty prisoners.

The Sixth Corps then continued on to Fairfield, the enemy retiring before it, where they remained, while General Neill, in command of his brigade of infantry and of McIntosh's brigade of cavalry with two pieces of light artillery and a battery of rifled pieces, was detached to move early the next morning to reconnoitre the enemy's position at the Gap.

After this encounter General Sedgwick reported to General Meade, which report he received at 6 P. M., that he had come upon the enemy, who had made a stand in force, and that he had ascertained from prisoners taken that McLaws's division was bringing up the rear of the rebel army with Alexander's artillery immediately in his (McLaws's) front, and that they were going to the Gap, where they intended making a stand.

On receiving the above information, the forward movement of the army was arrested by the issue of the following circulars and orders and the army held in its then position until further information could be obtained as to the probability of the enemy making a stand in force in the mountains:

*July 5, 1863.*

Circular.

The movement of troops ordered to-day and all arrangements dependent thereupon, are suspended until further orders.

*July 5, 1863.*

Circular.

Head-Quarters will be to-night at the same place as last night, instead of Gregerstown.

*July 5, 1863.*

Circular.

General Head-Quarters will move to-morrow at 6 A. M. precisely and be established at Frederick to-morrow night.

To General Sedgwick, commanding the right wing, the following was sent:

"I am directed by the Commanding General to say that, in consequence of your report of the appearance of the enemy in force in your front, the movement of troops ordered towards Middletown has been suspended, to await further information from you."

To General Howard, commanding the centre, and General Slocum, commanding the left wing, the following order was sent:

"In consequence of information received from General Sedgwick of the enemy in his presence, the movement ordered will be stopped where it is until further orders. Send a staff officer to these Headquarters to-night for orders."

During a lull in these operations General Meade took advantage of the opportunity thus offered to again write to Mrs. Meade.

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
GETTYSBURG, PA., *July 5, 1863.*

I hardly know when I last wrote to you, so many and such stirring events have occurred. I think I have written since the battle, but am not sure. It was a grand battle, and is in my judgment a most decided victory, though I did not annihilate or bag the Confederate Army. This morning they retired in great haste into the mountains, leaving their dead unburied and their wounded on the field. They awaited one day, expecting that, flushed with success, I would attack them when they would play their old game of shooting us from behind breastworks—a game we played this time to their entire satisfaction. The men behaved splendidly; I really think they are becoming soldiers. They endured long marches, short rations, and stood one of the most terrific cannonadings I ever witnessed. Baldy was shot again, and I fear will not get over it. Two horses that George rode were killed, his own and the black mare. I had no time to think of either George or myself, for at one time things looked a little blue; but I managed to get up reinforcements in time to save the day. The army are in the highest spirits, and of course I am a great man. The most difficult part of my work is acting without correct information on which to predicate action.

On the 5th Major-General Daniel Butterfield, chief of staff, was relieved from duty with the army and Brigadier-General Alfred Pleasanton, chief of cavalry, and Brigadier-General G. K. Warren,



chief of engineers, in connection with their own duties, jointly acted at times as chief of staff until the night of July 8, when Major-General A. A. Humphreys, commanding the Second Division of the Third Corps, was appointed.

On the night of July 5 the army occupied the following positions:<sup>1</sup> The Sixth Corps was at Fairfield, in touch with the enemy. The First and Third Corps were in the vicinity of Gettysburg, in support of the Sixth Corps. The Fifth and Eleventh Corps were south of Gettysburg, also in support of the Sixth Corps. The Second Corps was at Two Taverns and the Twelfth Corps at Littlestown. The cavalry was on both flanks of the army. Buford's division was at Frederick City, on its way to Boonsboro Pass. Kilpatrick's division and one brigade of Gregg's division was at Boonsboro. Two brigades of Gregg's division were just north of Cashtown and Fayetteville. The rear of the Confederate army occupied the Cashtown and Fairfield Passes.

At 2 A. M., on the morning of July 6, General Meade sent the following to General Sedgwick:

*July 6, 1863, 2 A. M.*

COMM. OFF. 6TH CORPS.

After conversation with General Warren,<sup>2</sup> I think under existing circumstances you had better push your reconnoissance so as to ascertain, if practicable, how far the enemy has retreated, and also the character of the Gap, and practicability of carrying the same. In case I should determine to advance on that line, you must be careful and watch your right and rear, as roads from Cashtown all open to the enemy to advance against you. My cavalry sent to Cashtown have not reported, but I have reason to believe that the enemy is there in force. I beg you will keep me fully advised of what occurs, and I desire you will report at least every two or three hours. Both the 1st and 3rd Corps are under your orders, and can be called to your support if you require them. I shall not move the army from its present position until I am better satisfied the enemy are evacuating the Cumberland Valley.

In obedience to orders, and in spite of the fact that the morning was very misty and dark, rendering it impossible to obtain correct information of the enemy's movements, General Neill, with his command, advanced and engaged their rear-guard.

<sup>1</sup> See Map No. 21, position night of July 5.

<sup>2</sup> General Warren had just returned from the front.

At 8.30 A. M. General Meade received the following despatch from General Sedgwick:

"Since sending my despatch a few minutes since, upon consultation with General Wright, who agrees with me, that considering everything I would strongly advise moving this Corps to Emmettsburg, or on that road. This advice might be modified after hearing further from General Neill, but I cannot think it will change the circumstances. Their line, General, is evidently very strong, and I do not like to dash my Corps against it, especially as I do not know what is on my right. Cashtown is in rear of us:—perhaps it would be well to push out a Corps for two or three miles—to watch."

In answer to the above General Meade immediately sent the following reply at 9 A. M.:

"Your despatch is received, proposing to move to Emmettsburg. I cannot, at present, approve of the proposition. I advised you last night that you could call to your support Newton and Birney, who are under your orders. Newton reporting to me that he and Birney had moved under your orders on the Emmettsburg Road (and your despatch saying you had not sent orders to them) I immediately directed them to halt, to report their positions to you and await your orders. I have also directed General Howard (who commands 5th and 11th Corps) to post one of his Corps at Emmettsburg, and the other on some road leading to Fairfield from whence it can be thrown up there.

"With this disposition, viz.: three Corps under your immediate command, and two within support together with the fact just reported that our Cavalry have passed through Cashtown without opposition, and were at Caledonia Iron Works (N. W. from Fairfield some 11 miles) I am of the opinion that you are in a measure secure on your right flank and rear and therefore can examine the front.

"All evidence seems to show a movement to Hagerstown and the Potomac. No doubt the principal force is between Fairfield and Hagerstown, but I apprehend they will be likely to let you alone if you let them alone. Let me know the result of Neill's operation, whether they retire before him or threaten to push him and you. Send out pickets well on your left flank, reconnoiter in all directions, and let me know the result.

"This is all the instructions I can now give you. Whenever I am



satisfied that the main body is retiring from the mountains I shall continue my flank movement. I am going to direct Couch to move down the Cumberland Valley, to threaten their rear."

About noon General Meade received a report from General Sedgwick saying that he had pushed the enemy's rear-guard as far as Fairfield Pass, which was of such a nature that a very small force placed there could hold him in check for a considerable length of time, though he could finally take it, and that, in his judgment, it would involve delay and waste of time to endeavor to push the enemy any farther on that road.

At 2 P. M., soon after receiving the above, the following report was received from General Sedgwick:

"I am satisfied that Hood's Div. with one battery hold the Gap to cover the trains and that Ewell's whole (Div.) is on the mountains. I think they will withdraw to-night. Mr. McKenzie will give you the result of Neill's operation. Howe has gone up with his whole Div. I shall hold on until further orders. I think Newton and Birney should be a little nearer, but I cannot believe the enemy will attack me and therefore do not wish to fatigue the troops by unnecessary marching. I have just sent in one hundred prisoners, a few more have since been taken. When a general movement takes place will you please send orders to Newton or Birney direct as I am so far away from them that time would be lost in communicating with them."

Upon receiving the above, General Meade decided to move the whole army down toward Middletown, and accordingly issued the following order:

*July 6, 1863.*

#### Orders.

Commanders and other Independent commands, and Chiefs of Staff Departments, will at once proceed to carry into effect the orders of march of July 5th, temporarily suspended. Head-Quarters will be to-night at the same place as last night and to-morrow at Frederick.

By Command of Major General Meade,  
(Sd.) S. WILLIAMS, *Asst. Adjt. Genl.*

Immediately upon the issue of this order, General Meade sent at 2 P. M. the following report to General Halleck, at Washington:

"Yesterday I sent General Sedgwick with the 6th Corps in pursuit of the enemy towards Fairfield and a brigade of cavalry

towards Cashtown. General Sedgwick's report indicating a large force of the enemy in the mountains, I deemed it prudent to suspend the movement to Middletown until I could be certain the enemy were evacuating Cumberland Valley. I find great difficulty in getting reliable information, but from all I can learn I have reason to believe the enemy is retiring, very much crippled and hampered with his trains. Gen. Sedgwick reported that the Gap at Fairfield was very formidable and would enable a small force to hold my column in check for a long time. I have accordingly resumed the movement to Middletown, and I expect by to-morrow night to assemble the army in that vicinity. Supplies will be then forwarded, and as soon as possible I will cross South Mountain and proceed in search of the enemy.

"Your dispatch requiring me to assume the general command of the forces in the field under Gen. Couch has been received. I know nothing of the position or strength of his command except the advance under Gen. Smith which I have ordered here and which I desire should furnish a necessary force to guard this place while the enemy is in the vicinity. A brigade of infantry and one of cavalry with two batteries will be left to watch the enemy at Fairfield and follow them whenever they vacate the Gap. I shall send general instructions to Gen. Couch to move down the Cumberland Valley as far as the enemy evacuated it and keep up communication with me but from all the information I can obtain I do not rely on any active co-operation in battle with this force. If I can get the Army of the Potomac in hand in the valley and the enemy have not crossed the river, I shall give him battle, trusting should misfortune overtake me, that sufficient number of my force, in connection with what you have in Washington, would reach that place so as to render it secure.

"General Trimble of the Confederate Army, was to-day found wounded just outside of Gettysburg. Gen. Hemper was found mortally wounded on the road to Fairfield, and a large number of wounded estimated at several thousand. Gens. Heth, Wade, Hampton, Jenkins and Pender are reported wounded.

"The losses of the enemy were no doubt very great, and he must be proportionally crippled. My Head-Quarters will be here to-night and to-morrow I expect to be at Frederick. My cavalry have been attacking the enemy on both flanks inflicting as much injury as possible."



At 5 P. M. a still further report was received from General Sedgwick, which follows:

"The enemy have withdrawn all but one regt. which is now retiring;—our skirmishers are following. I will move up to the Gap and send out a small force rapidly to observe their future movements. My main force I will move to the other side of Fairfield and await orders."

It is evident from the above despatch, which was sent by General Sedgwick at 3.25 P. M., that he had not yet received the order to again take up the march, and accordingly the following message was sent him:

"You will take every precaution to maintain the position you now hold till dark. You will then withdraw all the 6th Corps, except Gen. Neill's brigade and a rifled battery and proceed with your command (the 1st and 3d Corps included) to execute the order of march of July 5th. Gen. Neill will follow the enemy cautiously as he (the enemy) retires, keeping the com'dg. General constantly informed. The commander of the rifled battery will report to him. Col. McIntosh with his brigade of cavalry will be directed to report also to Gen. Neill. Gen. Newton has been halted near Emmettsburg. Gen. Birney has not moved from this place. You will issue orders to them to execute the order of march when you think proper. Gen. Meade does not think proper to do so himself, as circumstances may compel you to call them to your aid or to retire in some order that you alone can determine. Head-Quarters will be to-night the same place as last night."

Some of the corps, having received, in time to start that day, the order to again take up the flank movement, had moved out; and on the night of July 6 the army occupied the following positions:<sup>1</sup>

The First Corps was at Emmettsburg. The Second Corps was at Two Taverns. The Third was at Gettysburg. The Fifth between Gettysburg and Emmettsburg. The Sixth and Eleventh also at Emmettsburg, and the Twelfth Corps was at Littlestown. The cavalry was spread out on both flanks of the army. Buford's division was between Boonsboro and Williamsport, with Kilpatrick's division and one brigade of Gregg's division on its right. One brigade of Gregg's division was a few miles south of Chambersburg, and another brigade at Fairfield.

The enemy were supposed to be retiring down the Cumberland Valley between Fairfield and Hagerstown toward the Potomac.

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 22, position night of July 6.

Let us now turn to the Confederate army to see what its actual position was at the close of each of the first two days of its retreat from the field of Gettysburg.

On the night of July 5—that is to say, about the same time that the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac was at Fairfield, and General Sedgwick had reported that he believed the Confederates were going to make a stand—the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia was concentrated in the mountains in the vicinity of Fairfield.<sup>1</sup> Ewell with his corps of infantry occupied the passes at Cashtown and Fairfield. Longstreet with his whole corps was on Ewell's right, and Hill with his three divisions was in the rear in support. The cavalry under Stuart was guarding both flanks of the army.

Meanwhile, it will be remembered the Army of the Potomac had been halted by the suspension of the order to concentrate at Middletown until further information could be gained as to the probability of the enemy making a stand in force in the mountains.

On the 6th Lee again retreated, and by night Longstreet, in the advance, was about to enter Hagerstown followed by Ewell at Waynesboro.<sup>2</sup> Hill, bringing up the rear, had not yet left the mountains. The cavalry continued guarding the flanks.

The Army of the Potomac in the meantime had received the order to again take up the flank movement, and by the morning of the 7th of July the whole army was in motion.

<sup>1</sup>See Map No. 23, position night of July 5, No. 2.

<sup>2</sup>See Map No. 24, position night of July 6, No. 2.