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13. Howard Selects Cemetery Hill.

Howard, hearing the firing over by the Lutheran Seminary, thought he would reconnoiter the vicinage while waiting for Capt. Hall's return. He first turned to the left and ascended to the highest ground by the Peach Orchard. Wadsworth's division, supporting Buford's cavalry, was already partially engaged. This was evident from the sound and smoke along the Seminary Ridge. Doubleday's division appeared to be following, going from the Emmetts-
Road
burg across the fields, closing up on Wadsworth.

While on that height by the Peach Orchard, Howard noticed another higher hill eastward, near Gettysburg; so with his immediate following he galloped over there. The cavalcade ascended to the top of this, the Cemetery Ridge, and rode to the northern extremity. Here Howard halted and with his adjutant-general, Meysenburg, by his side, took a view of this ground and the surrounding country. then was thinking of securing some defensive line

to use, if his advice should be asked, or in case of other need. Studying this ridge, he said to Meysenburg, "This seems to be a good position, Colonel!" Meysenburg replied, "It is the only position, General."

Continuing the reconnaissance, Howard then rode rapidly into the town, tried to ascend the belfry of the court-house, but finding no stairway, a lad called his attention to another place across the street. It was Fahnestock's Observatory. With two or three staff officers he made his way to the top. Within the small square space there fenced in he spread out his map and began a study of the situation. What did he see? These are his words: "I saw the roads, now so familiar, from Bonnaughtown, York, Shippenburg, Chambersburg, (or Cashtown) and Hagerstown-- roads emerging from Gettysburg like the spokes from the hub of a wheel; roads which are exceedingly important for the soldier in command to have engraved on his memory. I saw Buford's

division of cavalry, seeming in the largeness of the field beyond the college but a handful." "I got glimpses of Wadsworth's division of infantry fighting near the Oak Ridge railroad cut. Success was then attending him and prisoners in gray were being conducted into the town. I saw Doubleday's division beyond the Lutheran Seminary, filing out of sight beyond Oak Ridge to the south of West a mile away."

4. Jno. F. Reynolds' Death--Howard Takes Command.

As Howard stood there diligently plying his field-glass and quickening his thoughts, a young ~~officer~~ ^{cavalry soldier} was approaching rapidly. He halted in the street, and saluting, said, "General Reynolds is wounded, Sir!" Howard replied, "I am very sorry; I hope he will be able to keep the field." A few minutes later another (it was Capt. Hall, and not Major Biddle, as was erroneously recorded) called from below, "General Reynolds is dead and you are

the senior officer on the field."

(Of course Howard was at first startled at the suddenness of responsibility and of great danger to the national cause. A large part of Lee's army he knew to be close by. On the other side just then there were on the field less than 10,000 Union men.) It was about 11.30 a.m., and the 11th Corps could not well be expected for an hour; and it seemed almost hopeless that Meade with the 6th Corps over thirty miles away, could gather his widely separated troops in time to promise success to our arms. Howard, as a sudden resolution entered his heart, exclaimed to himself, "But, God helping us, we will stay here till the army comes!"

(He at once assumed command of the field, giving Schurz the 11th Corps; Doubleday now commanded the 1st Corps; and Buford continued with his cavalry. Captain Pearson, A. D. C., was dispatched with the news to Sickles at Emmetsburg and with entreaty for him to come up as quickly as possible; then on to

Meade at Taneytown with report; and another messenger threaded the Baltimore Pike back to Slocum, near Two Taverns with the same sad tidings; and also others to Schurz and Barlow on their respective roads of approach.) To get off these important dispatches took but a few minutes. (Then Howard rode slowly, followed by his escort and all headquarter belongings, to take possession of the high ground near the Cemetery gate.) ^{and took} How providential that that Cemetery had been already examined!

Here Schurz, who hearing the firing, had hastened forward before his marching column, joined Howard, and received his orders: "The First Corps is over there," pointing westward, "holding that ridge parallel to this; Buford's cavalry on the right. Prisoners show that a large force of Lee is already there. Place all the reserve batteries of your command on this Cemetery hill and support them by Steinwher's division. Send to the right of the First Corps north of Gettysburg the other two-

divisions (Barlow's and Schimmelfennig's) to give support to Doubleday. The headquarters for the day will be here!"

That was the way that the Cemetery Hill was taken possession of. Howard's immediate determination was to hold the front line as long as possible; and when compelled to retreat, as he doubtless would be, to dispute the ground obstinately, but to have a strong position for his reserves and one that he could hold till at least Slocum and Sickles could ~~reach~~ certainly reach him; and then possibly Meade and the rest.

While Howard and Schurz are pausing here on Cemetery Ridge, let students go back a little to the beginning of this day and see what has thus far been done.

15. First Day's Battle.

As the day dawned before Buford, commanding the Union cavalry, was near that Oak Ridge and ready for work. He had deployed his brigades beyond him

and sent his scouts far out on every road of approach toward the town of Gettysburg, which itself covered with its buildings, about one square mile. He had caused his horse artillery and cavalry men to dismount and fight as infantry. One brigade, Devin's, held the right roads, that is the Chambersburg and the Carlisle, while Gambles covered the space as far as Hagerstown, as well as he could.

The confederates in column at daylight were advancing. Pettigrew's brigade that had fled from Gettysburg on Buford's coming the day before, came back and with it all of Heth's division. Soon skirmish lines were formed and, pushing in Buford's pickets, slowly caused his skirmishers to retire. By nine o'clock the Confederate advance was in sight of Buford's artillery and of the Lutheran Seminary. Buford opened his artillery and his carbine fire as sharply as he could with his thin and extended lines. This bold stand made Confederate Heth cautious. He halted; he gradually sent main lines to

right and left of the Chambersburg pike -- two brigades in front and one in reserve. Then, lest he be too fast, he waited for Pender's division.

While Hill, the Confederate corps commander, *was*

there

~~is~~ trying to ascertain what ~~is~~ ^{was} in front of him, Buford at the Seminary had descried bright Union flags to the south of him. Buford was glad enough when a little afterward Reynolds himself, about 10 a.m., grasped his hand and told him that Wadsworth's division was close by, and the rest not far off! As Reynolds was to govern the wing and the field, he let Doubleday control the movements of the First Corps. With Buford Reynolds went out to the position of Gamble and encouraged his weary cavalrymen to hold steady a little longer, till his infantry could replace them. He sent back and had Wadsworth brought forward. Wadsworth took the right of the Chambersburg pike and the railroad cut with Cutler's brigade and Hall's battery, while Reynolds himself followed the other, "the iron brigade," (Meredith's) to the left of the pike.

Confederate Davis, with a small brigade, was at last advancing against Cutler; and Confederate Archer with another, massed farther south, against Meredith. The fire opened and became very brisk on both sides. Reynolds, hearing the firing of Cutler, was hurrying Meredith's regiments into position. All this, which it takes but a minute to tell, had consumed much time. It was now nearly 11 o'clock, and Doubleday with his divisions of Rowley and Robinson was near to Reynolds when a ball pierced Reynolds' forehead and he fell dead. The news had been carried to Howard, standing, as we have seen, on Fahnenstock's observatory.

The battle went on. At first Wadsworth's right was driven back, but after awhile most of Confederate Davis' brigade was captured in the railroad cut, and Davis regiments, taken in flank, were brought in. Doubleday made as long a front as he could, sending Robinson to the right of Wadsworth, and Rowley to the left of Meredith. Buford had

marched off to watch the extreme right of the extended line.

(The energy of the commencement of this great action had already produced the desired effect. Lee supposed he had a larger force before him than he had; and so, holding his front and firing occasionally he waited to get up part of Longstreet's corps, yet behind, and part of Ewell's.) The prisoners ^{in Gray} taken had been sent back to the town for safekeeping and the ambulances were bringing in the wounded; orderlies with messages were going back and forth between Doubleday, Buford and Howard.

It was after 12.30 when Barlow's head of column on the Emmetsburg road came in sight. Howard, leaving his chief of staff and headquarters at the Cemetery, took two or three horsemen with him and joined Barlow, and with him rode through Gettysburg. Schurz had already caused Wheeler's and Dilger's batteries to trot out through the town and pass to the north and take position in advance. The noise

of the batteries caused some excitement. The streets were pretty much deserted. Barlow and Howard caught a glimpse of a young lady who bravely came to her porch and waved her handkerchief as the division passed her. It was a cheering review, better than music.

As Schurz~~x~~ put his men in position, -almost at right angles to Robinson and in echelon with two of his regiments that were making a small flank, and extending his line eastward away over to Rock Creek,- Howard rode along southward past Robinson's men to Wadsworth; then on till he could see Doubleday and discern his left resting upon Willoughby Run. He said to each commander: "We will hold out here upon the Seminary (or Oak) Ridge as long as we can, but if forced to retreat we must dispute the ground foot by foot and go to the position on Cemetery Ridge."

Howard then turned from Doubleday's left flank, and hastened back to the Cemetery. He believed

from the indications that Lee would soon use all A. P. Hill's corps and support it by such brigades of Longstreet's as were present; so that Doubleday's weak left, resting on no redoubt or natural obstacle would inevitably be overreached and displaced.

16. Ewell's Approach.

Just then, looking from the Cemetery Hill, he noticed a wooded knoll north of Robinson. He said to himself: "Let us seize that." It will take Lee's attention and perhaps bring ^{us} relief!" The order to Schurz to do this had scarcely left him when Major Howard, his aide, brought word, "Ewell's corps is here, coming from the north." Schurz' order was instantly countermanded, except to push out his skirmishers. He found that wooded knoll already held by Confederate Rhodes' division, and Early's whole division was just appearing from the eastward, far beyond Schurz' right flank.

Disaster now seemed inevitable; the odds against Howard were more than two to one. While messengers

sped off again for Slocum and Sickles, the skirmishing and artillery firing at the front was increasing to a storm. A small success near Robinson's left, in which a regiment in the 11th Corps bore some part, resulted in taking in as prisoners another Confederate brigade, that of Iverson. But the calls from Schurz and Doubleday for re-enforcements were now insistent.

About 3.30 the fighting was at its height all along the line. Early, to the east, had deployed opposite and beyond Schurz, and Rhodes was striking for the weakest point between the 11th and First Union Corps, and Confederate Hill was firing, and advancing his abundant brigades, more than masking all of Doubleday's front. Steinwher, on the Union side, at the Cemetery had intrenched and instructed his batteries; and Osborn, the artillery chief, had arranged as many guns as he could use to sweep the streets of approach. One small brigade (Costar's) had been sent by Howard to the edge of the town to possess houses there and make barricades.

17. Retreat to Cemetery.

Then, feeling that his weakening lines could stand the heavy storm of battle but little longer, Howard dispatched the positive order to Doubleday, Schurz and Buford to fall back to the Cemetery as slowly as possible and take a stand on the ridge-- Schurz to the right of the Baltimore Pike and Doubleday to the left. Buford must extend the line southward and make all the show possible with his cavalry and artillery.

Afterwards

^ Doubleday was of opinion that the retreat would have been a more successful one "if it had not been unfortunately the case that a portion of the 11th Corps which had held out very well on the extreme right had been surrounded, and had fallen back at the same time that his (my) right flank fell back."

The two corps, a good deal broken up, came together in the town. The Confederates pressed them hard. Costar's brigade did good work in protecting

(not a good word)

flying men, but was taken captive almost entire, and the losses to both of the Union corps were very great. (But with all their bloody repulses and losses, the majority reached and defended the Cemetery Hill.) Lee made but one attempt aiming to turn Howard's new right by Rock Creek, when Osborn, Howard's chief of artillery, gave the venturesome Confederates such a shower of artillery projectiles that they ran back to the town for cover.

(Howard in a monograph has written thus of the closing scenes of this 1st day of July:

"As the men were reaching their new position on the heights at the time of greatest confusion, General Hancock joined me near the Baltimore pike; he was sent up from Taneytown by General Meade to represent his (Meade's) authority on the field. After a few friendly words between us, Hancock took Wadsworth's division to Culp's Hill. . . . He worked hard to aid me in rallying the troops and putting them in line. "At sundown Hancock returned to Taneytown. Meanwhile Slocum's troops had come

and been put in position; and Sickles, who by the messengers' delay did not get word till late, had also arrived and extended the lines along the Cemetery Ridge, southward.

"The First Corps, then the 11th and Buford's cavalry, did their duty nobly the first day at Gettysburg; fought themselves into a good defensive position, good especially when the Army of the Potomac came up in its entirety to occupy it. General Lee, from the vigor of our defense mistaking our numbers and beholding the great fortification-like appearance of our new stand, contented himself with what he had gained and postponed further attack till the next day."

For the selection of this ground and defending it General Meade gave Howard the credit in his report; and ^{Howard} at a later date received, for that and his other work at Gettysburg, the unanimous thanks of Congress.

18. Second Day's Battle.

That night Slocum, Sickles and Howard remained together near the Cemetery Lodge. The gate-keeper's wife gave them coffee to refresh them. Perhaps a little after three o'clock a.m., the 2d of July, General Meade and his staff made their appearance. The first words he spoke to Howard were in commendation of his work of the preceeding day and in apology for one of his orders which had looked like a condemnation. He then asked him concerning the situation. Howard replied, "I am confident we can hold this position." Gen. Sickles, who was near, said, "It is a good place to fight from, General." Meade replied, "I am glad to hear you say so, gentlemen, for it is too late to leave it."

After a short conversation standing together, Meade and Howard mounted and rode along in rear of the men sleeping in place by their arms. The lines were yet thin, but Meade said that the other corps

were near at hand. The two generals rode to the point of the Cemetery where the Soldiers' Monument now stands. Meade, as well as he could with his field-glass, took a survey of the hill and its environments, while Howard now and then spoke to him a few explanatory words.

The sun was just rising. There was an occasional cannon shot from a hill far to the north and then replies from the nearest Union battery. There was a rattling of skirmish shots from the pickets. Meade now saw the Cemetery Ridge. It was like a fortification on the north, where the Ridge was terminated by the Rock Creek and valley. Like the flank of a fort came Culp's Hill, a rocky, wooded knoll a little back and close to the Creek. Letting the eye run from Culp's Hill along the Cemetery front to his left, he noticed a group of trees, ~~called~~ called "Ziegler's Grove." Beyond that was, apparently, lower ground, which gradually ascended southward till the upward slope ended in an abrupt rock

spur which the inhabitants called "Little Roundtop." Beyond this, Meade's view was limited by a more pronounced hill, the highest point of all, covered thickly with trees, called "Big Roundtop."

Now, turning around and looking to the crossing of the Rock Creek by the Baltimore pike, near McAllister's Mill, a half mile to the east, and letting his eye sweep around westward to Culp's Hill, next to the highest point of the Cemetery Ridge, thence southward to the Roundtops, Meade saw the ground already partly occupied, but before many hours to be covered with his troops.

It was like a fish-hook lying before you with the concavity toward you: the point at McAllister's; the bend at the Cemetery; the shank the remainder of the line. From extreme right to extreme left the distance was five miles.

Meade could not thus early define the exact position of his enemy. He and his staff caught glimpses of batteries. He soon knew where were the

pickets, and guessed at the rest. There was the village below; northwesterly the long Seminary or Oak Ridge beyond the village, less than a mile off, fringed with trees. There were the roads leading to town and a rolling interval before him; Benner's Hill and other high ground for Lee's artillery to the north, where some hostile troops were already in motion.

"The General stood there in this magnificent morning light with a panorama spread before him of hill and valley and mountain and woodland and cultivated farms, of orchard and grassland, as beautiful as nature anywhere furnishes. But he saw not the beauty; he was planning for Lee and planning for himself; plan against plan, move against move. In a few minutes he turned away slowly, and rode back to the Gate, and soon after the army lines began to take new form." (Gen. Howard in Atlantic Monthly).

9. How Meade Placed His Army.

*Was not
Carroll
Tweener?*

All soldiers will understand the arrangements. Beginning at our extreme right at McAllister's Mill Slocum's two divisions, those of A. S. Williams and Geary; the Confederate Ewell has ^{two divisions} opposite these, Ed. Johnson's and Early's. On Culp's Hill, our Wadsworth's division; next on Cemetery Hill, Schurtz' three, Ames', Shimmelfenning's and Steinwehr's; opposite these are some troops of Early's division and all of Rhodes'. Next to Steinwehr from Cemetery to Ziegler's Grove, Doubleday's and Robinson's divisions; then Hancock's three divisions in line leftward, Hayes', Caldwell's and Gibbon's; opposite to all these, Confederate Hill's large corps in divisions--Anderson's, Pender's and Heth's.

For this day, July 2d, Sickles' corps covered all the remaining ground to Little Roundtop, in two large divisions, Humphrey's and Birney's. Here was the extreme left, for Buford's cavalry division had

been withdrawn. Sickles pushed his men forward to possess the Peach Orchard and rested his left at "The Devil's Den," a rugged, ugly-looking, rocky prominence in front of the Roundtops. Opposite Sickles was Longstreet, commanding two divisions, Pickett's being absent, viz: McLaw's and Hood's. Our Sykes' Fifth Corps at first was behind the lines, in reserve: Barnes', Ayers' and Crawford's divisions. Pleasanton's cavalry was then guarding the right flank; opposite was Stuart's horse, as soon as it reached the field, somewhat fagged after its extensive raid. General Buford's division of cavalry, placed by Howard beyond Sickles' position, withdrawn by Meade, had been sent back to Westminster to guard the main supply trains. By some oversight there was no cavalry at all near the Roundtops during the 2d of July.

Sedgwick at Manchester, as soon as Meade's call reached him at nine o'clock at night, made a remarkable march in the next seventeen hours. He tried

the experiment of resting his men ten minutes at the end of each hour, with two or three longer halts en route. About 2 p.m. this, Meade's largest corps, marched into position as the main reserve, back of Meade's headquarters, which were then at Mrs. Leister's house, southeast of Ziegler's Grove, and on the Taneytown road. This house was much exposed to Lee's artillery, and soon seemed to have become a target for the enemy's long range guns. There was no more dangerous place anywhere during the artillery duelling, except the Cemetery itself. Lee's artillery officers had sought for prominent points to locate their cannon, all along the front near the Oak Ridge and off to the north; those on Benner's Hill enfiladed the Cemetery line, but were too far away to give Meade much annoyance. Lee used over 270 guns.

Meade's Chief of Artillery, Hunt, aided by Wainwright and Osborne, carefully posted his answering cannon. Cemetery Ridge was dotted with pieces;

and batteries, or sections, were put in action wherever there was an available spot; and of course the remainder were placed in reserve under some cover, and ready at call. Except weary men of the Sixth Corps, the army was rested. The influence of order, movement and reenforcement gave great joy to those who had met and survived such fearful odds the day before.

Greatly to the satisfaction of Meade and his corps commanders, there was nothing during the morning but the spurts before the shower; for Lee had been advised by Ewell not to attempt to attack our right near Culp's Hill, as he had first planned. Nothing of importance was done till 4 p.m. There was some small movement, probably the Confederate chief was bringing support to his batteries. There was all along the line a curious magnetic feeling, an unusual expectancy, as the words ran along the lines, "Be ready for action!"

After the signal at four o'clock thirty or

forty hostile batteries from front and right opened their fire on our position. The Union guns, fully manned and ready, made instant and rapid response. Puffs of smoke showed gunners where to aim. Then great projectiles were in the air and thunderous noise shook the ground. Occasionally a round shot would hit the ridge and often a shell would explode above men's heads and send its death-dealing fragments into their midst to trouble the brave artillery men and their horses, or to rattle among the tombstones. Some went over and set ambulances, wagons and all lookers-on into a rapid retreat from the shelter they had sought. The crest was so narrow that but few lodged on it, yet, a few did so. And such, for example, struck the ranks of a New York regiment and exploded, killing and wounding twenty-seven men.

20. A Cemetery Incident.

One Union battery occupied a prominent front,

facing west. It seemed for a time to escape every accident; the horses remained attached to its limbers and caissons. Among those who served the right piece was a handsome young man. He was notable for his cheerful demeanor and for his activity. He ran to straighten up the horses as they would in terror sway back in the harness; he then hastened to the limber for a cartridge, singing and whistling as he sped from place to place. Of a sudden a single solid shot, better aimed by the Confederate gunners than its predecessors and giving no warning, struck this artilleryman in the thigh; there was one sad cry, and the young man was a mangled corpse!

A correspondent who was at the Cemetery during this fierce cannonade has given this picture:

"There came then a storm of shot and shell; marble slabs were broken, iron fences shattered and horses disemboweled. The air was full of wild and hideous noises--the low buzz of round shot, the whizzing of elongated bolts, and the stunning explosions

overhead and all around. . . . "In three minutes the earth shook with the tremendous concussion of 200 pieces of artillery."

21. The Infantry Attack.

It will be remembered how General Sickles, having no cavalry, had arranged his lines. First, Humphrey's division being a half mile in front of Hancock's left flank, Hancock had sent part of Gibbon's men forward, part way, as support. Birney's division next to Humphrey's had three brigades. The first, Graham's, extended over the Peach Orchard crest, and then trended back obliquely toward the Devil's Den. De Trobriand's brigade continued this line into that rough ground. Ward's brigade, holding the precipitous ravines and huge rocks of the ugly "Den," completed Sickles' left flank.

Longstreet had taken his infantry around out of our sight. Hood's Confederate division overlapped the Devil's Den southward and looked straight toward the wooded hollow between the Roundtops.

McLaw's large Confederate division was masking the whole of Sickles' center and right. Anderson's division of A. P. Hill, supported McLaw's close to McLaws's left. This, with the cannon, was the entire attacking force. Lee's plan was, that while Longstreet was making the main assault, Hill must threaten us at the Cemetery, and Ewell do so more fiercely between Culp's Hill and McAllister's Mill; all this to prevent Meade from reenforcing anywhere.

As soon as the terrible ^{cannon} roar had lulled, the Confederates Hood and McLaws followed rapidly the havoc supposed to have been made by their artillery. The rapidity of Hood caused our De Trobriand and Ward to receive the first onslaught. They did not give way under it, but returned shot for shot, and held fast; so that considerable of Longstreet's front was stopped right there. Our Graham's brigade was fearfully exposed. A few minutes later, after Hood's charge, Graham was struggling with Confederate McLaws. Graham's men held their position, but

a short time. The weak angle gave back first. Yet, in some parts of Sherfy's Orchard the struggle was more severe and more prolonged.

22. Bigelow's Battery.

Sickles' batteries here did remarkable service. Bigelow's, for example, near Trostle's barn, fought hard, lost its infantry support, was forced to retire. It did so, using the prolonge and keeping up its fire from place to place. At last the Confederates with a rush were upon his guns. Bigelow blew them even from the muzzles of his pieces. But they came on; they shot his horses, they clambered over his limbers. Five of his non-commissioned officers and twenty-two of his men were killed or wounded, and Bigelow himself was seriously wounded in the side. But, strange to tell, he so extricated two out ^{of} his six guns as to continue the resistance till McGilvery, the corps chief, had put a fresh battery on the higher ground behind him. It

was such combats as these made by Bigelow and his brave men, made all along Sickles' front, that delayed the Confederate advance that 2d of July.

During the fearful struggle between infantry and infantry, or artillery and infantry, of men of equal courage and energy on both sides, ranging from the Roundtops to the Emmettsburg road, ravines, rocks, trees, stone-fences, in fact, every natural obstacle had been taken advantage of by the Union men, who, much outnumbered at those points, had been forced to retire. But they retired so slowly that they delayed Longstreet a full hour in arriving at his objective--the now famous Little Roundtop.

23. How Meade Reenforced.

During that hour Meade had not been idle. Sickles had been wounded, losing his leg, and Birney had taken his place. Birney called loudly for help. Meade directed Hancock, Sykes, Sedgwick, and finally Slocum to reenforce his now shattered left.

a brigade of

Follow Caldwell's division, which Howard had once commanded, for a few minutes forward into that battle. Facing southwest, it crossed the fields under every sort of fire, grazed the Devil's Den on the left, and its right entered De Trobriand's wheat field. It brushed back part of McLaws' and Wilcox, who supported him, and so charged the left flank of Hood's line as to drive all Confederates within reach behind the huge rocks and into the wooded ravines for shelter. Colonel Cross, who controlled the First brigade, tall, elastic and full of ardor, believing in a charmed life for himself, though often wounded, here met the fatal call. His monument now marks the spot. General Zook, who led forward his brigade--a kind, patient spirit--fell here. General Brooke, though wounded, stayed in that wild place and directed matters with his wonted coolness.

Take another point, Meade's left-most point? Lossing, in his history, speaking of the low ridge

between the Roundtops, says: "Never was there a wilder place for combat and never was there a combat more fierce than was seen there on that hot July evening; with blazing musketry and hand-to-hand struggles, with clubbed fire-arms and jagged stones. For half an hour this conflict went on, when a charge from the 20th Maine, under Colonel Chamberlain, hurled the Texans from the hill."

Now another point. Warren, Meade's chief of engineers, going on before Sykes, found the signal officer near Little Roundtop already startled as he beheld a line of Hood's men advancing with quick step from his front and left. "Keep the signal flag in motion!" said Warren. In a few minutes he was back with plenty of troops. They nevertheless had no time to lose. There was Weed's brigade, O'Rourke's 140th New York Regiment, and Vincent's brigade, thrown a little to the south, while Hazzlett's battery was dragged by hand to the stony part of Little Roundtop. The enemy's objective was

now covered by Union men front and flank. And oh, who can describe the deadly struggle for that key-point of the field?

Here are one or two pictures. Young Col. O'Rorke, but a few months from West Point, meets them in double time, loses heavily, and loses his life. Gen. Weed, one of New York's best, follows to support O'Rorke and ^{Harris'} his battery. He falls forward wounded to death. Lieutenant Hazlett, who is his warm friend is catching Weed's last word, when also struck, he falls upon the body of his commander and both die together. Yonder in front the wounded, the dying and the dead, soldiers of every grade, were piled together!

Dreadful was that flank fight, the most important of the day. Here many other troops of Sykes, the commander of Meade's old corps, especially his regulars under Ayres, bore the brunt of repeated Confederate charges. But at this hill Hood's men, now under another commander, for Hood was severely wounded, were effectually stopped.

24. Humphrey and Crawford.

Meanwhile Confederate Anderson swept down upon the brave Humphrey. He ^{Humphrey} resisted as long as he could. When both his flanks were enveloped; then he would give back, fighting, Gibbon's men protecting his right. For a few moments about six p.m. Humphrey in an open space, endeavoring to gain a stone fence in his rear, was so hard pressed that he thought the day was lost. Wheaton's division of the 6th Corps and William's of the 12th had deployed right there in the nick of time, so that after passing behind the wall, Humphrey's division gained the needed rest and cover to re-form.

Crawford's Pennsylvania Reserves, Meade's first division to command, now went into battle in extended order from places near the Little Roundtop. He drove what was left of Hood's and McLaws' disorganized infantry and one or two batteries back through the Devil's Den, across the wheat field.

and into the wood beyond. Crawford says, "Heavy lines of skirmishers were thrown out and the ground firmly and permanently held." Meade's ^{new} left was now well established, for Sykes possessed the new line of the Roundtops; Sedgwick's corps, the largest of all, was behind him; and further, Pleasanton had now sent Kilpatrick's cavalry division to watch and guard the left of Sykes'.

It had been an exciting afternoon; Meade had lost the Peach Orchard line,--the new position was a half mile back; the dead and wounded of both armies lay between them. The victory was not decisive enough for rejoicing. It only made everybody feel thankful that things were not worse, and dread the morrow.

25. Night Engagement.

One brigade only was left by Slocum, when he removed Williams' division and Geary's from McAllister's Mill over to help Sickles, miles away. That

brigade was fortunately commanded by one of Meade's best soldiers, General George S. Greene. He held it near Culp's Hill, watching, as well as he could in a thin forest, Slocum's empty barricades.

Howard's brief ~~account~~ of this, a most remarkable night fight, must suffice:

"After the struggle had closed, and when we supposed we should have a rest for the night, some troops in our front, said to be the "Louisiana Tigers," sprang from their covers under the steep hill on the north end of Cemetery Ridge, broke thro' Ames' division, and in three minutes were upon our batteries, Wiedrick's and others,--almost without firing a shot. General Schurz by my order sent a part of a brigade under Colonel Kryzanowski to the batteries' immediate relief. The artillerymen left their guns and used sponge-staffs, handspikes, or anything they could lay hold of, to beat back the enemy. As soon as help came the batteries were

Schurz also sent a brigade farther to the

right to help General Greene, who requested re-enforcements. I sent to Meade for more troops, as part of Ames' division was forced back and a gap made. But Hancock, hearing the firing, had detached Colonel S. S. Carroll, with his spirited brigade, to my aid. His men formed at right angles to the general line, and swept swiftly over the highest ground northward, carrying everything before them. Generals Steinwehr and Newton immediately filled any gaps made on my left by sudden withdrawals."

This night engagement extended eastward as far Slocum had any troops. It was Ewell's effort on our right to assist Lee's main attack. The enemy's troops took quiet possession of all points vacated, and really slept within our lines, within a stone's throw of the Baltimore Pike; but the ground was so rough and the woods so dark that their generals did not realize till morning what they had gained.

This was the condition of things at the close of the second day. Lee held Sickles' advance position of the morning, and part of our rifle-pits

or barricades between McAllister's Mill and Culp's Hill. Lee modestly says, "These partial successes determined me to continue the assault the next day."

(Howard's Monograph continues:)

24 26. Third Day's Battle.

How Slocum regained his lines.

"The detachments of the 12th Corps (Williams' division strengthened by Lockwood's brigade) that had given efficient help on the left during the 2d of July, and two brigades of Geary's division, which Meade says did not reach the scene of action from having mistaken the road, attempted after night to return to their breast-works on the extreme right of our line; but, [as I have intimated,] they found them already occupied by Johnston's Confederates. Gen. Slocum was at this time in command of more troops than the 12th Corps, and Gen. A. S. Williams had the latter. Williams made arrangements to at-

formerly occupied by the corps." (See Gen. Meade's corrected report.)

Slocum arranged some fourteen batteries on Wolfe's Hill, a convenient knoll behind the army, and supported them with such other troops as Meade loaned him. Williams then stretched a line in triangle: one foot was Greene by Culp's Hill, and the other Ruger's right, by McAllister's Mill; Wolfe's Hill the apex. Ewell, the Confederate commander who had also ordered an attack at dawn, really began the battle.

"I slept with others inside of a family lot in the Cemetery, beside an iron fence, with a grave mound for a pillow. Being very weary for want of rest on previous nights, I was not awakened till five a.m., when I heard quick, sharp musketry firing, with an occasional sound of artillery. It began like the pattering of rain on a flat roof, only louder, and was at first intermitted. Then it would increase in volume of sound till it attained a continuous roar. Of course I sent at once

to headquarters to ascertain what the firing meant. The reply came shortly, "The 12th Corps is regaining its lines." ~~By~~ ^{Before} seven o'clock the battle was fully joined. The Confederates were fully determined to hold on, and disputed the ground with great obstinacy. But after a lively contest of five hours, Ewell was driven beyond Rock Creek, and the breastworks were re-occupied and held. I went over this ground five years after the battle, and marks of the struggle were still to be observed; the moss on the rocks was discolored in hundreds of places where bullets had struck; the trees cut off, lopped down, or shivered, were still there; stumps and trees were perforated with holes where leaden balls had since been dug out; and remnants of the rough breastworks remained. I did not wonder that General Geary, who was in the thickest of this fight, thought the main battle of Gettysburg ^{had} (must have) been fought there.

27. Cavalry Combats on the Flank.

^uStewart's cavalry made a demonstration at this time beyond Ewell. The able General Gregg's division engaged him vigorously near the Bonnaughtown road, and checked his advance so as to prevent mischief from that quarter. About this time our bold, sanguine Kilpatrick moved his division of cavalry over beyond the enemy's right, near the Emmetsburg road, where Pleasanton later in the day directed him "to pitch in with all his might on Longstreet's right."

In these combats several valuable officers lost their lives. Among them was General Farnsworth, in command of a brigade, near the time of Pickett's repulse. Pleasanton speaks of this work on the enemy's right as follows: "I have always been of the opinion that the demonstration of cavalry on our left materially checked the attack of the enemy on the 3d of July."

26. Pickett's Charge.

The last bloody contests at Gettysburg opened about one p.m. by a cannonade. Lee's plan was substantially the same as that of the day before, except that Longstreet now had Pickett's division, and Lee added one division and two brigades of A. P. Hill to the attacking column. Longstreet brought together in his front, opposite the low ground west of Little Roundtop, ⁷⁵ ~~fifty-five~~ long range guns, and Hill massed some sixty more a little farther towards and opposite our center. The point of attack was on Hancock's front.

The signal gun was fired by the enemy, and from the southwest, west, north and northeast, his batteries opened, hurling into the Cemetery grounds missiles of all descriptions. Shells burst in the air, on the ground, at our right and left, and in front, killing men and horses, exploding caissons, overturning tombstones and smashing fences. The troops hugged their cover, when they had any, as

well as they could. One regiment of Steinwher's was fearfully cut to pieces by a shell. Several officers passing a certain path within a stone-throw of my position were either killed or wounded. The German boy holding our horses under cover of the Cemetery Hill on the eastern slope, near a large rock, had his left arm clipped off with a fragment of a shell. Men fell while eating, or while their food was in their hands, and some with cigars in their mouths."

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At half past two p.m. we ceased to reply. We had ammunition, and were not silenced, but we knew that this cannonade preceded an attack, and we thought it possible the enemy would conclude that we had been stopped by their effective shots and would proceed to the contemplated attack; then we should need batteries in readiness and plenty of ammunition. We were right. The firing of the enemy lulled, and I could see, better than the day before, their infantry in line: at least a quarter of a

mile of it was exposed to my view, as it started from Oak Ridge opposite our ^{centre} left. It was like an extensive parade; the flags were flying and the line steadily advancing. As I know now, these were Pickett's and Pettigrew's divisions and part of Anderson's, with Wilcox' brigade supporting their right.

On they came. As soon as they were near enough Osborne, Wainwright, McElvery, and other artillery chiefs started the fire of their batteries; first with solid shot, making hardly any impression; soon with shells exploding near and over and beyond the advancing line. Now gaps were plainly made, but quickly filled. When nearer, the cannister was freely used, and the gaps in the enemy's line grew bigger and harder to close. Soon this array came within short musketry range of our full long line in front, all concealed by temporary cover, breast-works, stone walls and trenches. As if by some

simultaneous impulse, the whole line fired and continued to fire rapidly for perhaps five or ten minutes. As the smoke rose I saw no longer any enemy's line. There was running in every direction. Regiments of ours from Steinwäher's position to Roundtop were moving in to the valley with their flags flying and apparently without much order, taking flags, guns and prisoners, and bringing them in.

General Hancock, by special direction, commanded the majority of the troops on that front of attack, namely the first, second and third corps; Newton having the First, Gibbon the Second, and Birney the Third, during this day's combat.

Hancock says: "The shock of the assault fell on the second and third divisions of the Second Corps; and those were the troops assisted by a small brigade of Vermont troops, together with the artillery of our line, which fired from Roundtop to Cemetery Hill at the enemy, all the way as they advanced, whenever they had the opportunity. . .

No doubt there were other troops that fired a little but these were the troops that really withstood the shock of the assault. . . ." I was wounded,"

Hancock adds, "at the close of the assault, and that ended my operations with the army for that campaign."

General Hancock mentions the fact that General Gibbon was also wounded during this assault, and thinks that the absence of two commanders who knew thoroughly the circumstances at such a ~~moment~~ as this was a great detriment. ^{to make} "Otherwise, advantage would have been taken of the enemy's repulse by our making a decisive advance."

⚡ Our entire loss is reported at 23,186, of whom 2834 were killed, 13,709 wounded and 6643 missing. It is difficult to ascertain Lee's losses. We had in our hands upwards of 7000 wounded Confederates, the most of whom were so severely injured that they could not accompany the retiring army. The hospital record gives the number 7262. If we deduct this from the whole number of prisoners, which I

believe is understated by General Meade at 13,621, it gives us 6359 well prisoners. The most moderate estimate that I have seen of the enemy's loss in killed is 5500. Now, if we place the number who were not so severely wounded as to be left behind, and those who escaped from the field and did not fall into our hands, but were lost to the enemy, at 10,000 (probably the number was much greater), we have 29,121 for the aggregate of Lee's losses.

29. After The Battle.

Nothing can ever give an adequate picture of that field of battle during the night of Friday and the two following days. There is an exhilaration in the preparation for conflict, there is spirited excitement during the storm of the heated engagement; but who can bear the sight of blackened corpses of distorted faces of the dying, or of the pale, quiet sufferers who lie for hours and sometimes days for their turn to lose an arm or a leg at the

hands of the overtasked surgeon?

I saw, just before leaving the Cemetery on the 5th of July, a large plat of ground covered with wounded Confederates, some of whom had been struck on the first and some on the second day's battle, not yet attended to. The army surgeons, and the physicians who now flocked to their aid by every incoming train from the North, were doing their best; yet it took time and unremitting labor to go through the mass. The dirt and blood and pallor of this bruised mass of humanity affected me in a manner I can never forget, pleading pathetically for peace and good-will toward men.

The circumstances of the retreat and our slow pursuit, the stand of Lee at the river, our council of war, where Wadsworth, Pleasanton and Howard urged an immediate attack, and Meade's failure to attack, are familiar to all who were connected with the army." (Extract from a lecture delivered after

The Thanks of Congress;--President Lincoln.

When General Meade and his army received the thanks of Congress, Senator Grimes, of Iowa, said on the floor of the Senate: "As I have read the history of that campaign, the man who selected the position where the battle of Gettysburg was fought and who indeed fought it on the first day was Genl. Howard; and to him the country is indebted as much for the credit of securing that victory as to any other person. I wish, therefore, as a recognition of his merits, to couple his name with that of Genl. Meade in the vote of thanks."

It was so done. And surely Howard had a right to be glad and proud of this unsought and unexpected testimonial. But as it was intimated to him, after Lee's escape, that it was believed that he was ambitious for Meade's place, he wrote to Mr. Lincoln a letter which drew from him a characteristic answer.

Headquarters 11th Corps,
Army of the Potomac,
near Berlin.

July 18th, 1863.

To the President of the United States:

Sir:-

Having noticed in the newspapers certain statements bearing upon the battle of Gettysburg and subsequent operations which I deem calculated to convey a wrong impression to your mind, I wish to submit a few statements. The successful issue of the battle of Gettysburg was due mainly to the energetic operations of our present commanding general prior to the engagement, and to the manner in which he handled his troops on the field. The reserves have never before during this war been thrown in just at the right moment. In many cases when points were just being carried by the enemy, a regiment or brigade appeared, to stop his progress and hurl him back.

Moreover, I have never seen a more hearty co-operation on the part of general officers than since General Meade took command. As to not attacking the enemy prior to leaving his stronghold beyond the

[at Williamsport]

Antietam, it is by no means certain that the repulse of Gettysburg might not have been turned upon us.

At any rate the commanding general was in favor of an immediate attack; but with the evident difficulties in our way, the uncertainty of a success, and the strong conviction of our best military minds against the risks, I must say that I think the General acted wisely. As to my request to make a reconnaissance on the morning of the 14th, which the papers state was refused, the facts are that the General had required me to reconnoiter the evening before and give my opinion as to the practicability of making a lodgement on the enemy's left; and his answer to my subsequent request was that the movements he had already ordered would subserve the same purpose. We have, if I may be allowed to say it, a commanding general in whom all officers with whom I have come in contact, express complete confidence.

I have said this much because of the censure and of the misrepresentations which have grown out

of the escape of Lee's army.

Very respectfully your obedient
servant,

O.O. HOWARD,

Major-General.

Executive Mansion,

Washington, 21st July, 1863.

My Dear General Howard:-

Your letter of the 18th received.

I was deeply mortified by the escape of Lee's army across the Potomac, because the substantial destruction of his army would have ended the war, and because I believed such destruction was perfectly easy--believed that General Meade and his noble army had expended all the skill and toil and blood up to the ripe harvest and then let the crop go to waste. Perhaps my mortification was heightened because I had always believed--making my belief a hobby, possibly--that the main rebel army, going north of the Potomac, could never return if well attended to, and because I was so greatly flattered in this belief by the operations at Gettysburg. A

s having passed, I am now profoundly grateful for what was done, without criticism for what was not done. General Meade has my confidence as a brave and skillful officer and a true man.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN,

The main hindrance to our concentrating at Gettysburg as rapidly as Lee was a strategic one. Meade threw forward the left of his general line, so that Lee was able to strike it. Had Gettysburg, and not Taneytown or Pipe Clay Creek, been Meade's objective point, his general line on the 30th of June would have been more nearly parallel to that of Lee. But kind providence overruled even this mistake to our advantage, inducing as it did undue confidence on the part of General Lee.

For myself, I am content with the work accomplished at Gettysburg, and avoid aiming any bitter criticism whatever at those true-hearted officers and men, in any corps or division of our army, who there acted to the best of their ability.

(Story of Capt. Griffiths)

END.

