

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLVIII, Battlefield Tour Edition

Chicago, Illinois

April 28-May 1, 1988

38th Annual Battlefield Tour: 125th Anniversary of Chancellorsville

Our 38th annual battlefield tour will take us to the Fredericksburg, Virginia area where four major battles were fought—Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness and Spotsylvania—and each will be covered in depth. The dates of the tour are Thursday April 28, 1988 through Sunday, May 1. This weekend also marks the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Chancellorsville, which we have given as the title of the tour. Our headquarters will be at the Fredericksburg Holiday Inn North at Route 17 and I-95. Accommodations will be waiting for you there on Wednesday night, April 27. Tour kits and badges will be distributed at the motel.

Transportation to Fredericksburg will be on your own. Those who are flying can make arrangements for arrival at either Washington National airport or Richmond airport. Both have a shuttle service called "Groom Service to Fredericksburg." The shuttle leaves Washington National every hour on the hour until 9:00 p.m. and from Richmond every half hour until 9:00 p.m. The shuttle cost is \$15.00 per person from either Richmond or Washington. The shuttle will take you to the Sheraton Inn just west of Fredericksburg where you can take a van provided by the Holiday Inn North for the 3 mile ride to our headquarters. This service will be provided all day Wednesday only. Call 371-5550 to inform them of your need of a ride. On Sunday, for those who will be flying out of Richmond, we will have a bus available to take them to the airport. A bus will also be available to take those flying out of Washington to the Sheraton Inn to pick up the shuttle service to the airport. A list of flights is available from the tour committee.

Our chief guide will, once again, be Ed Bearss, Chief Research Historian of the National Park Service. Bob Krick, Chief Historian at the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Battlefield will join us for Thursday's tour of Fredericksburg and members of his staff will serve as bus guides throughout the weekend.

Friday we will tour the Wilderness and Spotsylvania battlefields. That evening we will travel to the Sheraton Inn for a special dinner given by the National Park Service in honor of the 125th Anniversary of the Battle of Chancellorsville, followed by a speech by the well-known historian Frank Vandiver. This will be followed by a trip to Guinea Station, the site of the death of Stonewall Jackson. A short program conducted by Bob Krick will commemorate the 125th anniversary of Jackson's death.

Saturday we will have a split group for an all day tour of Chancellorsville. You have the option of taking a special

Cost of Tour

\$285.00 per person, double occupancy, or \$350.00, single accommodation. Please note that non-members must add \$25.00 to the prices listed. Please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room. Transportation to and from Fredericksburg, Virginia is not included.

Includes: Motel room, all lunches and dinners (breakfasts are on your own), bus transportation in the field, tour kits and badges, group service tips, admission fees where required, refreshments on buses, and a non-refundable \$25.00 registration fee per person.

For variations: Portions of the tour, joining enroute, individual meetings, meals or rooms, write or phone Registrar Richard McAadoo, 638 Douglas, Elgin, Illinois 60120 (312) 697-8982.

Local CWRT groups and others joining in lunches and dinners, please make reservations through the registrar so that caterers can be notified of the number to prepare for, and so payment can be made.

walking tour of Jackson's flank march or of joining Ed Bearss on the bus tour. Bob Krick and his staff will conduct a leisurely 5.9 mile walk along Jackson's route. The hike will take 3½ hours with stops at the vista to Hazel Grove, Catherine Furnace, unfinished railroad, Wellford house site and Brock road intersection. Refreshments and box lunches will be provided. There will be a van available to pick up anyone who may not be able to complete the walk. We would like to remind you, though, that this is for the hardy souls who enjoy a lot of exercise. The walking group will rejoin the bus group at 1:30 p.m. when the tour of Chancellorsville will continue. Saturday evening, following dinner, we once again board the buses for Chancellorsville where we will take part in a special walking tour of the Hazel Grove and Fairview sites with troop encampments and park service interpretation. This tour is part of the 125th anniversary commemoration and will take the place of our normal fun night program.

Sunday we will tour the Kelly's Ford and Brandy Station battlefields. An optional tour, given by the National Park Service on special Jackson sites such as Moss Neck, will be available Sunday morning and additional programs regarding the 125th anniversary commemoration will take

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street
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place at Chancellorsville in the afternoon. These optional programs are on your own and there will be a small charge by the park service. You can make your plans to return home after 1:30 p.m.

For those of you who plan to arrive in Fredericksburg early in the week, the National Park Service will be having a series of talks each night at the Chancellorsville Visitors Center as part of the anniversary program. Saturday, April 23, Dr. Daniel Beattle will speak on "Hooker at Chancellorsville"; April 24 will be Ed Bearss on "Chancellorsville: A Hollow Victory"; April 25, Greg Mertz on the "Relationship of Lee and Jackson"; April 26, James Ogden on "Holding Hooker's Attention: Lee at Chancellorsville, May 2, 3"; April 27, our own Marshall Krolick on "The Cavalry in the Chancellorsville Campaign"; and on Thursday, April 28, Mac Wyckoff on the "Opening Movements of the Battle of Chancellorsville."

This promises to be one of our best tours ever, so make sure you get your registration forms in early.

Fredericksburg Campaign: Nov.-Dec. 1862

Burnside replaced McClellan on November 7, 1862. The Army of the Potomac had been advancing cautiously south and was in a position to strike between the separated wings of Lee's army. Burnside, however, decided to shift his line of operations to the east to attack along a line through Fredericksburg to Richmond. Sumner arrived opposite Fredericksburg on November 17 before Longstreet could get there (November 18) to oppose a crossing of the Rappahannock. Burnside's error was not allowing Sumner to try a hasty river crossing. Although Lee had originally intended to drop back to the line of the North Anna, he decided to capitalize on Burnside's slowness and use the excellent defensive terrain on the south bank of the Rappahannock to contest the Federal crossing.

Burnside's plan depended on the arrival of a large pontoon train to bridge the 400-ft stream. This equipment did not arrive until November 25. Meanwhile, Lee positioned his army of 78,500 to oppose the Federal force of 122,000. Burnside tried to force a crossing on December 11 by putting up five bridges along a 10,000-yard front, three opposite Fredericksburg (upper) and two just below the mouth of Deep Run (lower).

Franklin, aided by dense fog, laid two bridges on the 11th and completed crossing opposite Prospect Heights on the 12th. At Fredericksburg, Barksdale's Mississippians, firing from houses along the river, repeatedly stopped the bridge building. Eventually, Union volunteers crossed in boats and cleared the town. The bridges were then laid in a few minutes. Sumner crossed on the 12th. It was agreed that Franklin was to make the main attack.

The battle opened December 13 with Burnside issuing tardy and confused orders. Franklin, on the left, attacked Jackson. On the Union right Sumner's troops in the Fredericksburg streets were subjected to heavy artillery fire. The Union advance had to be made across an open plain cut by a steep-banked drainage ditch some 30 feet wide and 6 feet deep and the advancing Union troops presented a massed target to the Confederates four deep in a sunken road behind a stone wall at the foot of Marye's Heights. Most of the divisions attacked one brigade at a time. In all about 14 separate charges were made. Night ended the battle. The Union lost 10,208 men and the Confederates lost 5,209; 6,300 of the Federal soldiers were killed and wounded at the base of Marye's Heights.

Chancellorsville

By Gilbert Twiss (1968)

General Joseph E. Hooker succeeded Burnside in command of the Army of the Potomac. "Fighting Joe" reorganized the demoralized army and, on April 27, 1863, resumed offensive operations. He left General John Sedgwick facing Lee at Fredericksburg and marched up the Rappahannock to cross and turn against Lee's rear. Lee was alert; he left General Jubal Early to face Sedgwick and took his main force westward. Hooker was at Chancellorsville, a country estate 10 miles from Fredericksburg. Lee's shift threw Hooker off balance. He dropped the initiative and assumed a defensive position. His left wing was on the Rappahannock, but his right wing was dangling. On May 2, in a daring move, Lee divided his forces. He sent Stonewall Jackson by roundabout woodland trails to strike Hooker's right and cut Union communications. Hooker's right wing was routed, but darkness fell before the Confederates could complete their victory. While scouting at about 9 p.m., Jackson was wounded by gunfire from his own men, who

mistook his party for a Federal patrol, and on May 10 the great Stonewall was dead.

On May 3, the Confederates struck Hooker's center. Jackson's troops, temporarily led by the cavalryman, General J.E.B. Stuart, struck eastward, and Longstreet's men, personally directed by Lee, lashed out northwestward. The converging Confederates drove Hooker toward the river.

Lee learned that Early had lost the Fredericksburg heights. Leaving Stuart to occupy Hooker, he moved part of his army eastward to meet the oncoming Sedgwick, defeating the Union force at Salem Church, four miles west of Fredericksburg, May 4-5. Sedgwick escaped over Bank's Ford. Lee then counter-marched his troops to find that Hooker had retired across the Rappahannock at United States Ford.

At Chancellorsville, the Federals lost 17,278 men out of 133,868 and the Confederates, 12,821 out of 60,892.

Kelly's Ford

Brigadier General William W. Averell's 2nd Division of the Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, was ordered by General Joseph Hooker to attack the Confederate cavalry reported to be around Culpeper, Virginia. On March 17, 1863 Averell succeeded in crossing the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford, capturing 25 prisoners. Confederate Brigadier General Fitzhugh Lee, at Culpeper, learned of the Federal crossing at 7:30 a.m., and started his 800 troopers forward to stop the threatened advance on Brandy Station and the vital Orange and Alexandria railroad.

The Confederates found Averell's men in a defensive position about a half mile from the ford. Federal skirmishers were in a position along a stone trench. The 3rd Virginia cavalry charged the stone fence; during this charge John Pelham, the brilliant young commander of J.E.B. Stuart's horse artillery, was mortally wounded by a shell fragment.

On the opposite flank an attack launched by the 1st Rhode Island, 4th Pennsylvania, and the 6th Ohio cavalry against the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Virginia forced the Confederates to withdraw to a position about a mile behind their initial position. Despite an unimpressive overall record the Federal troopers had shown evidence that Stuart's cavalry would be facing a much more aggressive enemy.

Brandy Station

In early June, 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia lay poised to set out on its second northern invasion, the campaign that would culminate at Gettysburg. The spearhead of this invasion would be the famed southern cavalry led by the dashing J.E.B. Stuart.

By the evening of June 8, Stuart had his five brigades scattered along the southern bank of the Rappahannock River north of Culpeper. This concentration of Confederate horse had been observed by the Federals who decided that Stuart was merely planning another raid. To prevent it, Hooker ordered his own cavalry chief, Alfred Pleasonton, to "disperse and destroy the rebel force."

On the morning of June 9, the Federals crossed the river and completely surprised Stuart in his camps. The resulting Battle of Brandy Station, which lasted the remainder of that day, has come to be known as the largest cavalry battle ever to occur on the North American continent. The fighting was at many times hand to hand as mounted charge met mounted charge.

By late afternoon, both sides were too exhausted to continue. For the first time the northern farm boys and factory workers had fought Stuart on even terms. For the

Tour Schedule

Note—all joining at Fredericksburg: Check in at the motel, identifying yourself as a C. W. R. T. tour member, you will be pre-registered. Schedule subject to changes to be announced—all times are local.

Thursday, April 28, 1988

Breakfast on your own, as on each day of tour.

8:00 a.m.—Board buses for trip to Fredericksburg National Battlefield Visitors Center.

9:15 a.m.—Sunken Road, Willis Hill.

11:00 a.m.—Chatham.

12:15 p.m.—Lunch at Sophia Street Station.

1:15 p.m.—Board buses for Lee's Hill.

2:30 p.m.—Prospect Hill.

3:45 p.m.—Salem Church of Chancellorsville Campaign.

5:00 p.m.—Return to motel.

6:30 p.m.—Command Post (Cash Bar).

7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker, Edwin C. Bearss.

Friday, April 29, 1988

8:00 a.m.—Board buses for tour of the Wilderness.

10:00 a.m.—Widow Tapp's, Longstreet's Attack, Brock Road intersection.

12:00 p.m.—Lunch at P.K's Restaurant.

1:15 p.m.—Board buses for Spotsylvania Battlefield.

3:00 p.m.—Bloody Angle, McCool House, Fighting on May 18th and 19th.

5:00 p.m.—Return to motel.

6:10 p.m.—Board buses for Sheraton Inn for special dinner arranged by the National Park Service and speech by Frank Vandiver. Board buses for Guinea Station and short program commemorating Stonewall's Jackson's death. Arrive back at motel at about 11:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 30, 1988

8:00 a.m.—Board buses for Chancellorsville.

8:30 a.m.—Walking tour group to start 5.9 mile trip of Jackson's Flank March. Re-join bus tour at 1:30 p.m.

8:30 a.m.—Bus group tours Visitors Center.

9:00 a.m.—Ely's Ford, Site of Chancellorsville, Zoan Church, Last Meeting of Lee and Jackson, Wellford.

12:00 p.m.—Box Lunch.

1:00 p.m.—Burton Farm, Jackson's Attack, Wilderness Church, Jackson's Death.

5:00 p.m.—Return to motel.

5:30 p.m.—Command Post (Cash Bar).

6:00 p.m.—Dinner.

7:10 p.m.—Board buses for Chancellorsville—Walking tour from Visitors Center, Hazel Grove and Fairview.

9:30 p.m.—Return to motel.

Sunday, May 1, 1988

8:30 a.m.—Board buses for Kelly's Ford, Brandy Station.

12:30 p.m.—Return to motel for luncheon.

1:30 p.m.—End of tour.

Union, probably the most important result of this classic struggle was that the Federal cavalry gained the confidence that would lead to a succession of victories. For the Confederacy, Stuart's embarrassment at Brandy Station would produce defeat in Pennsylvania as it caused him to ride away from Lee during the Gettysburg Campaign in a vain quest for redeeming glory.

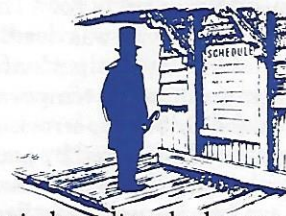
Armchair Generalship

by Marshall D. Krolick



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BULLETIN BOARD



On the Tour: Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate time each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, join a car group, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

The Wilderness to Spotsylvania

On March 10, 1864, Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant was assigned as "Commander of the Armies of the U.S." A plan of action was laid out for the destruction of the only two organized armed bodies of any considerable strength the South had in the field—Lee's army in Virginia and Johnston's army in Georgia. On April 9, Grant communicated his plan to Meade, "Lee's army is your objective point, wherever Lee goes, there you will also go."

On May 4, Meade crossed the Rapidan with 4300 wagons and 835 ambulances, cutting between Lee and Richmond. The wagon train was Grant's mobile "base of supply," and absolute immunity against attack on the lumbering wagon trains governed the movements of every combat element of the Army. Thus the early bivouac in the Wilderness on May 4.

On the 5th two distinct battles were fought on the turnpike and the plank roads. About 7 a.m. on May 5, Warren's Corps encountered the vanguard of Ewell's Confederate Corps on the Orange Turnpike. Warren attacked and was repulsed. To the south, Hill's Confederate Corps on the Orange Plank road met Getty's Federal Division which had rushed forward to secure the vital intersection of the Plank and Brock roads. Hancock's Corps, reinforcing Getty, held the area against heavy Confederate counterattack. At dawn, May 6, Hancock attacked, forcing Hill westward through the forest. Just as all seemed lost, Longstreet arrived to stop the Federal push. A Confederate counterattack and turning movement flung the Federals back to the Brock Road. Confederate charges against the Brock Road trenches failed. Later, the Confederates outflanked the Federal right on the Turnpike, achieving only partial success. Grant broke the stalemate by sidestepping leftward to get between Lee and Richmond. Whatever the cost, Grant would take no backward step.

During the night of May 7 both armies raced for the village of Spotsylvania Court House, a key road junction in Lee's rear. The Confederates arrived first and took up an entrenched position, strong at all points except the center, where a vulnerable salient jutted out. In a bitter contest, fought intermittently from May 8 to 19, Grant probed the Confederate lines. The fighting reached a climax on May 12 when Hancock's Corps pierced the salient and captured a Confederate division. A Confederate counterattack led to a savage hand-to-hand struggle of almost 24 hours on the west face of the salient at the point forever after known as "The Bloody Angle." Lee then abandoned the salient, falling to a new line from which he could not be budged. Deeming further struggle useless in the area Grant again moved on, eastward and southward toward Richmond.