

Chapter 10: Back to Richmond

June 29, 1864 through April 1, 1865

As yet, no maps have been created for this chapter. The strategic flow of the campaign, as well as the text, will make more sense if the reader references one. A useful map, showing the road network and locating engagements, is available at the National Park Service's website for the Richmond National Battlefield Park, www.nps.gov/rich.

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Though the men did not realize it at the time, the evening of July 28 would be their last shift in the trenches fronting Petersburg. Upon abandoning the works to the care of Bushrod Johnson's division, the brigade trudged past the now familiar rest camps around Petersburg and continued into the night. They marched north, across the Appomattox River and away from the Petersburg trenches. After covering around three miles they boarded rail cars, probably at Dunlop's station, that took them further north, to Rice's Turnout, near Drewry's Bluff. In the early morning hours of July 29, they crossed to the north side of the James River, then continued on foot to New Market Heights, arriving there near sunset. Their departure from Petersburg came at a most opportune time, as a regiment of Pennsylvania coal miners had been tunneling under the same section of lines held by Field's division. The Pennsylvanians' goal was to get under the Confederate line and detonate a mine. They succeeded on July 30, blowing a hole in the Confederate lines 50 yards wide, and virtually annihilating the infantry regiment and artillery battery that had been posted above. After a fierce battle, Confederate reserves were able to seal the breach in their lines. Benning's brigade, recent occupiers of these same works, was over ten miles away on New Market Heights, enjoying what had been a quiet night's rest. As testament to the volume of the sound of battle, survivors of Benning's Brigade recorded hearing both the initial explosion and the subsequent fighting. Lt. Harvey Hightower, 20th Georgia, recognized a close call and wrote home that "[the brigade left] before the blow up", and "I tell you I am not sorry we left, either". Ironically, the Brigade, and Field's division, had been transferred to the north side of the James in response to a Northern offensive, now called First Deep Bottom, that struck in late July and was meant as a feint to draw Confederate troops away from Petersburg, just prior to detonation of the mine.¹

In response to the firestorm outside of Petersburg, the brigade was first ordered forward to man earthworks, then ordered to Chaffin's Farm (on the opposite side of James River from Drewry's Bluff). Finally they were ordered back to New Market Heights, to cover the planned withdraw of Kershaw's I Corps division, which was being sent to the Shenandoah Valley to reinforce Jubal Early and the army's II Corps. The brigade remained near New Market Heights, in what officers of the 15th Georgia termed "comparative quiet", to rest and recuperate. After a few days' rest, the men's energy level rebounded sufficiently that they started taking time to forage, write home, and take stock of the news of the rest of the war. Private Bowden of the 2nd Georgia was certainly not alone in foraging for food; around this time, he crept into a cornfield to

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“pull a few ears” and was surprised by a United States Colored Troop (official designation) doing the same thing. By silent consent the two men ignored each other, and Bowden’s first encounter with a black soldier ended peacefully. Though the Benning’s Brigade had not yet met USCT in combat, the men had heard about them, and considered them “now the most respectable and valiant soldiers in Grant’s army”²

Army administration also had an opportunity to catch up on paperwork. Company officers completed overdue returns, frequently noting the positive effects the current respite was having on their men. Brigade adjutant, Captain Herman Perry, completed an inspection report for 20th Georgia. His findings included “a general want of discipline among company officers who allow their men to disregard order and obedience”, though he noted “some officers in that Reg’t...are excellent ones...captain Mitchell of the 20th is recently in command of that Reg’t and promises to be an excellent officer.” He concluded that “The 20th Ga has been unfortunate in the loss of field officers which may in some measure account for poor discipline”. Similar reports could have applied equally to any of the other three regiments.³

Benning’s brigade and it’s parent unit, Field’s division, did not remain north of the James purely for rest. The stretch of land between the James River, on the south, and the Chickahominy, on the north, contained a network of roads leading to Richmond that had drawn McClellan’s eye in 1862. With the bulk of both armies static in front of Petersburg, it was a matter of time before the current northern leadership turned their attention towards this geographic area. Kershaw had previously fended off just such an offensive, known as “Deep Bottom”, while Field’s division was in transit. Now Field’s division was tasked with controlling the road network that ran southeast from Richmond, and protecting it from any sudden moves the northern army might make. The period of rest they received was really just a lucky break. The division held a fortified camp at New Market Heights, at the intersection of New Market and Long Bridge Roads. The heights were strategically important for two reasons. First, they provided a good observation platform on the Confederate army’s extreme left flank. Second, the works on the Heights overlooked one of two likely crossing points that Union troops coming from Petersburg via Bermuda Hundred would use, at Deep Bottom.

Geographically speaking, this area was well known to both armies from the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. The James ran due south from Richmond, seven or eight miles, to Drewry’s

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Bluff on the west bank, where the river made a ninety degree turn to the east, flowing a mile or two before turning south at Chaffin's Bluff, on the east bank, after which it wiggled off generally to the southeast. It should be remembered that the Chickahominy River ran through this area in a southeasterly course, starting from a point two to three miles north of Richmond. This left an intervening strip of land seven or eight miles wide between the two rivers, familiar to both armies. A series of roads radiated like bicycle spokes south and east from Richmond. The Osborne Turnpike ran due south from Richmond, paralleling the James River. The next road, going counter clockwise, was The Varina Road. It split off from the Osborne Turnpike two or three miles south of Richmond, and ran south-southeast until it crossed the James at Aiken's Landing. The New Market Road ran generally southeast from the city, past New Market Heights and Deep Bottom; the Charles City Road ran east-southeast from the city to the area east of Malvern Hill; and the Williamsburg Road ran due east to Seven Pines, then on to Williamsburg. In the coming months, Benning's men would see action on all of these thoroughfares. Between the Confederates' Richmond defenses and Petersburg lay a federal stronghold at Bermuda Hundred – a peninsula where the Appomattox River joined the James. This peninsula had been sealed off by Lee's army in June, in part through the efforts of Field's division, and was now blocked by General Pickett's division, strongly entrenched along what was known as the Howlett line. Though blocked in front, the Federal camp offered easy access between Petersburg and any front they might develop at Richmond.

The Confederates had begun work on several rough lines of fortifications, intended primarily for close in defense of the city of Richmond. The "Exterior Line" of the city's defenses had been started in July of 1862. It was anchored on the James around naval defenses at Chaffin's Bluff and a nearby ground fortress, Fort Harrison, that controlled the Varina Road. From here it ran northeast, crossing Varina Road (a mile and a half from Chaffin's, a quarter mile from Fort Harrison), then New Market Road (two and a half miles from Chaffin's), where the line took a north – northeast bearing. It continued two miles past Darbytown Road; then another mile and a half to cross the Charles City Road, and the last mile and a half to cross the Williamsburg Road, where the "Exterior Line" met up with works built during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862. The Exterior Line covered all of the major roads leading to Richmond. A fortified "Interior Line" had also been built, paralleling the Exterior Line but anywhere from ¼ mile to a mile closer in on Richmond. An advance set of works known as "The New Market

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Line” were started in the summer of 1864. These were also anchored on the right at Chaffin’s Farm, but stretched almost due east to New Market Heights, already well known to Benning’s men, then turned northeast for a mile (as of July 1864) till they ended at the intersection of Long Bridge and Darbytown Roads. As previously mentioned, the works on New Market Heights covered the James River crossing at Deep Bottom, and portions of the New Market Line covered the second crossing point, Aiken’s Landing.⁴

While Benning’s men had been doing shifts in the Petersburg lines, Kershaw’s division had been guarding the eastern approach to Richmond. They had enjoyed a month of light duty, (even First Deep Bottom fell into this category) and ultimately high command considered them “fresher” and a more appropriate reinforcement to Early. When Kershaw’s division departed for the Shenandoah, it was accompanied by acting I Corps commander, Dick Anderson. The assignment of Field’s division to hold this post indicates the confidence General Lee had in both his subordinate general and all of the men of his division. This was the most exposed portion of the army, furthest from any support from other divisions. With Longstreet still recuperating from his wound, Anderson gone north with Kershaw, and most of Lee’s attention focused on Petersburg, General Field was effectively operating an independent command. This was not unheard of in Lee’s army, but in August of 1864, Field had commanded his division less than five months. In contrast, the Army of Northern Virginia’s senior division commander, General George Pickett, commanding his division for almost two years, might have expected this posting based on his seniority. Instead he was holding some of the heaviest defensive works, and correspondingly quietest sectors, the Howlett Line.

Although the front seemed quiet, enemy movements were afoot. By August 8, Union army intelligence believed they had plotted the position of the Confederates on the north side of the James. Field’s division was concentrated around New Market Heights, though Bratton’s brigade extended close to Chaffin’s Farm on the west. Tige Anderson’s brigade held the extreme eastern portion of line, facing south and east from its position at Fussell’s Mill, at the intersection of New Market and the old Darbytown Roads. Law’s brigade came next, then the Texas brigade. Benning’s men were west of the Texans, and Bratton’s brigade held the division’s right. Lane’s and Conner’s brigades, on loan from Cadmus Wilcox’ III Corps division, backed up Field’s division and connected his line to the James River. Based on this information, the Union high

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command drew up plans to send two army corps across the James River at Deep Bottom and turn Field's left flank. There were a few relevant details the Northerners missed. Confederate trench lines extended east and north of Tige Anderson's brigade, but were unmanned, although a cavalry brigade commanded by General Martin Gary was lurking among and watching over them.⁵

The impending Union offensive became apparent to the men, and with it the end of their period of rest, on the night of August 13. Some southerners heard sounds of a crossing during the night, which was the II and X US Army corps crossing the James at Deep Bottom. Federal units appeared in front of Benning's brigade through the course of August 14, on what would be a comparatively quiet stretch of line. General Field reported three assaults directed frontally against "his line" during the 14th, all of which were "handsomely repulsed, with loss". Their frontal attacks having failed, the northern commanders attempted to turn Field's left flank, sending their infantry through woods to Fussell's Mill. Here they were met by two of Gary's cavalry regiments, skirmishing on foot. The Federals were repulsed completely following the arrival of Tige Anderson's brigade, with artillery support, and the counterattack that seemed to inevitably follow surprise appearances by Confederate troops. The 14th ended with both sides settled into defensive positions, the northerners digging works to match those of the southerners. This continued on the 15th of August, as both sides received reinforcements. Benning's brigade was very active, participating in heavy skirmishing along the lines. Some men were noticeably "excited" at the long numerical odds they seemed to be facing. Confederate reinforcements, sent from Petersburg, nearly doubled the size of the rebel force and allowed General Field to extend his line considerably beyond Fussell's Mill. Still, the total Confederate force was likely half that of the Federals.⁶

The men of at least the 2nd Georgia felt that Grant had tested their lines on the 14th, found them occupied, and would have sufficient "common sense" to know he was checked. But, "to our astonishment and the gratification of the troops generally he decided on an assault". In the late morning of August 16, heavy firing erupted roughly 600 yards east of Fussell's Mill, a weak spot in the Confederate line. This section of works ran through rough, densely forested ground. The defending troops were reinforcements who had arrived in the last 24 hours, another Georgia brigade commanded by General Girardey. Given the short amount of time they had had, these men were able to clear a field of fire only 50 yards deep. General Field, in overall command,

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and most of the troops, heard the noise, but relaxed when the volume died down, which indicated the repulse of a probe. Half an hour later, the Yankee troops, members of the US X Corps, tried again. This time they overran Girardey's men. An adjacent brigade from North Carolina was hopelessly flanked, and broke in turn. Field's adjutant, Major William Jones, observed the collapse. Galloping pell-mell to inform the general of the disaster, he cried, "General, they are breaking!". Field responded, "Well, I knew they would", to which Jones had to reply, "But, General, it's our men". The New Market line was split wide open.⁷

With no reserves on hand and the center of their line smashed, the Confederate commanders acted swiftly and decisively. Field wrote that his "own gallant division had never yet failed when called upon"; their actions this day would justify his faith in them. Colonel Oates, again commanding General Law's Alabama brigade, was responsible for the segment of line just south of the breakthrough. He immediately refused his left hand regiments, a maneuver that temporarily contained the northern breakthrough. Making use of the time purchased by his Alabamians, Field ordered three of his brigades, including Benning's, to hold their own lines with skirmishers, and double quick the rest of the troops to Fussell's Mill. The 2nd Georgia, probably already deployed as skirmishers, was left behind to hold the brigade's assigned sector of line. The first two units to reach Fussell's Mill were Benning's and a detachment of Bratton's Brigades, panting from their cross country jog in the summer heat. "The day was excessively warm, and the trial of bringing up men under such a sun at the double quick step was no ordinary one", wrote "Tout le Monde". It is likely that their route took them parallel to and west of the main line of works. The situation behind the Confederate line, in the hills and swamps and forests, was very confused. To the men in the ranks, it seemed uncertain where the fight was, or where they were to attack, until masses of wounded and demoralized men suddenly appeared in front of them and settled the question. Even then, most of the men were in thick woods and could see very little. Colonel DuBose formed the 15th, 17th and 20th regiments under cover of woods and amidst "a galling fire", and moved in on what had been the right flank of Lanes' NC brigade. General Girardey, trying to rally some of his men, was killed directly in front of the 17th Georgia as it deployed. Despite these distractions, Colonel DuBose coordinated a counterattack with Colonel Coward, commanding the detachment from Bratton's brigade, the 5th SC and 2nd SC Rifles. Division staff officer Richard Corbin recalled the men "went in with a deafening war whoop". Advancing against the foe, the Georgians discovered they had engaged in their first

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combat encounter with US Colored Troops. At this point Benning's men got some help from the Federals, whose axis of advance pivoted from west before the breakthrough to south afterwards, as they tried to roll up the southerners' line. By the time DuBose ordered his men to attack, they had a square shot at the right flank of the enemy line. It took about ninety minutes of fighting to drive the Yankees back, half a mile to the first line of captured breastworks, then sweep them from the forward line entirely. To their credit, the North Carolina brigade that had broken, and portions of Girardey's brigade, rallied and assisted in the latter stages of the fight. Large numbers of the enemy were shot down in heaps at the recaptured forward line, as were a few Georgians. Private Swinson, of Company B, 20th Georgia, leapt atop the works, shouted "Come On, Boys!" and fell mortally wounded. Private John Lokey assisted in carrying Swinson out to an ambulance, but Swinson died that night. Captain Corbin had only recently entered Confederate service, but noted that veterans told him the fight had been a hot one, though as Private Fuller noted, they had accomplished it "with slight loss of life." The same could not be said of the damage inflicted on the US X Corps, or to Girardey's brigade. The *Richmond Enquirer* reported that the Northern troops left over 200 dead on the field, lost over 400 prisoners, dropped over 2,000 rifles, and abandoned the flags of more than one USCT unit.⁸

Late in the day, after the situation had stabilized and the fighting died down, the bulk of Benning's brigade was returned to its original position. Here they learned that since their emergency departure, the 2nd Georgia had had its' hands full, having faced and repulsed several strong probes made against their extended skirmish line. Typically, a skirmish line's job was not so much to stop full blown enemy advances as to slow them and let the main body prepare to handle things. Skirmish lines were always being driven back, advancing forward, always fluid. Knowing that losing a portion of the skirmish line on this particular day would be as great a disaster as the breakthrough at Fussell's Mill had been, must have made the men of the 2nd think of their long lonely morning above Rohrbach's bridge. Sergeant Edward Richardson Crockett, of the 4th Texas, was posted a few hundred yards away from the 2nd Georgia. His regiment had pulled the same duty as the 2nd had, holding the brigade's entire front with a skirmish line. Crockett's description of the work was "we skirmished with them all day through the thickets". The day had been hot and sultry, as Crockett noted when he continued, "We lost several men to sunstroke or being overheated. Just after the fight we had a shower of rain. When night came on we were all nearly exhausted"⁹

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August 17 opened with a return to skirmishing and sharpshooting, until a request for a ceasefire, signed by Union General Hancock, made it's way to Field's headquarters. Litter bearers spent much of the remainder of the day cleaning up the human debris of battle, after which no one seemed very anxious to restart the shooting. By August 18, the northerners were withdrawing south of the James, and the situation quieted down. The fighting of August 14-17, 1864, came to be known as "Second Deep Bottom". The location of the brigade's fight is on privately held land about ½ mile south and east of the intersection of modern day Darbytown and Yahley Mill Roads. A follow up Union offensive was launched against the left flank of the Confederate line in front of Petersburg, and led to the battles of the Weldon Railroad and Globe Tavern (August 18 through 21), and Reams' Station (August 25). In response to these offensives, Field's III Corps reinforcements were rushed back to their home units. As the fighting wore on south of Petersburg, General Lee started raiding Field's division itself for reinforcements. On August 21, General Field, and Anderson's and Law's brigades were transferred to the Petersburg front. Bratton's brigade followed on August 22, leaving only General Gregg and his Texas brigade, Benning's Brigade, commanded by Colonel DuBose, and General Gary's cavalry, in front of Richmond, General Gregg in overall command. They were supported some local defense units, more appropriately termed militia, but were otherwise alone.¹⁰

With the repulse of the northern troops, army life settled back into an easy pattern. Two members of the 20th Georgia deserted to the enemy at Deep Bottom on August 27th; the next day, Colonel DuBose, Captain Bird, Colonel Waddell of the 20th, Captain Lovick Pierce of the 15th, and John Waddell of the Troup Artillery, an element of the 2nd Georgia in the heady summer days of 1861, joined in a dinner party in the vicinity of Four Mile Church. No menu was recorded, but afterwards brigade Quartermaster Bird wrote home in his typical form, asking his wife to prepare staples such as butter, lard, meat, flour, pickles and catsup, that his "servant" Sam could transport. Bird also specifically requested she order him "very good" boots from an Athens factory, "only made for stockholders". Brigade Adjutant Herman Perry found time to execute a sketch "Gavroche", the fox who had wandered into the lines of the 15th during the fighting in the Wilderness, for Bird's son. The enlisted men attempted to savor the smaller pleasures they normally satisfied themselves with; the same day as the "dinner party" (August

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27th), one of the enlisted men waved his newspaper at the yankee pickets, an indication that he wanted to trade. A USCT walked out to meet him; all the reb could do was “cuss him out” and leave in disgust. By early September there were primarily USCT on the brigade’s front, several of whom had “come over” or deserted to the southerners. Also in early September, Captain Bird got himself reassigned to The Slaves Claim Board in Richmond, established by the Confederate Congress to examine and compensate slave owners for losses of slaves, from disease, desertion or injury, while in Confederate service. This transfer was arranged with the assistance of Colonel James Waddell, nominally with the 20th Georgia but now serving on the board, and brigade surgeon, Dr W. B. Gregory, from the 2nd Georgia, who examined Bird’s hemorrhoids and certified that they frequently disabled him from field service. One wonders why Bird did not use the lingering affects of his head wound, rather than hemorrhoids, as an excuse. Some men managed to get new clothes during this respite. Bird got himself a good pair of blue, government issued pants, and some of the men received boxes from home, delivered by “the express” or various Relief Associations. It made for some level of resupply, but it was unevenly distributed.¹¹

Joseph Johnston had commanded the Confederate Army of Tennessee, posted just south of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in May of 1864. In a coordinated offensive, General Sherman had attacked Johnston’s army nearly simultaneous to Grant’s movement into the Wilderness. By August, Johnston and his army had been driven to the suburbs of Atlanta. Johnston had been relieved of his command, which was then entrusted to the same General John Hood who had been Benning’s commanding officer a year ago. With their own front quiet, Benning’s men had time to consider the implications of the campaigning in Georgia, especially disconcerting due to the proximity of Sherman’s army to their own homes. Though the men had a generally fond memory of Hood, several expressed concern regarding Hood’s ability to handle an army. “Our army in north Georgia...is composed of splendid material and was effective in the hands of a master mind like Johnston.” wrote Captain Bird, “Hood is a nice fellow, but isn’t owner of sufficient mental caliber for the crisis [Atlanta]”. Bird instructed his wife that, if the Yankee army approached their farm, “such [of their slaves] as wish to go with them are welcome; those of the men who do not should take to the woods, for they will seize every one of them and enroll them in their army to meet such fates as the poor creatures at Fort Pillow and the other day at

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Petersburg” Their worries were confirmed after the first week of September, when they learned Atlanta had fallen.¹²

Things along the lines became especially quiet around September 19, continuing so until late in the morning of September 21, when a heavy cannonade was received. By evening, the pickets had done enough jawing with their blue coated counterparts to learn that the cannonade was a salute to the defeat of Jubal Early’s army in the Shenandoah, at the Third Battle of Winchester (or Opequon Creek) on September 19. The front was again quiet until September 24th, when another heavy cannonade was received, announcing another Union victory over Early’s force, this time at Fisher’s Hill on September 22. Dark storm clouds were rumbling in the distance in every direction, and would soon reappear in the brigade’s immediate vicinity.¹³

By September 28, Confederate forces north of the James River consisted of several scattered units. A small brigade of Tennesseans, formerly commanded by General Bushrod Johnson, now commanded by Colonel John Hughs and numbering less than 400 men, were watching the crossing at Aiken’s Landing from a distance of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. Gary’s cavalry brigade and Gregg’s Texas brigade, both at New Market Heights, kept an eye on the crossing at Deep Bottom. Benning’s brigade, still commanded by Colonel DuBose, was deployed on the New Market Line between the Heights and Fort Harrison, just east of modern day I-295 and north of Kingsland Road. Several Virginia Reserve Battalions were on the front lines, supporting the veteran troops. Artillery consisted of emplaced siege guns, manned by an indifferent lot of reserve troops, and Col. J. Thompson Brown’s veteran artillery battalion. The total number of soldiers was, generously, 3,000. That day a boat loaded with 200 convicts and 300 slaves was sent from Richmond to Fort Harrison to assist in the construction of additional fieldworks. Seven companies of the 17th Georgia were detailed to take charge of the work crews at Fort Harrison; the other three companies remained on picket post along the brigade line, where the men were improving the breastworks of the New Market Line, which now extended west from New Market Heights all the way to the James. Fort Harrison has been mentioned before, but never in detail. The acting commander of the 17th Georgia, Captain James Moore, was at the Fort with the labor gangs. He described it as “a large earthen fort commanding the approach by land to Drewry’s Bluff as well as the heights in its front and for some distance to its left. It was armed with several pieces of field artillery and one thirty two pound Columbiad and was of

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sufficient size to accommodate a garrison of some five hundred men, but was manned only by a few militia, who were armed with smooth bore muskets, with only ten rounds of cartridges each, while the artillery was served by raw troops with only a few rounds of ammunition.” The fort had a square shaped northern section, and a southern portion in the shape of an arc. The two portions were separated by a wall, and traverses further split both sections of the fort. The labor parties were useful, but what Fort Harrison and the rest of the line really needed was more infantry. As night fell, the three companies of the 17th bivouacked near the rest of the brigade in a thick piece of woods near what the detachment commander, Captain J. H. Martin, called the “Philips” house. That night, the Sergeant Major of the 20th Georgia recalled the men in his unit heard a large Federal force cross the James. While the enlisted men began preparing for what they knew would be hot work in the morning, the news was relayed up the chain of command.¹⁴

The offensive launched by the federal troops on September 29 was planned and led by General Benjamin Butler, better known to the Georgians as [silver] “Spoons” in deference to his preferred form of loot during his days as military governor of New Orleans. Butler had analyzed the failures of the Second Deep Bottom Campaign of mid August, and devised his own, two-pronged plan of attack. His eastern wing, Birney’s X Corps, would cross the James at Deep Bottom, attack and turn the Confederate left at New Market Heights, and proceed towards Richmond along the New Market Road. His western wing, Ord’s XVIII Corps, would cross at Aiken’s Landing and head straight for the anchor of the Confederate right flank, Fort Harrison. After seizing Fort Harrison, the XVIII Corps would continue north along the Varina Road towards Richmond. If all went according to plan, the two wings would meet where the two roads they were using met – on the Confederate’s Interior Line, two miles past Fort Harrison. At worst, Butler expected his two converging columns would be able to flank the Confederates from any positions where they might make attempt a stand, and drive them into Richmond proper. At best, they would crush the rebels in a vice. A cavalry division followed the infantry, and was available either to exploit a breakthrough by the infantry, or flank the defenders further north, as circumstances dictated. Butler’s overall manpower was at least 15,000, sufficient to make his plan a good one.¹⁵

Skirmishers began popping away at each other just before daylight on the 29th. As dawn broke, the men of Benning’s brigade, less the seven companies of the 17th at Fort Harrison, began to pick out the battle lines of their enemy, advancing towards them. The men formed and

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double-quickd west along the line of breastworks to General Gregg's headquarters, which was about a half mile away, and the same distance east of Fort Harrison. As they reached this point, a courier from General Gregg caught up with them, instructing them to hasten to the aid of the Texas brigade, under assault at New Market Heights. Sounds of the battle were audible to the men and seemed to confirm the need. They double-quickd the mile and a half to New Market Heights and arrived there just in time to see the Texans, supported by Gary's cavalry, complete the repulse of an attack. The Texans "killed 'niggers' galore" to quote Captain Martin of the 17th, inflicting approximately 850 casualties on their attackers, who had to deploy in and move through swampy, low ground to assault the well fortified southerners, who suffered only about 50 casualties. There was no time to continue gloating, as more sounds of combat reached them, now coming from "our right and very much in our rear", according to Sergeant Granberry. Another courier found them with news that Fort Harrison was under attack, and delivered orders to high tail it there. Benning's brigade led the way back towards Harrison, again paralleling the trench lines, now literally running.¹⁶

While most of the brigade was jogging back and forth along the New Market Line – they would double-quick and run for roughly four miles before engaging – the seven companies of the 17th Georgia, near Fort Harrison, were otherwise occupied. Hughs' Tennessee brigade had been watching Aiken's Landing from a position on a ridge along the Varina road, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile or so from Aiken's. Ord's XVIII Corps advanced up the Varina Road behind a line of skirmishers, who were armed mostly with repeating rifles. Outnumbered and outgunned, Hughs' brigade was rapidly and bodily driven over two miles up the Varina Road, till some were able to find shelter in the trees and works around Fort Harrison, and others retreated further into the interior lines. The Union advance halted to allow the main body to come up; when the full XVIII Corps arrived, it numbered over 8,000 men. Facing them were several reserve units, the scattered remnants of Hughs' brigade, and Moore's detachment, a total of maybe 800. It was around this time that the Confederates on New Market Heights were ordered to Fort Harrison, as the full scope of the Union Offensive was making itself known. A northern success at Fort Harrison would not only open a door to Richmond, but also had the potential to cut off any southerners further east; making the Confederate stand on New Market Heights meaningless. Both wings of the Union offensive posed dangerous threats to the Confederates, but the drive to Fort Harrison was potentially the most lethal. General Gary was assigned to delay to X Corps with a rearguard

action, but New Market Heights were to be abandoned to the enemy, and its defenders rushed towards Fort Harrison.¹⁷

Firing broke out in front of Fort Harrison proper at around 7 AM. Captain Moore had received orders from General Gregg to turn the work gangs over to the militia and report with his detachment to New Market Heights. Before executing these orders, one of Moore's men alerted him that blue coats were immediately in front of Fort Harrison and would soon be inside. These were likely Ord's well armed skirmishers, resting after flushing Hughs, and awaiting the balance of their corps. At this point Moore took the initiative, and sent the convicts and blacks to the rear under the charge of two of his companies. After sending a courier to notify General Gregg, Moore led his other five companies, totaling seventy-three rifles, into the southern salient of Fort Harrison and opened an effective fire on the enemy, now 400 yards distant and advancing in four columns of about 600 men each. Despite the disparity in numbers, Moore's 70 odd soldiers were able to lay down sufficient fire that, when combined with the scattered fire from the Tennesseans and militia, that the Yankees were forced to halt their advance in a gully and reform their lines.¹⁸

General Gregg had already been notified of the situation at Fort Harrison, and help was closer than Moore could have hoped. Benning's brigade was, even then, nearing Fort Harrison. Brigade Adjutant Captain Herman Perry had ridden in advance of the brigade to determine where it should deploy. Perry recalled entering Fort Harrison around sunrise, to find the Yankees a few hundred yards away. The section he entered, apparently the northern, box like section, was held by only eighteen novice artillerymen, commanded by a sergeant. Perry apparently didn't know that Moore was in another section of the works – they were expansive and complex enough that under these circumstances it is not an unreasonable or negligent oversight, especially since Moore had only 70 odd men – but he begged and cajoled the gunners into loading a heavy piece with grape shot. In reconciling accounts by both Moore and Perry, it seems probable that Perry entered the fort and got the artillery piece loaded while the northerners were paused and reorganizing their attack. Moore knew a 32 lb Columbiad had been loaded, but assumed it had been done by his own men.¹⁹

The Unionists maintained a brisk skirmish fire as they adjusted their lines, and in a few minutes were advancing once more on Fort Harrison. The Virginia reserve units had begun the

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day with only 10 to 15 rounds per man, and by now most of them had run out of ammunition and dispersed northwards, towards interior defensive lines. Moore's own ammunition was running low, and his firing had almost ceased. However the head of Benning's brigade had come into his view, increasing Moore's desperation to try to hold the fort. When the northerners advanced to within 200 yards or so of the fort, the Columbiad was fired. Perry hoped to "give notice to our troops to hurry"; the efficacy of this signal is unknown, but the result of the fire was clear. Moore wrote, "This shot was exceedingly destructive, tearing a lane of some thirty feet or more through the entire four columns". Unfortunately for the Georgians, the double shot of grape also dismounted the Columbiad. But even had the Columbiad stayed in service, a single artillery piece would not have stopped this attack without heavy rifle fire from supporting infantry, something these five companies of the 17th no longer had adequate ammunition to provide. Perry's artillery crew quickly scattered; as the last of them fled, Perry remounted his horse and galloped to the relative shelter of the brigade. More than 2,000 northerners quickly crossed the remaining two hundred yards of fields and began pouring into the fortifications. Although the lead regiment of Benning's brigade was only 300 yards away and was running to support him, Moore's situation had become hopeless. He ordered everyone to get out as best they could, and reform on the next line of works, half a mile north of the fort. Moore was in the last group to leave his section of the fort, and was accompanied by Captain D. H. Wilmot, Adjutant Sam Robinson, and Lieutenant William Landee. The situation was desperate and chaotic enough that he dropped "a very fine sword, which was left to the enemy's care." As he exited the fort, Moore recalled Private (later Captain) A. P. McCord atop a traverse, firing at the enemy from a range of less than fifteen feet, until surrounded, then miraculously escaping, as well as passing the 32 lb Columbiad, now off its carriage and upright in the mud. Once out of the fort, the Southerners received a heavy but ineffective fire from the victorious Yankees. Several men remembered the fusillade specifically because no one seemed to be harmed by it.²⁰

The balance of Benning's brigade, now arriving in the vicinity of Fort Harrison, had so far endured double-quicking approximately two miles west, then east, along the New Market Line, followed by "a long run [two more miles] from Newmarket back to Fort Harrison", in the words of Captain Moore. It was not yet 8 AM, and the troops were winded. On reaching the western terminus of the New Market line, the brigade had crossed to the exposed side of the Exterior Line, and was following this line of works towards Fort Harrison, Harrison being a

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strongpoint on the Exterior Line. Captain Martin thought, “when we came in sight of Fort Harrison, it seemed that the whole world in front was full of bluecoats”, and a member of the 2nd Georgia recalled emerging from woods, only to see 3000 blue coats between themselves and Fort Harrison. Yet the brigade continued, the 20th Georgia in the lead, hoping to save the fort. Rounding a blind corner in the Exterior line, the head of the 20th smashed into a Federal column, which was moving to block the Georgians from relieving the fort. Watching from a relatively safe distance, Sergeant William Houghton, 2nd Georgia, remembered “a scene such as is seldom witnessed even in war. Both sides were almost exhausted with their long run, tongues hanging out, guns empty, one side calling to the other to halt in great oaths, and the gray coats refusing to surrender and swearing back with equal vigor, some striking at others with their guns.” Ultimately, thirty seven members of the surprised and heavily outnumbered 20th Georgia, “a large part of the front of it”, surrendered. Lt. John B. Richards of 20th Georgia was among this group; Private Joseph Fuller of the 20th was also captured this day, probably at this juncture. Most of the rest of the regiment managed a clean escape, retreating by the same route they had taken to get there. Some attempted to retreat to the next line of works, a few hundred yards to the rear; exposed in the open ground, many of these men were shot down, including Orderly Sergeant James Huguley of Company B, “a gallant soldier and a splendid man”, recalled Sergeant Granberry. The rest of the brigade swung north around the Federal troops, then headed straight for the Interior Line, at least in part due to messages received from General Gregg, who was with the Texas brigade, behind the Georgians. Gary’s rear guard at New Market Heights had enabled the Confederate infantry to march to the Fort Harrison vicinity; now he sent notice that the X Corps was pushing aside his thin lines of skirmishers, and appeared to be preparing to up the New Market Road. If left uncontested, such a move would cut off Confederates fighting around Fort Harrison from Richmond.²¹

The Interior Line was the next major defensive line between the northern troops around Fort Harrison and Richmond. In the vicinity of Fort Harrison, it ran roughly parallel to and a quarter mile or more north or west of the Exterior Line. A traverse wall led northwest from Fort Harrison, now completely held by the yanks, a quarter mile northwest to Fort Johnson, a salient point on the Interior Line. This was where the two defensive lines were closest to each other. West of Fort Johnson, the Interior Line ran due west to the James River; the Confederates were building a large winter camp between these sections of the Interior and Exterior lines North of

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Fort Johnson, the Interior line traced a jagged course north for a quarter mile to Fort Gregg, located where the Interior Line crossed Mill Road. The line continued north 200 yards to Fort Gilmer, then turned west for 200 yards, creating a salient at Fort Gilmer, then continued north past New Market Road. The portion of the Interior Line running from the James River to Fort Johnson would be crucial to containing the Federal success at Fort Harrison; the portions around Forts Gregg and Gilmer would be crucial to impeding the Union X Corps, marching towards the Confederates by way of New Market Road.²²

The threats to both sectors weighed on DuBose's mind as he deployed the brigade. The Federal troops in Fort Harrison appeared disorganized, so he sent the 2nd Georgia along the traverse wall to see if the federals still might be flushed from the fort. If that proved unsuccessful, DuBose identified Fort Johnson as crucial to containing the Federals at Fort Harrison, and he sent the two companies of the 17th to join its defense. The 15th Georgia was sent north to hold Forts Gilmer and Gregg; 40 to 50 men took up position in each fort. The 20th Georgia, "fearfully decimated" according to Captain Perry, strung itself along the Interior Line between Forts Gilmer and Johnson. Random pockets of Virginia reservists supported the line, and Willis Dance's veteran battery of Napoleons, part of Col. Brown's artillery battalion, rolled into Fort Johnson. These developments took place in a manner of minutes.²³

Colonel William Shepherd managed to lead his 2nd Georgia, numbering less than 100 men (maybe as few as 60), almost into Fort Harrison before northern troops began to press their advantage, and Fairchild's brigade launched their own attack from Fort Harrison. The 2nd was forced back along the works into Fort Johnson, where Shepherd was badly wounded by a friendly artillery shell. Houghton recalled the enemy "advanced gallantly under fire of Corporal Charlie's two guns [a section of Dance's battery] and the remnant of our force until within 150 yards...Some brave fellows came within 20 yards of the works." The artillerists were soon either shot or driven from their guns, except for the Corporal. Georgia infantrymen were pressed into service loading the guns, after which Corporal Charlie "would aim his gun at the ground just in front of the fort, and, with hearty curses, pull the lanyard. Sometimes we saw caps, pieces of muskets clothing and other things fly into the air, as the solid shot tore through the cover in front of us." Unfortunately for the Benning's men, a common theme for the day was developing - the infantry's ammunition was soon shot up, and the supporting artillery dismounted. Before the

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federals attacked, Private Bowden, and the friend of his who had “shown the feather” at Knoxville, had vowed to each other that, in face of the obvious odds, they would fight to the death rather than surrender. These two were likely deployed in a salient along the connecting wall between Fort Johnson and Fort Harrison, just south of Fort Johnson. After emptying most of his cartridge box, Bowden’s gun became fouled and useless. Federals began to enter the works, so he dove under a cannon carriage for shelter. He emerged after the firing had subsided and surrendered, as did his friend, who had run out of ammunition.²⁴

Captain Moore, observing the attack on the 2nd Georgia in Fort Johnson, rallied a portion of the 17th Georgia that had escaped Fort Harrison with him, and moved to the assistance of the 2nd. As Moore’s men were also short of ammunition, a small party from his command (Captain Moore named McCord, Lindsey and Landee) infiltrated through the cabins of the winter camp to an ammunition wagon they had passed during their retreat from Fort Harrison. The members of the detail each grabbed a crate of cartridges and carried it at a run for half a mile back to Fort Johnson. Moore’s party joined the 2nd inside of Fort Johnson, the ammunition crates were broken over a gun carriage, and the southern cartridge boxes refilled. The men of the 17th arrived not a moment too soon - an artilleryman observing from nearby Fort Gregg recalled “They had trotted (or rather run) from another part of the line when the attack first began, and by the time they reached Dance's guns [in/around Fort Johnson] the Yankees were almost there, but the colonel in command of the brigade leaped across the works, followed by his men, and after an almost hand to hand fight drove the Yankees back. Too much praise cannot be given to this colonel (I wish I could remember his name [Captain, later Major, Moore]), for I was told by one of Dance's men that he had never seen a man so entirely free from fear, and that in front of his men he discharged every barrel of his pistol right into the Yankees' faces.” Based on this recollection and Bowden’s fate, it seems the Yankees controlled a part of the works just south of Fort Johnson for a short time. Due to the lay of the land, Confederate artillery posted along the curtain wall just south of the fort would have contested the northern attackers much more effectively than guns inside Fort Johnson proper.²⁵

Having secured the friendly artillery, Moore paused to take stock of the situation. He found Colonel Shepherd “severely wounded” and assumed command. The enemy was within 100 yards of the fort, many of them concealed in low brush, but their advance had stalled, probably as they dealt first with the surrender of the party Bowden was with, then Moore’s own

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counterattack. Volunteers were called for to charge the enemy, and eleven men quickly responded. Three of these volunteered again, to draw enemy fire; the other eight worked their way 40 to 50 yards into the winter camp area, around the left of the Federal line. The main body was ordered to hold their fire until they had clear targets. When all was ready – again, these events developed in a manner of minutes - Lieutenant Hines of southwest Georgia, John Lindsay, of Columbus, Ga, both small, red headed men from the 2nd, and a third man, leapt over the works with a yell. In the smoke and noise and confusion of battle, the Northern troops believed this was a real counter attack, and those who could emptied their guns at the Confederate fort. The flanking party then let out the rebel yell and opened into the northerners' left flank, while the men in the fort opened a blistering frontal fire on northerners who stood up to fire or reload their guns. The federals began to break and run for the rear. Exposed and in the open, they made excellent targets for the Confederates in Fort Johnson. Jim DuBose, 2nd Georgia, and A. P. McCord, 17th Georgia, have been named as members of this flanking party, as was Sergeant Houghton, who left this description of the charge:

I never knew what took place for the next few minutes...I had no knowledge of what I did, or of what others did, until I found myself sometime afterwards about 100 to 150 yards from the fort. To say that I was excited would convey a very faint idea of the state of my mind. I was entirely absorbed, delirious. It was victory or death, and, had the latter come to me then, I would not have known it, should not have felt it. Our task was not so hard as it would seem. When men who compose a charging column once lie down, scattered behind a convenient cover, it is almost impossible to get them to act in concert, and especially hard to get them to rise up in the face of a withering fire. The first who rise are shot down; the rest do not attempt it. Lying on the grounds, scattered, unable to load their guns, except slowly and with difficulty, they interposed little obstacles to the madmen who rushed among them. The first thing I remember after leaving the works I was about 150 yards from the fort, standing with one foot on a pine log, the other on the ground. My Enfield rifle was clubbed and raised high in the air. Four living and some dead federals were behind the log and the victory was won, on that part of the line and the fight was over for the time.²⁶

During the fighting at Fort Johnson, the 15th Georgia and 20th Georgia had repulsed federal probes at Forts Gregg and Gilmer, after which some members of at least the 15th ran to the assistance of the 2nd. This, and the distance between Forts Johnson and Gregg, may explain an artilleryman's previous description of a brigade-sized reinforcement to Fort Johnson. At least one member of the 15th Georgia had been shot; one, wounded in the breast, called on a passing

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friend, Captain Martin of the 17th, to aid him in getting away. Martin recalled that both were captured as they struggled to the rear, but they seized an opportunity and “made a break, and succeeded in rejoining our forces. Then our litter corps took charge of him.” The defenders of Fort Johnson claimed 287 prisoners, not counting the wounded. There were also many blue-clad corpses on the ground, some described by Houghton as “sadly mangled by Charlie's solid twelve pound shot.” The prisoners were sent to the rear, and details of Confederates scoured the ground of guns and ammunition abandoned by the retreating northerners. The Texas Brigade arrived at the Interior line during the fight at Fort Johnson, and took a temporary position around Fort Gregg. Griffen's “Salem Flying Artillery”, also part of Brown's battalion, took position in Fort Gregg as well. It was about 10 AM.²⁷

Still gasping for breath, the Georgians could see thousands of Federal troops massed half a mile away – Houghton estimated at least 5,000 of them, backed by lots of artillery. They wondered that this large body of the enemy stood idly by while their own small band successfully defended Fort Johnson, and also that they launched no new assaults. The answer, though the Georgians did not know it, was that the top level leadership of the Union XVIII Corps had collapsed. General Ord was a capable soldier and had ably led his corps this day. He had personally led the assault on Fort Harrison and, after its fall, attempted to exploit his victory. Leading from the very front of his corps, he was scouting along his skirmish line when a southern rifleman, probably a Virginian, shot him in the leg. He was taken to the rear in an ambulance, leaving the Corps in the hands of Brigadier General Charles Heckman. With Ord's departure went the motive force behind his corps. Heckman had little experience as a division commander, and simply was not up to the task of leading an entire corps in an offensive movement. He cautiously took up his new responsibilities by setting most of the corps to work consolidating his hold on Fort Harrison. What little offensive bent he had was squashed by the arrival of Lt. General Richard Ewell, now serving the Confederacy in the capacity of commander of the defenses of Richmond. Ewell brought his own brand of experienced and canny leadership and personally took over the defenses west of Fort Johnson. He rallied many of the scattered reservists and began to aggressively contest Northern probes from Fort Harrison, then began skirmishing directly with the fort's new occupants. Except for a few uncoordinated, brigade sized attacks, the XVIII corps would be occupied for the remainder of the day by Dick Ewell and

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the Virginians. The Federals took no further aggressive action against Benning's brigade until the arrival of the X Corps in midafternoon.²⁸

During the fight, companies and squads had been shifted to wherever the greatest threat appeared, irrespective of regimental organization, and by the end of the fight, most of the men were in units company size or smaller. Benning's brigade now received a huge benefit from this lull, which permitted the scattered pieces of individual regiments to reassemble into cohesive units, and allowed men canteens of water, fresh ammunition, and opportunities to clean fouling from their guns. The regiments then resumed their initial deployment. The 2nd and 17th Georgia Infantry Regiments reassembled and continued to hold Fort Johnson and the works of the Interior Line north of it, to just south of Fort Gregg. The 15th Georgia was again split, half in Fort Gregg, and half in Fort Gilmer. The 20th Georgia was strung along the Interior line from south of Fort Gilmer to Fort Gregg; some of its men were in Fort Gregg proper, and a small number may have been in Fort Gilmer. This was a much bigger deal for the troops than it sounds like now, a hundred forty years afterwards. Scattered groups of Reservists remained along the Interior Line, and the Texas Brigade redeployed immediately west of Fort Gilmer. Re-enforcements, small in number but welcome, were present in the form of the Louisiana Guard Artillery and a second, unknown battery, posted along the Interior Line a quarter of a mile northwest of the Texans. The artillery covered the left flank of the infantry, but they themselves were entirely unsupported, and the works between the artillerists and the Texans, entirely unmanned. Major General Dick Anderson, temporary I Corps commander, had been ordered to the Richmond front the previous day, and arrived with his staff during the morning. Anderson brought no additional troops, and it appears he allowed the front line commanders to continue handling the tactical details. General Gregg had telegraphed General Lee as soon as he learned of the fall of Fort Harrison; Lee had promptly ordered General Field, and the three brigades of his division that were outside of Petersburg with him, to move immediately to the Richmond front; these troops were en route. General Lee was also preparing Hoke's division to follow.²⁹

The head of Union General David Birney's X Corps began to appear on the New Market Road, half a mile from Fort Gilmer, soon after the firing died down around Fort Johnson. A group of officers came into view of those inside Fort Gilmer. They were mounted and appeared to be reconnoitering the Confederate line. An artilleryman decided to scatter the enemy officers

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and aimed a cannon, loaded with shrapnel, at them. The 29th of September was proving to be Captain Perry's day to sample the lifestyle of the artillery - the cannoneer noticed Perry observing from nearby, and waved him over for a closer look. Captain Perry stood beside the gunner as he yanked the lanyard, then watched as "The ball rose high in the air, making the parabola, and then descended quickly over the group. It grew to a speck as it descended, and in about Five seconds exploded over the mounted party. They scattered and disappeared in the woods." What exactly the Union scouts saw, besides the approaching shell, is unknown, but their deployments that followed as a result of their reconnaissance were fatally flawed. As the masses of infantry that followed these scouts began to arrive around noon, they went no further north than Laurel Hill Church, where General Gary made another defensive stand. The northerners drove off Gary's skirmishers, then deployed along the New Market Road, facing Fort Gilmer. If the X Corps could launch a coordinated attack, it had sufficient force to overwhelm the defenders with a frontal assault. The issue of coordination of force presented a large "if", and a frontal assault was a questionable path for Birney to follow. Had his men, or even half his men, continued north for another mile, they would have been in position with sufficient force to flank the entire Confederate line. Instead, soldiers in both armies prepared for Union frontal attacks around Forts Gilmer and Gregg. Birney's lead division, the 2nd Division, X Corps, commanded by Brig. Gen. Robert Foster, deployed roughly half a mile northeast of Fort Gilmer, facing the fort. Birney's 1st Division was not yet up, but when it did arrive, it halted at the intersection of Mill Road and New Market Road. Intentionally or not, Birney's 1st division acted as the Corps reserve for the remainder of the day. The X Corps reserve brigade, all US Colored Troops commanded by Brig Gen William Birney, the corps' commander's brother, was also following Foster's division, and was expected to push east along Mill Road, until it faced the Confederate works. Paine's division of the XVIII Corps, been badly shot up in the morning's fight at New Market Heights, followed Foster's division to secure the Unionists' northern flank, but would not deploy in time to assist Foster's division in its hour of need, which was fast approaching.³⁰

"Fort Gilmer...was quite a formidable structure, with a large moat next the enemy, flanked by heavy earthworks, and perhaps three fourths of a mile nearer Richmond [than] Fort Harrison was on the outmost line, looking nearly, if not directly, south on a rise commanding a large area...In front of Fort Gilmer there was a wide clearing ... About four hundred yards off

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was a woods in which the enemy formed directly facing Fort Gilmer...[they had] a full view of the enemy after advancing from the woods to the attack. From the fort to the woods was almost a dead level.” This was Captain Perry’s recollection of the fort. The walls of the fort covered an arc of about 270 degrees, with what would have been its southwest face, had one existed, open to the rear of the works. Its moat was eight to ten feet deep, and its walls ten or twelve feet high. It was large enough to have easily contained Benning’s entire brigade, had the southerners had the luxury of so concentrating their forces. In addition to the elements of Benning’s brigade previously mentioned, several napoleons from the Goochland Artillery had been placed within the fort. The ground between Foster’s division and Fort Gilmer was mostly open farm country, but was cut by four small ravines, swampy and overgrown, that ran across the axis of any advance his men might make on Gilmer. Foster determined to strike head first against the northern face of Fort Gilmer, which would pit his division against the defenders of the fort and the Texas brigade. His troops would need to advance into the fields, then make a partial left wheel and advance, to execute his plan. The ravines would provide some shelter for his troops, but they might also disrupt their alignment, especially because of how the gullies lay across the terrain. The troops on the left of Foster’s line, those with the shortest distance to advance, had to deal with one ravine, while his right hand brigade, with the furthest distance to cover, would have to cross all four gullies. By 1:30 PM, Foster had his men in position, at least the 1,400 or so still with him after marching since sunset of the previous day. If he could keep his troops together, and if David Birney’s brigade could launch a coordinated attack from the east, there would be enough attackers that Fort Gilmer would be seriously threatened. However, Foster could see no friendly troops deployed to support him, and Paine’s division was just beginning to arrive behind his. Despite this, the Federal X Corps commander had ordered an assault at 1:30, and he was determined to have an assault at 1:30. Instead of waiting for their full strength to deploy, the Union command, anxious to get their stalled offensive moving again, ordered Foster’s division forward.³¹

To the Georgians inside Fort Gilmer, the enemy seemed to suddenly appear from the northeast, rushing towards Fort Gilmer. The ravines did separate Foster’s three brigades as they advanced, to the degree that Confederate veterans recalled the attack as being made not by a division, but by three brigades, in succession. The first Union brigade to come up was broken, then scattered, about 150 yards from the fort; the intense infantry and artillery fire from their

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front, coupled with the raking artillery fire delivered by the Louisiana Guard Artillery and its partner battery, square into their right flank, was simply too much. A fresh union brigade seemed to well up behind the broken one, and under the cover of battle smoke made it to within 75 yards of the fort before being shredded into submission. A Federal recalled “we...were within forty paces of the abatis of the fort, when a whirlwind seemed to rush across our front. The line disappeared as though an earthquake had swallowed it...The ground was covered with our slain.” Foster, seeing that two of his brigades were wrecked, ordered a retreat, during which the same Federal recalled “The rebels stood in crowds upon the parapet of their fort, shouting at us in derision”. The Southerners were fighting under few illusions; they knew how small their own force was, they saw yet another of their large guns dismount itself by recoil, and they knew that, had the enemy attacked in almost any other way, their own defeat might have been inevitable. Foster’s attack was over by 2 PM, the flag of the 3rd NY Infantry left behind amidst his dead and wounded.³²

Around 2:30, three USCT regiments of William Birney’s brigade belatedly (at least from Foster’s perspective) began deploying along the western edge of woods just north of the intersection of Varina and Mill Roads, a half mile east of Fort Gregg. His attack never had enough cohesion for it to loose any, and was piecemeal before it started. At about 3 PM, Birney sent a battalion of the 9 USCT forward to probe the Interior Line between Forts Gilmer and Gregg. The 9th was stopped cold by men of the 15th and 20th Georgia before it got halfway across the field to the Confederate line, and retreated back to the woods. A bit later, Birney sent a battalion of the 8 USCT forward to test Fort Gregg. The Georgians successfully stiff armed these troops as well, though the 8th USCT reinforced their advanced position with a second battalion and held. Having failed in these two probes, Birney ordered the 7th USCT to attack another location, Fort Gilmer, at around 4 PM. A battalion of 4 companies, deployed in skirmish formation, dutifully stepped off for the attack.³³

The 7th USCT started forward just moments after the veterans of Benning’s Brigade and the Texas Brigade were reunited with General Field, accompanying Law’s Alabama Brigade, the first of the infantry reinforcements to arrive from Petersburg. Law’s men, commanded by Colonel Perry, filed into the unoccupied works on the left of the Texas Brigade and finally secured the left flank of the entire Confederate line. Soon after the arrival of the Alabamians, the attacking USCT came into the defenders’ view, moving due west across stubbled corn fields.

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Georgia veterans, reinvigorated by the arrival of reinforcements, poured in heavy volleys into the attacking columns, as the Goochland artillerists blasted them with shrapnel and grape. The USCT continued gallantly forward, losing men with every step. Rather than taking time to stop and return fire, the USCT's broke into a run and finally entered the moat in front of Fort Gilmer, which was eight to ten feet deep and out of view of the fort's defenders. With the attackers hidden from view, firing died off for a few minutes. Then Georgians began crawling atop the parapet to snipe at the enemy, which drove the USCT in the moat to begin lifting one another to the parapet of the fort, so they might engage the defenders. The men of the 15th, commanded here by Captain Madison Marcus, were ready and waiting for them. Sergeant Granberry recalled that "not a head appeared but that it was quickly perforated with one or more balls." A New York Times reporter observing the attack wrote that at least 20 men of the 7th USCT met their end this way, one of whom burned his name into the lorebook of the Army of Northern Virginia. J. B. Polley, of the Texas Brigade, sketched the incident in a letter a few days later:

"Surrender, you black scoundrels!" shouted the commander of the fort.

"S'rendah yo'seff, sah" came the reply in a stentorian voice. "Jess wait'll we uns git in dah, eff you wanten." Then they began lifting each other up to the top of the parapet, but no sooner did a head appear than its owner was killed by a shot from the rifles of the infantry.

"Less liff Cawpul Dick up", one of them suggested, "he'll git in dah suah," and the corporal was accordingly hoisted, only to fall back lifeless with a bullet through his head.

"Dah now" loudly exclaimed another of his companions, "Cawpul Dick done dead! What I done bin tole yer?"³⁴

News of Negro troops stuck in Fort Gilmer's moat spread like wildfire along the line, and nearby Georgians and Texans came running towards the fort, hoping for "a chance to shoot a nigger." Before all of these random infantrymen could be accommodated, officers inside the fort called upon the surviving USCT to surrender. The Georgians received no response, so the cannons in the fort began to throw lit shrapnel shells over the fort wall and into the ditch. Some sources claim Captain Marcus ordered the shells tossed, but the idea could have come from any of the men; Benning's brigade had seen this treatment dished out on Wofford's

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Georgia brigade outside of Knoxville. Regardless, the shells were effective. A few seconds after they were tossed, they blew, and “a fearful howl came up”. A few explosions were enough to force the survivors of the 7th USCT into subjection. They threw their guns out of the moat, and 75 to 100 unwounded prisoners were taken, entering into Fort Gilmer through a culvert. Among the prisoners was a white lieutenant with a badly broken leg. According to Captain Perry, this officer was “stupidly drunk and cursed us roundly. No one got angry with him, but our Confederate soldiers guyed him into great fury. One of them took his canteen half full of rotgut whisky and poured it out. He seemed to regret the loss of the whisky more than his defeat.” Captain Martin reported that in addition to the officers, “the negroes were drunk, for there was whisky in their canteens.” The reports of the attackers’ use of alcohol is ironic in light of their brigade’s own history, and also because spirits had been part of US Military etiquette since before the American Revolution. Rumors of abuse of the black prisoners also arose, and in a remarkably sad statistic, two thirds of the USCT captured at Fort Gilmer died in southern prison camps within the next year. Perhaps in response to this, Perry added years later that “I don’t think any of the wounded were butchered or any of the negro prisoners were harmed after surrendering.” Whatever the case regarding abuse, I Corps staff officer Moxley Sorrel referred to the fight with the 7th USCT as “an ugly affair all through.”³⁵

There was one more act to play out around Fort Gilmer. With fresh reinforcements behind them and no organized enemy forces nearby, many Georgians ran out in front of their works to “forage” for clothes, boots, blankets, or anything else that might have been useful and could be found on a dead or wounded enemy. A Virginia Reservist, C. W. Breckinridge, nearly opened fire on the Georgians, whom he initially took to be deserting. Then he realized what they were doing; “How it shocked my youthful sensibilities to see a dead man’s wearing apparel jerked off of him before he was cold .” The Georgians discovered that many of the enemy lying on the ground proved to be unhurt, but these were either shot or captured as the victorious Georgians moved among them.³⁶

Late in the afternoon, the last piecemeal attack of what might have been an overwhelming, mass assault began against the men of the 2nd and 17th Georgia. The Federals were Jourdan’s brigade from the XVIII Corps, and intended to support the 8th USCT on William Birney’s southern flank, though by the time they had deployed and begun to advance, the 8th USCT had been stalemated. The southern half of Jourdan’s brigade stepped off towards the

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Confederates in Fort Johnson. They boldly advanced, maintaining “splendid order” in the face of a heavy skirmish fire. Yet the defenders concluded that, considering their own numbers, about 150, and the state of their breastworks, that the attack was suicidal. When Jourdan’s men reached a ditch, 200-300 yards in front of the fort, the Georgians opened a blistering fire. Most of the defenders had at least one extra rifle in their possession, picked off the field after the morning’s fight. With the extra guns, they were able to fire multiple volleys in rapid succession before having to reload. The hail of fire was too much for Jourdan’s men, and they broke and ran for cover. The northern half of Jourdan’s brigade attacked the Confederate line at Fort Gregg, now somewhat weakened and disordered by the individuals and squads who had run to Fort Gilmer, hoping to participate in the “blackbird shoot”. This attack did not have the weight to seriously threaten the Interior Line, but members of the 55th Pennsylvania managed to temporarily occupy some of the works. While the defenders dispatched with them, a corporal of the 158th New York Infantry managed to seize the flag of the 20th Georgia and escape with it. Though its men had performed well, the 20th became the second regiment in the brigade to suffer the indignity of losing its colors.³⁷

With the repulse of Jourdan’s brigade, serious fighting ended for the day. By sunset, the remaining two brigades of Field’s Division reached the Confederate lines, as did a brigade sized task force from Pickett’s Division. General Lee himself was on the field, and had begun planning the recapture of Fort Harrison. The reinforcements took position between the Federal troops and the men who had contested their advance all day, allowing Benning’s men and the Texans an opportunity to finally rest. General Field prepared his three unfought brigades to attempt to recapture Fort Harrison that night, but the counterattack was cancelled by General Anderson. Field and his men would await the arrival of Hoke’s Division, which was on its way from Petersburg, all the while listening to Northern fatigue parties laboring to improve the fort’s defenses.³⁸

Preparations for the counterattack were not complete until around noon on September 30. After an artillery bombardment, Field’s division, less Benning’s and the Texas brigades, was to attack the northwest face of Fort Harrison, while Hoke’s division struck its western face. The fact that there were western and northwestern faces are indicative of how hard the northern troops worked to reverse the works of the fort and consolidate their hold on it – these sides of the

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fort did not exist in the morning of September 29th. Once the attack started, nothing went right for the southerners. The bombardment proved ineffective; then one of Field's brigades charged the fort prematurely. Field attempted to salvage the attack by ordering his other two brigades forward, but Hoke kept his division out of the fight until after all of Field's brigades had been repulsed. Finally part of Hoke's division advanced, but was unsupported, as Field's men had been, and their attack also bloodily repulsed. Benning's brigade was again posted between Forts Johnson, Gregg, and Gilmer. While fortunate in not having to join the abortive assault, they did have to watch it "signally fail", as Perry reported. General Lee observed the debacle from Fort Gilmer, amongst the Georgians.³⁹

In spite of the pall cast by the failed attempt to retake Harrison, the men of Benning's brigade passed the 30th as best they could. Captain Perry heard about Corporal Dick for the first time, as men were retelling his story and "laughing over the expression" all day. The story quickly made its way through the I Corps, then the entire Army of Northern Virginia, and "Corporal Dick" became a byword in the Confederate army for all Colored Troops. Around 6 PM a heavy rain started falling, that continued into October 1. News of the fighting had spread rapidly in Richmond, as well as the army, and sightseers from town started showing up on the 1st, excited at the prospect of seeing the dead USCT. Blacks who were serving masters in the Confederate army reportedly joined the civilians in insulting the corpses. Confederate authorities refused to allow a truce for the burial of the fallen, and the dead Negroes remained unburied for the sightseers' pleasure for several more days. By October 4, the brigade had officially buried the bodies of 119 northern soldiers, though evidence suggests that few, if any, of these bodies being USCT.⁴⁰

The major fighting from September 29-30, what has become known as "Chaffin's Farm" and "New Market Heights", ended with the counterattack on Fort Harrison. The Federals launched a few additional probes against the northern flanks of the Richmond defenses, but for the most part both sides remained more or less where they were and resumed digging. The actions in front of Richmond were coordinated with attempts by Grant to cut the Boydton Plank Road and turn the Confederate right flank, south of Petersburg. Both of these Northern offensives fell far short of their marks. During the fighting, Benning's brigade suffered approximately twenty men killed, forty wounded, and sixty captured, for a total of 120 – roughly 20% of its strength. The 2nd and 17th Georgia each lost around 20 men, the 15th about thirty five,

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and the 20th, perhaps forty five. While these are significant losses relative to the brigade's size, the northern brigades engaged, Fairchild's, William Birney's, and Jourdan's, along with Foster's division, reported 111 dead, 775 wounded, and 483 captured, a total of 1,369, most of whom fell in front of Benning's men. There were some other troops sprinkled lightly along the line, but the 1,369 total ignores the losses inflicted by Moore during the initial Federal assault on Fort Harrison. It seems safe to credit Benning's brigade, and the supporting artillery, with putting over 1,200 of the enemy hors de combat, inflicting ten times the casualties received. Indeed, General Gregg reported an official tally of 483 prisoners captured by Benning's men. The fighting put an exclamation point on the last letter written to the *Savannah Republican* by Tout le Monde, a letter that described the summer of 1864 as one "whose fame of blood will go on till history forgets all that lays behind it". The letter was dated August 31, 1864. "Tout le Monde" remains anonymous, and his fate therefore unknown, but it is hard not to believe that he numbered among the brigade's casualties.⁴¹

General Lee remained on the Richmond front, dissatisfied with the strategic state of affairs. He determined to try to strike the Union right flank, along the Darbytown Road, on October 7. Benning's brigade was to be part of the strike force, and received orders to move on October 6. Before the brigade left Fort Gilmer, burial parties were finally sent out to deal with the dead USCT. Immediately after the fighting of the 29th had ended, Virginian C. W. Breckenridge had entered the moat, and seen an estimated forty corpses, "some torn to pieces by the hand grenades, but a number of them with the hole in the forehead". A member of the burial detail recalled "they were piled up several deep in the ditch and were lying pretty thick in front". After laying on the ground mouldering for a week, the bodies must have presented an indescribably awful appearance and smell. One wonders how thorough a job the burial detail did, or if they did anything at all. Staff Officer Corbin recalled slaughtered USCT "lying thick as blackberries" in front of the fort on October 6 – this two days after General Gregg submitted his report on the battle and subsequent disposition of enemy dead, wounded and captured. The returns for Company I of the 15th Georgia indicate that they left the works at Fort Gilmer around 9 AM on the 6th of October, marching two miles to the left, and crossing the works. Before noon, they were obviously moving towards the attack General Lee had ordered, leaving precious little time to work a burial detail.⁴²

By the morning of October 7, both Field's and Hoke's divisions were massed on the Darbytown Road. Facing them was General Augustus Kautz' cavalry division, dismounted and on the far side of the old Exterior Line, and supported by twelve to sixteen artillery pieces. General Field sent one of his brigades to assist Gary's cavalry brigade in turning Kautz' left flank, and attacked Kautz frontally with the rest of his division. After a brisk, twenty minute fight, the enemy cavalry routed, leaving behind at least nine guns, ten caissons, and 100 horses in the possession of Field's division. As Hoke's division advanced to Field's right, the northern cavalry reformed behind reinforcements in another line of works, two miles in rear (further from Richmond) of their first position, and a mile or so east of where present day Darbytown Road crosses I-295. Expecting Hoke's division to coordinate in assaulting this new line, Field sent his brigades forward, their commanders on foot. The Confederate brigades penetrated the abatis, only to be shattered a withering fire created by artillery and a new weapon (an old nightmare from Chickamauga), the Spencer Repeating Rifle. For some reason, Hoke never advanced to the attack, and the firestorm focused on Field's attack. The lack of support from Hoke, combined with the defenders' numbers and firepower, left the attackers with no chance of success, and they fell back to their jump off point on the Exterior Line. General Gregg, commander of the Texas Brigade, and under whom Benning's men had fought at Chaffin's Farm, was shot through the neck and numbered among the dead. General Bratton, of the division, was wounded. The "First Battle of The Darbytown Road" ended, the northerners' right flank still secure.⁴³

The end of fighting was again temporary, and Field's division remained active. By October 11 it had dug a new defensive line between the "Exterior Line" and the "Interior Line". The new defenses started at Fort Gilmer, the right flank of Field's division, and ran north to the Darbytown Road, along Cornelius Creek and roughly midway between the two previously lain lines of works. During the night of October 11-12, the Texas brigade was moved to the north side of Darbytown Road. On the morning of the 12th, a heavy force of the enemy advanced up the Darbytown Road, hoping to smash Field's left flank north of Darbytown Road, at the time the Texas brigade. The Texans held the Federal troops off long enough for Field to get the rest of his division north of the road to help face the foe, less Bratton's brigade intentionally held south of the road. At some point during the fighting, most likely as Benning's brigade came into line on the north side of the road, elements of the 15th Georgia joined with dismounted cavalry in

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attacking and driving federal troops from their lines. Captain Madison Marcus, defender of Fort Gilmer, was killed during this action; his body was retrieved and buried in the Hebrew Cemetery on Shockoe Hill, in Richmond. Heavy Union assaults fell on Field's line throughout the day, but were unsuccessful and, although the individuals most affected couldn't appreciate it, Field's division again deflected a large enemy attack while suffering comparatively few casualties. As night fell, the northern troops retired, ending the "Second Battle of New Market Road". On October 14th, Benning's and the rest of Field's men extended the defensive works along the line they now occupied north of New Market Road.⁴⁴

Throughout their time on the Richmond front, Benning's brigade regained some of its strength with the return of men recovered from wounds suffered since the onset of campaigning, in May. On October 19th, they were rejoined by their corps commander, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, his right arm now hung in a sling, "quite paralyzed and useless". His return to command was greeted with "great joy" by at least his division commanders, as well as the majority of his soldiers, many of whom mounted the earthworks to cheer as he rode by with his staff. General Anderson, who had led the corps during Longstreet's recuperation, was formally promoted to Lt. General, and given command of the newly created IV Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia.⁴⁵

General Longstreet rejoined his command just in time to participate in the next Federal attempt to turn the Confederate left. Beginning on October 25th, scouts detected a Union move in this direction. On the 27th, heavy skirmishing opened along the Confederate line, covering a Union thrust through White Oak swamp, aimed at securing the Williamsburg Road. Once again, the flanking column was delayed by Gary's cavalry brigade while the bulk of Field's infantry hurried to the threatened sector, and Field's initial line held by a heavy skirmish line. Once again, Field's men arrived in time to man the existing earthworks before the blue coated infantry could seize them. The Texas brigade and Bratton's brigade, supported by artillery, inflicted severe casualties while repulsing an assault along the Williamsburg Road, after which fighting died down. If it all is starting to sound familiar, it was getting that way for the men in the ranks, too – the Federals attacking everywhere along the line north of the James, the Federals repulsed everywhere. The 15th Georgia, and likely two of the other regiments of Benning's brigade, were

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involved in the maneuvering of October 27th, but did not engage in the fighting. The Georgians, and most of the rest of Field's division, returned to their previous positions on the 28th.⁴⁶

From this time forward, preparations for the oncoming winter took a new priority, although picket and outpost duties continued, unabated by season or weather. On November 7, Field's division was ordered to get scouts into the rear of the Union line. Sergeant Houghton of the 2nd Georgia was among those sent. Accompanied by "a brave little fellow" by the name of Simmons, they detected some blue coated cavalry scouts, and stalked them as they rode past a small but active federal field hospital. Houghton claimed to have entered the hospital, not then guarded by able troops. The two Georgians passed several dead and wounded federals, among whom was "a black negro with his thigh broken by a bullet." The "impudent fellow" asked, "Why the d---d rebels did not send some one to take care of the wounded?", upon which Houghton had to save the "brute" from Simmons' rifle. The man was wearing a fine pair of new cavalry boots, but the Georgians' attention was drawn by more readily available loot. Houghton relieved a dead Michigan captain of a green leather satchel, then he and Simmons raided a hospital supply wagon of 1858 Otard brandy, sugar, and new underclothes, and started back for camp. Nearing their lines, they crossed paths with a Texan they knew, who was off on a similar scout, and told him of the pickings that lay ahead. A day or two later, Houghton took liberty in Richmond. "Dinner at the American hotel was \$20, a drink of apple brandy was \$5, and a theater ticket was \$10." Just after sitting in the theater, Houghton

 saw all my Texas friends come in..After exchanging greetings I asked: "Boys, did you get any sacking the other day?" Receiving an affirmative reply I asked if they saw the boots on the wounded negro. The handsome Texan threw his foot encased in those very boots, on the top of the seat beside my head remarking: "Yes by G-d, here they are." In answer to my wondering inquiry as to how he got them off, he said that he put his foot against the man and jerked them off, and the negro could be heard yelling a mile, which was not to be wondered at. It is all sad, but it is history.

In contrast to this episode, three weeks later Negro teamsters took the places of able-bodied white teamsters serving Benning's brigade and Field's division, freeing the white soldiers for service on the firing line.⁴⁷

Besides scouting and foraging expeditions, General Field's division sent fatigue parties to strengthen their works, and set the rest of the men to building huts. By late November, General Benning had rejoined his men, who by now considered themselves in winter quarters. Colonel DuBose's performance during Benning's absence satisfied General Lee of DuBose's ability to handle a brigade. With Benning's return, DuBose was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a Georgia brigade in another infantry division. Benning's men were posted along the Darbytown Road, roughly five miles from Richmond, their camp in low, wet ground three quarters of a mile behind their lines. Axes were few and far between, but constant use of those available had resulted in huts for all, though construction of chimneys lagged behind. Despite stereotypes regarding the inadequacy of the Confederate quartermaster and commissary departments, staff officer and private soldier alike reported adequate provisions and clothes for the troops. Though the men were physically comfortable, thoughts of home and the proximity of Sherman's army to it weighed heavily on their minds. Some men seemed resigned to the situation – Samuel Wiley wrote, “we all imagine the worse” – but ready to keep fighting. Yet letters from home, telling of devastation and starving children, proved too much for many good soldiers, who found themselves trudging homeward to try and salvage whatever was left of their homes and families.⁴⁸

On December 9, the remnants of the Confederate II Corps, now led by Gen John Gordon, passed Field's division as it marched from the Shenandoah Valley to a reunion with Lee's army. Division staff officer Richard Corbin recalled “our boys jeered them piteously for their discomfitures near Winchester...at one time I thought a row was imminent between the two corps”. As if a punishment for this transgression against their fellow soldiers, Field's men received orders to prepare three days rations and take up the march at 5 AM on the 10th. Field's men were to maneuver against the Union right flank. The morning of December the 10th dawned with heavy sleet falling amidst a heavy nor'easter. The Confederate thrust deteriorated into a reconnaissance in force as its strength was rapidly depleted by heavy straggling. The Union line was located, a few prisoners taken, and the rebels returned to their camps. General Benning remembered this misadventure when he wrote, “after I rejoined the brigade in November, 1864, nothing of importance was done by it until the 2d of April, 1865.” The brigade settled back into

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winter quarters, serving picket duty, attending one of the churches that sprung up in the camps, or one of the division's theatres – a cultured officer pronounced the Texas brigade theatre “really very good”, sneaking into Richmond for R&R, or just trying to stay warm or fed.⁴⁹

¹ Fuller Diary, entries July 27 through July 29, 1864; OR – I – Vol XL/1 – p 762; “Letter From Tout le Monde”, August 1, 1864. *Savannah Republican*, August 20, 1864. ed. Stypke, Writing & Fighting from the Army...; Trudeau, The Last Citadel; Power, Lee's Miserables.

² Fuller Diary, entries July 30 through August 3, 1864; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co A; Bowden, Memoirs; “Letter From Tout le Monde”, August 1, 1864. *Savannah Republican*, August 20, 1864. ed. Stypke, Writing & Fighting from the Army...

³ Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co A; Power, Lee's Miserables, p 197.

⁴ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Trudeau, The Last Citadel

⁵ OR – Ser I – Vol XLII/2 – p 86; Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”. Darbytown Road has been relaid east of Fussell's Mill, on what at the time of the battle was a trail. The “old” intersection of Darbytown Road with Long Bridge corresponds today with Long Bridge and Yardley Mill Roads (see maps, Trudeau, The Last Citadel, and local Virginia maps)

⁶ Fuller Diary, entries August 14, 1864; Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Fuller Diary, August 15, 1864;

⁷ “Letter From Tout le Monde”, August 20, 1864. *Savannah Republican*, September 1, 1864. ed. Stypke, Writing & Fighting from the Army...; Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Trudeau, The Last Citadel;

⁸ Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”; *Richmond Enquirer*, August 31 1864, “Field's Division”; Fuller Diary, entries August 16, 1864; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; OR-I-XLII/1-p 878; Lokey, “The Battle Near Deep Bottom, Va”; Corbin, Letters; J H Martin mentions USCT,

⁹Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Fuller Diary, entry for August 16, 1864; Power, Lee's Miserables;

¹⁰ Fuller Diary, entry for August 17, 1864; Field, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Fuller Diary, entry for August 18, 1864; Trudeau, The Last Citadel and local Virginia maps; Trudeau, The Last Citadel; OR-I-XLII/1-p 879; OR-I-XLII/2-p 1193

¹¹Rozier, Granite Farm Letters.

¹² Fuller Diary, entries July 30 through August 3, 1864; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co A; Young, Last Order; Granite Farm Letters, ed Rozier

¹³ Rozier, Granite Farm Letters; Fuller Diary, entries September 19 through September 24, 1864

¹⁴ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; OR-I-XLII/1-p 935; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”

¹⁵Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Trudeau, The Last Citadel; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”

¹⁶Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed.

¹⁷ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”

¹⁸ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”

¹⁹ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”

²⁰ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed.

²¹ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys, p 113-117; Rozier, Granite Farm Letters; Fuller, Letter to Sister, October 17, 1864; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed

²² Sommers, Richmond Redeemed

²³ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; OR-I-XLII/1-p 935

²⁴ Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Flanigan, “That Fight...”; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Bowden, USAMHI-CWTIC; Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”

²⁵ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Johnston, Charles, “The Attack on Fort Gilmer...”

²⁶ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys

²⁷ Flanigan, “That Fight...”; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; OR-I-XLII/1-p 935

- ²⁸ Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”
- ²⁹ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; OR – I – XLII/1 – p 875-6
- ³⁰ Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed
- ³¹ Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; OR-I-XLII/1-p 760.
- ³² Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; OR-I-XLII/1-p 760
- ³³ Richmond Redeemed, Sommers, p 89
- ³⁴ Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Trudeau, The Last Citadel; Polley, “Polly Lost a Foot...”; Alexander, Fighting for the Confederacy, ed Gallagher
- ³⁵ Alexander, Fighting for the Confederacy, ed Gallagher; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Sorrel, Recollections
- ³⁶ Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”; Breckenridge, “Story...”
- ³⁷ Moore, James B, “The Attack of Fort Harrison”; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed
- ³⁸ Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”;
- ³⁹ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Granberry, “That Fort Gilmer..”
- ⁴⁰ Perry, H. H., “Assault on Fort Gilmer”; Alexander, Fighting for the Confederacy, ed Gallagher; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed
- ⁴¹ Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; OR-I-XLII/1-p 934; “Letter From Tout le Monde”, August 31, 1864. *Savannah Republican*, September 6, 1864. ed. Stuple, Writing & Fighting from the Army...
- ⁴² Trudeau, The Last Citadel; Sommers, Richmond Redeemed; Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Breckenridge, “Story...”; Martin, J. H., “The Assault...”; Corbin, Letters; OR-I-XLII/1-p 934; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co I
- ⁴³ Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; OR – I – XLII/1 – p 876; Corbin, Letters; Sorrel, Recollections
- ⁴⁴ Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co I; OR – I – XLII/1 – p 873-876
- ⁴⁵ Sorrel, Recollections; Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”; Cutrer, Longstreet’s Aide
- ⁴⁶ OR – I – XLII/1 – p 871-872; Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”, *SHSP* 14, 1886; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co A; “Longstreet's Report of Affair of October 27, 1864”, *SHSP* 7, 1879; Compiled Service Records, 15th Ga, Co I
- ⁴⁷ OR – I – XLII/3 – p 1204; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys; Samuel Wiley letter, Nov 26, 1864, Granite Farm Letters, Rozier
- ⁴⁸ Field, narrative, “Campaign 1864-1865”, *SHSP* 14, 1886; Samuel Wiley letter, Nov 26, 1864, Granite Farm Letters, Rozier; Corbin, Letters; Houghton & Houghton, Two Boys
- ⁴⁹ Corbin, Letters; OR – I – XLII/3 – p 1262-6; Benning, “Notes on the Final Campaign...”, *SHSP* 7, 1879