

A History of
Joseph Paul Lewis
and the
1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry

by
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My Lewis Line Genealogy in Brief:

Jack W. Lewis (born Oliphant Furnace, Fayette County, PA, February 11, 1937) son of
Lindsay Chester Lewis (born Oliphant Furnace, Fayette County, PA, May 19, 1899) son of
James Marshall Lewis (born Gibbons Glade, Fayette County, PA, July 10, 1868) son of
Joseph Paul Lewis (born Morgantown, Monongalia County, WV, 1844) son of
Benjamin A. Lewis (born Connecticut, 1802)

About the Author

I was born on February 11, 1937 at Oliphant Furnace, Fayette County, Pennsylvania where I had eight grades of schooling at the Oliphant Grade School. My family moved to Beaver Falls, Beaver County, Pennsylvania during the summer of 1951. I attended Beaver Falls Junior High School for one year (9th grade) and Beaver Falls Senior High School (3 years) until graduation in 1955. I worked one year as an apprentice millwright at the St. Joseph Lead zinc smelting works in Monaca, Pennsylvania while attending night school at Geneva College in Beaver Falls.

In 1956 I received an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut and graduated with honors from that institution in June of 1960 with a bachelor's degree in Science and a commission as an Ensign in the United States Coast Guard. I graduated seventh in a class of 137 cadets and first among all engineers. After graduation, I married Ann Long Harwick, whom I met while she was attending the Connecticut College for Women, also in New London. For four years I was assigned to the oceangoing Coast Guard Cutters USCGC OWASCO, based in New London, and the USCGC CASTLE ROCK, based in Boston, Massachusetts.

In June 1964, I received orders to attend graduate school at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I attended this institution two full years (including summer schools) and graduated with honors and two degrees: Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering and the two-year graduate degree of Naval Engineer (naval architecture). Following graduation, I was assigned to Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D. C. where I designed polar icebreakers (ships that transit polar ice fields).

In June 1970, I resigned my commission as a Lieutenant Commander in the Coast Guard and started my own engineering consulting business. In 1975 I was divorced from Ann Long Harwick and in 1976 married my current wife, Carol Surber Lewis. I am a registered professional engineer, have written over 50 technical papers and several books, and have won several best paper awards from engineering societies. I practiced engineering until 1997, when I decided to retire.

I became interested in the Civil War during the time I lived around Washington, D. C. I have toured numerous battlefields and read over 100 books and many articles on the Civil War. This paper is the first I wrote about the Civil War. In 2017 I wrote a historical novel, *Storm Coming: A novel of the Civil War in western Virginia*, about my other paternal great-grandfather, Alexander J. Swaney, who also enlisted in the 1st Virginia (Loyal) Volunteer Cavalry, later to become the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry, at the beginning of the War. The novel is available on amazon.com.

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Introduction

My father, Lindsay Chester Lewis (born 1899), a coal miner, and my mother, Margaret Mae McCormick (born 1902), a homemaker, were divorced when I was six years old (born 1937). I grew up without a father and lost connections with the Lewis side of my ancestry. I have vivid memories of my mother talking about the “dumb hillbillies” who lived in Morgantown, West Virginia not far from where I was born in Oliphant Furnace, Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Mom told me this so many times that, upon graduation from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1960, I had to finally go to Morgantown to see firsthand all of the “dumb hillbillies” who lived there. I was in for a real shock. Instead of “dumb hillbillies” in Morgantown, I found a modern town with a renowned university and medical school. As I pondered my mother’s remarks and what I saw before my eyes, I wondered if some of my Lewis ancestors weren’t from Morgantown and that Mom, whose feelings must have been severely hurt during the divorce from my father, was simply lashing out at him and his ancestors.

It would be many years later before I was given a chance to establish links to my Lewis family ancestors. I was attending the funeral of my sister Eleanor’s husband, Edgar Miller, when a woman who I did not know approached me. She introduced herself as Kathryn Cooley Miller and said she had heard that I was interested in researching my ancestors. She told me she had information about my Lewis family in her book and files. The information Kathryn provided me indicated that my great-grandfather was Joseph Paul Lewis. He had served in the U.S. Cavalry during the Civil War and was buried in the White Rock Cemetery. I had walked through this cemetery many times as a young boy and had attended church services at the White Rock Church next to the cemetery, yet I knew nothing about any of my Lewis ancestors being buried there. My oldest sister Hazel, living not more than a block away from the church nearly all of her adult life, knew nothing about this either. Being a Civil War buff as well as a horseman, I was immensely intrigued at the prospect of finding an ancestor who fought in the Civil War, and especially one who had been in the cavalry.

Hand in hand with my sister Hazel, I searched the White Rock Cemetery for the gravesite of Joseph Paul Lewis. It is hard for me to describe the feelings that came over me when we discovered his grave in 1993, exactly 90 years after his death. The grave contained a G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) marker showing he was a Union Civil War veteran. The marker was filled with flowers, indicating some person or organization was maintaining his gravesite. A trip to the Fayette County Courthouse in Uniontown provided me with the information that he had been in “Co. E of the 1st West Virginia Cavalry Division.” While this information turned out to be only partially correct, it was enough to help me discover Joseph’s Civil War Pension and Service Records. I have since discovered the G.A.R. was a fraternal organization open only to Union veterans of the Civil War. The organization was very influential in the 1800s and is claimed to have helped elect five U.S. Presidents. The G.A.R. had meeting places in every county and state in the North. It had yearly “Encampments” where members met for social and political activities. In 1890 the membership peaked at around 490,000. The organization was disbanded by the last six members in 1949. The last member, Albert Woolson, died on August 2, 1956 at the age of 109 in Duluth, Minnesota.

Since the discovery of Joseph’s regiment, I have been conducting research into the Lewis family on a part-time basis. My initial research was hampered by the fact that I lived and worked in San Diego and only visited the East Coast twice a year. In late 1996, I uncovered information that I have now summarized, shared, and recorded for members of my immediate family, relatives, and friends. It is my intent in these pages to honor and remember Joseph Paul Lewis and his comrades-in-arms in the First West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry who fought their fellow Virginians in order to preserve our Union, and to honor all Civil War veterans, both Federal and Confederate, who through their acts of heroism and valor helped make this country the greatest country on earth.

Pre-Civil War Lewis Family History

According to the Lewis family genealogy Kathryn Cooley Miller provided me, “Five brothers—Benjamin, Thomas, John and two others—left Wales in 1661 and settled in Westerly, Rhode Island. This family can trace its roots back to Ivan the Little who fought in the conflicts between England and Wales in the 12th century. These brothers had different occupations: Glass Worker, Steel Worker and Miners. Benjamin lived to be 96.” I’ve since been able to verify some of this information.

Joseph Paul was born in or near Morgantown in Monongalia County, Virginia (now West Virginia) in 1844. The 1850 census for Monongalia County, Virginia (taken on July 10, 1850) reveals that his father was Benjamin A. Lewis, age 48, and his mother was Sarah Ann Madera, age 28. Benjamin was married on May 21, 1839 to Sarah Ann Madera, daughter of John Madera, deceased at the time of their marriage.¹ The 1850 census states that Benjamin was born in Connecticut and was a stone cutter. In 1850, Benjamin and Sarah had five children: Eliza A., age 9; Frances, (female) age 8; Harriet, age 6; Joseph, age 5; and Anne M., age 2.

Since the accuracy of census information depends largely on the willingness or ability of the person being interviewed to provide accurate data, I decided to also check the 1860 census for Monongalia County, Virginia (taken on September 7, 1860). This census lists Benjamin’s age as 45 (instead of 58) and his place of birth as Canada (instead of Connecticut). Sarah’s age is listed as 41 (instead of 38). The ages of their children are listed as: Franney [*sic*] 18, Harriet 16, Joseph 14, Anne 12, and a new daughter Dorothy, age 9. The ages for the children, when adjusted for the 10 years between the two censuses, appear correct. Benjamin and Sarah’s oldest daughter, Eliza A., who would have been 19 at the time of the 1860 census, is not listed. Perhaps she married and was no longer at home.

The age discrepancies for Benjamin and Sarah between the two censuses can easily be explained. My wife, who was 13 years younger than me when we got married, is now (20 years later) only 3 years younger. During that time, I have simply gotten younger while she has gotten older! That leaves the question as to where Benjamin was born, Connecticut or Canada? In the 1890 census for Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Joseph Paul, then 44 years old, told the census taker that he was born in West Virginia and that his father (Benjamin) was born in Connecticut. This probably indicates that the information Benjamin provided in the 1850 census showing Connecticut as his state of birth is accurate. The fact that Connecticut is next to Rhode Island suggests the information provided by Kathryn Cooley Miller regarding the very early history of the Lewises is accurate. A search of the census for Connecticut and Rhode Island in the future may provide additional information. At this writing, I do not know who Joseph’s sisters married.

¹ Marriage Bond Records (see Bibliography for complete details on references)

A Time of Civil War

Several years ago, I made a visit to the Latter Day Saints Library in San Diego, armed with the information about Joseph Paul Lewis and his Civil War data that I had obtained from the Fayette County Courthouse in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. A search of their databases revealed that Joseph Paul had applied for and received a Civil War pension. Armed with this information and the name of his regiment, I requested from the National Archives his pension records and military records using NATF Form 80. A copy of these records is contained in Appendix B [*missing from this copy*]. In Joseph's application for a Civil War pension made on January 8, 1892 at the age of 45, being duly sworn, he indicated "... that he first incurred dislocation of the elbow at or near 'Meadow Bluff' WV, while on the return of General Hunter's expedition to Lynchburg, Va in the summer of 1864, by his horse falling on him while in the line of duty; that he has had it injured twice since by accidentally falling; that he believes the disability to his elbow to be permanent and that it is not due to any vicious habit or habits nor incurred since July 30, 1890." It was interesting to note that this "General Affidavit" was filed by a James Abraham of Smithfield, Pennsylvania, a person having the same name as my nephew James Abraham now living in Fairchance, Pennsylvania, adjacent to Smithfield.

With this piece of historical information, I began research on General Hunter's expedition to Lynchburg, Virginia. In my research I discovered that Joseph Paul likely fought in the area of Virginia where my wife, Carol Surber Lewis, and I have a home that we built on a portion of her father's ancestral property. Joseph Paul likely traveled, at least twice, the very same road Carol and I travel often from the Roanoke Airport to New Castle, Virginia. Joseph Paul also likely traveled the same route from Morgantown to New Castle that my brother Tom and his wife Joanne and my sister Hazel traveled while visiting Carol and me at our Virginia home. I found out that Meadow Bluff, West Virginia, now only a small community located just south of the intersection of US 60 and Interstate 64, was an important staging area for Federal troops during the Civil War.

Background of the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry

The 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry was organized at Wheeling, Clarksburg, and Morgantown July 10 to November 25, 1861.² The regiment was recruited from counties in western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and western Virginia. Henry Anisansel first commanded the regiment; his date of commission as a colonel was September 7, 1861. However, the regiment is mostly associated with Dr. Henry Capehart, born and educated in Pennsylvania, who had signed on as the surgeon on September 18, 1861. Following the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, Capehart was promoted to full colonel and placed in charge of the regiment. Later, his brother Charles would command the regiment.³

The regiment's first active service was in the mountains of West Virginia. Organized in detachments, it performed scouting, picket, and outpost duties for various infantry commands holding mountain passes and guarding the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad against attacks from Confederate scouts, guerrillas, and bushwhackers.⁴

In the spring of 1862, the regiment was combined with other cavalry regiments into a brigade under Federal General Hatch and participated in campaigns in the Shenandoah Valley under Federal Generals Shields, Banks, McDowell, Schneck, and Fremont against the famous Confederate General "*Stonewall*" Jackson. [Names of Confederates are shown in italics for ease of distinguishing between Federals and Confederates.] In the winter of 1862-63 the regiment was assigned to the defenses of Washington, D. C. In the spring of

² Dyer, pp. 1655-1656

³ Lang, Chapter XXIII, p. 159

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 163

1863, the regiment again saw action in the lower Shenandoah and was engaged in the Battle of Gettysburg in early July of 1863.⁵



Dr. Henry Capehart, Brevet Major General, U.S.A.

Dr. Capehart began his Civil War military service on September 18, 1861 by volunteering as a surgeon in the First West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry. He was born in the county of Cambria, Pennsylvania in 1825 and received his education in that state. In 1849 he moved to Bridgeport, Ohio where he practiced his medical profession. Dr. Capehart was an accomplished horseman and had an innate ability to read the country in which he traveled. In a report by Brig. Gen. Henry E. Davies, Jr. dated Gainesville, VA October 21, 1863, Davies thanks Dr. Capehart and states, "... to whose knowledge of the country, and exertions in bringing the column through, I am in a great degree indebted for the preservation of my command." Following this engagement, Dr. Capehart was promoted to colonel and placed in charge of the regiment. On September 23, 1864, when Major General Averell was relieved of command, Dr. Capehart was placed in charge of the Second Brigade, Second Cavalry Division. Under him were the First, Second, and Third West Virginia and First New York (Lincoln) Cavalry regiments. In January of 1865, Capehart's Brigade was redesignated the Third Brigade and placed in General George A. Custer's Third Cavalry Division. While under Custer, Capehart reached his military potential as a cavalry commander. After the surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, General Custer was promoted to the command of Sheridan's Cavalry Corps and Capehart was promoted to the full rank of Brigadier General of Volunteers and placed in command of the Third Cavalry Division.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 164

1863 Civil War Campaigns

On June 1, 1863, approximately one month before the battle of Gettysburg, 18-year-old Joseph Paul Lewis was recruited at Morgantown, [West] Virginia as a Private and assigned to Company "I." This company was later to become known as Company "A" apparently when the first Company "A" was permanently detached from the regiment. The existence of two companies designated "A" has made my research difficult. [Later, while researching my great-grandfather Alexander J. Swaney, who enlisted in the original Co. A of the First Virginia (Loyal) Cavalry, later the First West Virginia Cavalry, I discovered more information about this. I found letters indicating that the original Co. A had been detached from the regiment before Capehart took command and he apparently wanted a full list of companies, so he simply changed the name of one of the other companies (Joseph Lewis's company) to Company A. This action was angrily questioned by Capt. Harrison Hagans, commander of the original Co. A, also called the Kelley Lancers, when he reported back to the regiment with his company, only to find that there was a new Co. A. (His anger was understandable, since his Co. A was the first cavalry company formed in what would become West Virginia and he and his men took great pride in that fact.) This never seems to have been fully settled, as both companies are at times referred to as Co. A or by other company letters in various documents of the time. (For example, in the "Roster of 1st Regiment West Virginia Cavalry" at <https://www.ohiocivilwarcentral.com/entry.php?rec=53> the original Co. A is listed as Co. G, and Private Lewis's company is listed as Co. A. See Lewis, *Storm Coming: A novel of the Civil War in western Virginia* for more details on the original company A.]

In the "Company Descriptive Book," Joseph's company commander, Captain Dennis Delaney, described Joseph as being of fair complexion, with brown hair and blue eyes, and 6' - 0" tall. His occupation was listed as "stage driver," which might indicate he knew a thing or two about horses.

Captain Dennis Delaney was killed in action a little over a month later on July 18, 1863 near Wytheville, VA⁶, along with nine troopers from Joseph's company. Two of his company officers, 1st Lieutenant William E. Guseman and 2nd Lieutenant Charles H. Livingston, were also seriously wounded. Lt. Guseman later died of his wounds. I have not included a description of this action because it is hard for me to believe that Joseph, a brand new recruit, would have been taken on this expedition. I feel certain the news of the death of his company commander, the wounding of two other officers, and the death of nine troopers, must have shocked Private Lewis into recognizing the difficult realities of war.

As mentioned earlier, the true Company "A" had been first recruited and mustered in at Morgantown, WV on July 18, 1861, the first cavalry organization raised in what later became the state of West Virginia. (West Virginia officially became a state on June 20, 1863.) At the time of mustering in, Company "A" was named the Kelley Lancers and was commanded by Captain J. L. McGee, who quickly achieved fame for the company, earning himself a promotion to major (October 2, 1861) and an assignment to the 3rd WV Volunteer Cavalry. At that time Captain Harrison H. Hagans was placed in charge of Company A. Captain Hagans, a young Methodist Episcopal minister who had enlisted into the Lancers on July 18, 1861 as a private, had rapidly risen through the ranks, being commissioned a 1st Lieutenant on December 27, 1861 and promoted to captain on April 2, 1863.⁷

Another great-grandfather of mine, Alexander J. (A. J.) Swaney of Smithfield, Pennsylvania, as mentioned earlier, enlisted in the original Company A (Kelley Lancers) of the 1st Virginia (Loyal) Volunteer Cavalry on September 14, 1861, which became the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry in 1863. It appears to me that Joseph Paul Lewis and Alexander J. Swaney ended up being my great-grandfathers because of the Civil War. I suspect they met and became friends at some point due to being in the same cavalry regiment. Alexander may have even been responsible for Joseph moving to Pennsylvania. After the war, Joseph's son, James Marshall Lewis (my grandfather), and Alexander's daughter, Sara Ellen Swaney (my grandmother), may have met at a regimental gathering. They obviously fell in love and, mostly likely with the blessings of their fathers, were married. James and Sarah's first son, Lindsay Chester Lewis, became my father. I know my mother spoke highly of Sarah Ellen Swaney (Grandma Lewis) and had a fondness for the Swaney's. I later did extensive research on A.J. Swaney, who became a permanent orderly for Gen. John Buford, the general credited with choosing the high ground at Gettysburg that ultimately led to Union forces winning that crucial battle. In 2017 I wrote and published a historical novel about Alexander J. Swaney's and Capt. Harrison H. Hagans's exploits during the first years of the Civil War, and about the founding of the state of West

Virginia: *Storm Coming: A novel of the Civil War in western Virginia*, Surber Press, available on amazon.com.]

At the time of Joseph's enlistment, a company of cavalry troopers usually consisted of one captain, one 1st lieutenant, one 2nd lieutenant and 84 enlisted men. Two companies united formed a squadron, the tactical unit for maneuver, commanded by the senior captain.⁸ A regiment consisted of 12 companies, probably organized into three battalions, a total of around 1,000 men. A regiment was usually commanded by a full colonel and had several staff officers holding the ranks of lieutenant colonel, major, 1st lieutenant, 2nd lieutenant, surgeon, and chaplain. A regiment also had an accompanying musical band that was sometimes put into action. Two or more regiments were often combined into a brigade under a brigade commander who held the rank of colonel or brigadier general. Two or more brigades were often combined into a division under a division commander holding the rank of major general or lieutenant general, and two or more divisions were often combined into a corps under a corps commander holding the rank of major general or lieutenant general. One or more corps comprised an army under an army commander holding the rank of major general or lieutenant general.

Many regiments, once formed, were never recruited back to strength after soldiers were killed, wounded in action, or died of diseases. Consequently, regiments kept getting smaller in size as the war went on. Several Confederate regiments that surrendered at Appomattox Court House had only 45 or 50 men left, and they were among the lucky ones. Many regiments, on both sides, ceased to exist because everyone had been killed, taken prisoner, or died of diseases.

By the middle of 1863, a cavalryman's arms were a carbine or rifle, saber, and revolver. Their equipment consisted of a saddle, bridle, lariat, nose bag, saddle bags, camp utensils, rations and forage, extra horseshoes and nails, horse grooming tackle, and ammunition.⁹ The most important possession was the cavalryman's horse and the ability of a cavalryman was determined not only by his ability to handle the animal but also by the ability of the animal to handle combat.

Considerable training went into the making of a cavalryman. Being an accomplished horseman was essential, but only part of the training. The cavalryman had to learn to fight with a saber and revolver while mounted and learn to dismount quickly, accurately fire a rifle, then remount just as quickly and move to another location at the gallop. He had to learn an almost bewildering number of bugle calls and cook his own meals. He was frequently on the move and had to learn how to sleep in the saddle during night-long marches. In a forced march a cavalry unit could travel 60 miles in a day. A cavalryman almost always got less sleep than an infantryman because he had to first care for his horse. Often this meant finding forage for his horse and grooming the animal before he himself could eat. By the time the cavalryman started eating, his infantry counterpart was already asleep. Then the cavalryman had to get up about an hour earlier to feed and groom his horse and ready his tack. About the only thing that the cavalryman had over the infantryman was when it came to marching. However, from my own personal years of horseback riding experience years, I can honestly say that riding in a saddle for long periods of time is not too much easier than walking, except perhaps when going uphill.

⁶ Walker, *War in Southwestern Virginia*, p. 52

⁷ Lang, *History of the Second West Virginia Cavalry*

⁸ Eckert, p. 3

The Federal Cavalry was badly handicapped at the outset of the Civil War. Both horses and riders from the South were more skilled and the Confederate officers knew how to properly use cavalry, whereas their Federal counterparts did not. Famous cavalry officers like *Jeb Stuart*, *Fitzhugh Lee*, *Wade Hampton*, *Turner Ashby*, *Nathan Bedford Forrest*, *John Singleton Mosby* and *John Hunt Morgan* and a host of lesser cavaliers helped the Confederate armies win victory after victory, while making the Federal horsemen appear to be rank amateurs. Things began to change in 1863, when Federal General “Fightin’ Joe” Hooker took over command of the Army of the Potomac in February of 1863. He formed a separate cavalry corps consisting of three cavalry divisions led by Generals William Averell, David Gregg, and Alfred Pleasanton. General Averell engaged and routed the famous General *Fitzhugh Lee’s* Confederate cavalry in late February of 1863. *Fitzhugh Lee*, by the way, was a classmate of Averell’s at the United States Military Academy (West Point) and they knew one another quite well.¹⁰

General Averell graduated from West Point in 1855 and was fighting Indians in the Southwest when he was transferred to Washington in April 1861. Following the Federals’ disastrous defeat at Bull Run, VA on July 21, 1861, then-Lieutenant Averell was promoted to colonel and assigned to the command of the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry Regiment. He was ordered to train the volunteer regiment into a hard-fighting cavalry unit, which he did with great skill. Averell commanded the 3rd Pennsylvania through the Peninsular Campaign of April–August 3, 1862. On July 5, 1862, at the ripe old age of 29, he was appointed a brigadier general and for a while was even placed in command of all cavalry attached to the Army of the Potomac. Such a rapid promotion had to be a dizzying experience for Averell. While he was generally regarded as an excellent drill master, he was also regarded by many as overly cautious. This led to his being relieved of command by General Hooker in late April 1863 for disregarding his orders to engage the enemy.¹¹

Major General Robert Schenck, then in charge of the Middle Department (that included West Virginia), was badly in need of a cavalry organizer and hearing of Averell’s dismissal, requested that he be assigned to his department. Averell was given command of the Fourth Separate Brigade, which had its headquarters in Weston, WV, 15 miles southwest of Clarksburg. Company A of the 1st WV Volunteer Cavalry was assigned to his brigade from June–December 1863. The rest of the regiment, including Joseph Paul Lewis’s Company I, was assigned to the First Brigade, Third Division, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac.^{12, 13}

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 330

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 385-386

August 25–31, 1863 - Averell's raid through Hardy, Pendleton, Highland, Bath, Greenfield and Pocahontas Counties, WV

Even though Private Lewis's company did not accompany Averell on his daring raids in 1863, I wanted to cover them, since the original Company A of the First West Virginia Cavalry was with Averell. For these raids, Company A was detached from the regiment and assigned to Major Thomas Gibson's Independent Cavalry Battalion. During August 5–31, Averell conducted a raid aimed at Staunton, Virginia, which took his force through Hardy, Pendleton, Highland, Bath, Greenfield, and Pocahontas Counties, WV. Before starting on this raid, Averell had received instructions informing him that the destruction of his command "would not be considered a loss in the hazardous undertaking." Averell's forces destroyed a Confederate saltpeter works near Franklin, WV and fought an unsuccessful engagement with a superior Confederate force on August 26–27, 1863 at Rocky Gap, near White Sulphur Springs, WV. Losses suffered in this battle forced Averell to retreat to Beverly, WV, but the raid successfully destroyed more than \$5,000,000 of Confederate supplies.¹⁴

November 1-17, 1863 - Averell's raid from Lewisburg to Virginia and Tennessee Railroad

After recuperating at Beverly, Averell's second raid was against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad from November 1–17. In cooperation with a brigade under General Duffie, they moved against a Confederate force near Lewisburg, WV. Duffie's brigade captured this town on November 7th. Locating a large Confederate force of about 7,000 at Droop Mountain near Lewisburg, Averell and his brigade, with about half that number of men, drew up a defensive line on the mountain. Here they defeated the last major Confederate force in West Virginia under General *John Echols*.¹⁵ There were an estimated 526 casualties on both sides during this battle. Confederate resistance in West Virginia collapsed after this battle.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 355-384 and p. 389

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 389

¹³ Dyer, p. 1655

¹⁴ Eckert, p. 390

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 390

December 8–25, 1863 - Averell's raid from New Creek to Salem

Averell's force had suffered badly during the Battle of Droop Mountain and he was forced to return north to Winchester, Virginia and then to New Creek, West Virginia. From there he launched his third raid against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad near Salem, Virginia.¹⁶ It was during this raid that Averell passed through New Castle, VA on his way to Salem, VA and then made his escape through the mountains from Salem to Covington via Fincastle. These Virginia towns are very near the Surber family home of my wife Carol, where we now live. The famous Confederate General *Jubal A. Early* describes in his autobiography the attempts made to capture Averell's raiding force. *Early* also mentions Averell's attempts to cross swollen Craig's Creek¹⁷, a creek in which we fish and swim and which runs through our property. In his official report, Averell wrote, "I was obliged to swim my command and drag my artillery with ropes across Craig's Creek seven times in twenty-four hours."¹⁸ Further on in the report he wrote, "With frozen feet forced marches were made in frost and snow and through swollen streams by my noble soldiers, without a murmur. For three days my guns were dragged, almost entirely by the men, over roads so slippery that horses could gain no foothold, and some limbs were broken and men otherwise injured by their falling."¹⁹ In spite of the hardships suffered, this was Averell's most successful raid and was on front pages of newspapers across the country. With a relatively small loss to his own force, he captured 200 prisoners and 150 horses, destroyed three depots full of supplies in Salem, destroyed a half mile of telegraph wire, burned a railroad turntable, water station and three railroad cars, tore up railroad tracks, twisted rails and burned six bridges over a 15-mile extent.²⁰

One can only imagine what must have been going through the minds of the First West Virginia cavalrymen after these raids. Swimming with a horse across a flooding creek swollen with slush ice and floating trees in the winter seven times in one day is a bit beyond my comprehension. In seven short months, these men had likely spent more time in the saddle than most men had in a lifetime. They witnessed the horrors of men dying in battle and experienced the fear that goes through every man's mind when being fired upon by, and having to fire upon, enemy soldiers. But their enemies were not foreign soldiers or soldiers of another race – they were just like them. They were in fact fellow Virginians.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 392

¹⁷ *Early*, p. 328

¹⁸ OR, (S#48) Series I—Vol. XXIX, Part 1, p. 924

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 925

²⁰ *Eckert*, p. 392

How Private Joseph Paul Lewis might have appeared if we saw him dismounted in the battlefield ...



... and how he might have appeared marching with the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry Regiment.



1864 Civil War Campaigns

During the winter of 1863–64, Company A was reunited with its regiment in Fairmont, about 25 miles south of Morgantown. Stories were being circulated of Averell's reputation among the enemy. Even the famous Confederate General *Robert E. Lee* commented in a letter to the Confederate president that their cavalry was "worn down by their pursuit of Averell." One Federal officer remarked that, "Deserters and refugees are coming in daily and they state that General Averell is a terror to them; more so than even *Stonewall Jackson* was to us. A rumor of his approach is equal to death to them. His departure from West Virginia would be joyful news to them."²¹

In March 1864, the Department of West Virginia was reorganized and Averell was given command over half the Federal Cavalry in the state, reporting to Major General Franz Sigel. Headquarters were set up in Martinsburg about 20 miles northeast of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad track and at the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley, an important resource to the Confederacy.²² In this lovely and fertile valley grew crops and forage that fed *Lee's* Army of Northern Virginia, and because the valley runs in a northeasterly-southwesterly direction, it was militarily more important to the Confederacy than it was to the Union. Confederate armies marching north through the valley led them closer and closer to Washington, D. C. Federal armies marching south through the valley led them further away from Richmond and into the mountains.

The famous Confederate General "*Stonewall*" *Jackson* fought brilliant battles in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862, defeating every Federal general sent into the valley to destroy him. But now *Jackson* was dead, accidentally killed by his own troops in the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia in early May of 1863. Ulysses S. Grant, hero of the battle for Vicksburg, was now in command of all the Federal armies. He was a tough, hard-fighting soldier who already had two entire Confederate armies surrender to him, earning him the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" Grant. Now he was in charge of all the Federal armies and he had a grand strategy for ending the war. He would bring the industrial might of the North against the South and bring war to the Southern people. He would simultaneously attack Richmond using forces under Generals Meade and Butler; attack Atlanta, Georgia using forces under General Sherman; attack Mobile, Alabama using forces under General Banks and Admiral Farragut; and, deprive the Confederacy of the Shenandoah Valley breadbasket by sending forces under General Sigel up the Valley.²³ Private Lewis and the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry was to play a major role in the Shenandoah Valley campaign, first under General Averell, then under Colonel Powell, and in the closing months of the war, under the famous Cavalry General George Armstrong Custer.

After he took over his new command in March of 1864, General Averell was upset over inadequate supplies, especially horseshoes. Averell also knew that winter took its toll on the men and horses and some men, being so near to home, were tempted to go on extended visits. Averell knew he would need all the men he could get for the upcoming campaigns, so when marching orders went out to his officers to get every trooper ready and move them to Martinsburg, he meant everybody. But where was Private Lewis? According to Joseph's military records he was listed as having deserted sometime in March. Deputy Provost Marshall Jacob S. Hickman went to his home near Morgantown on April 9 to find out if his family might know where he was. Hickman reported that Private Lewis "has been at home sick with the measles for about two weeks." Medical treatment in the Army in those days certainly left a lot to be desired and one can easily surmise Private Lewis's reasoning for going home when he contracted measles. Whatever the reasons, however, the Army wasn't buying them. On April 11 he was arrested, put aboard a Baltimore and Ohio train in Grafton, West Virginia, and sent to his regiment in Martinsburg. He was fined \$12.02 to pay for his arrest and transportation. A private was paid around \$13.00 a month in those days, so a month's pay must have smarted and taught him a needed lesson, as this never happened again.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 393

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 392-393

²³ Greiss, Map 45

May 5–19, 1864 - Averell's raid on Virginia and Tennessee Railroad

In April Averell received permission to meet with General Grant. He discussed his supply problem and asked for more horses and the new Spencer or Burnside rifles. Grant was sympathetic, but could do little for the young cavalry commander.²⁴ On May 5, after doing what he could to equip his command, Averell launched another raid on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad with General George Crook, who was now in charge of the Army of West Virginia. Averell's force was to destroy the salt works at Saltville and the lead mine at Austinville (near Wytheville) in southwestern Virginia. Salt, used to preserve meat for the army, and lead, used to make bullets, were precious resources that the Confederacy needed to wage war. Crook's force was to destroy the railroad bridges over the New River near Radford, Virginia. At around the same time, General Sigel's force was to set off up the Valley to capture Lynchburg.

As Averell neared Saltville, he learned that a superior force under General *W. E. Jones* and supported by the famous Confederate Cavalry General *John Hunt Morgan* had the works strongly fortified and they could not be taken by Averell's mostly cavalry force. Averell then decided to move against the lead works at Austinville. On May 10, at Cove Mountain Gap near Wytheville, Averell's troopers met General *John Hunt Morgan* who, having learned of Averell's change of plans, rushed his force to Wytheville to defend the lead works. A gallant cavalry fight that lasted several hours left the Confederates in control of the field. Later General *Morgan* wrote his wife saying, "Averell fought his men elegantly, tried time and time again to get them to charge, but our boys gave them no time to form." During this fight Averell received a glancing wound on his forehead by a musket ball. With blood gushing profusely from his wound, Averell went to the rear, had his head bandaged and returned to the front to lead his men. Nonetheless, the tide of the battle ran in favor of the Confederates and Averell's forces began an orderly withdrawal, leaving 114 officers and men dead or wounded in the field. Being low on ammunition, Averell decided to retire his force to Union, Monroe Co., West Virginia. Along the way, there were numerous skirmishes with Confederate forces. Averell's command met up with Crook's command on May 15 at Union, where they learned of Crook's decisive victory at Cloyd's Mountain on May 9. Averell's and Crook's forces then marched to Meadow Bluff, West Virginia, arriving there on May 19.^{25, 26, 27, 28, 29}

May 26–July 1, 1864 - Hunter's raid on Lynchburg

On the same day that the forces of Crook and Averell reunited in Union, WV, Confederate forces under General *Breckenridge*, reinforced by the cadets from the Virginia Military Institute (the West Point of the South located at Lexington, Virginia) resoundingly defeated Sigel at New Market, Virginia. Sigel had a superior force and when Grant heard of the defeat, he was not pleased. He relieved Sigel of command and assigned Major General David Hunter, somewhat of an antislavery fanatic but a more capable general, in his place to resume the march on Lynchburg. Grant emphasized to Hunter that his objective was to destroy Lynchburg, move east, unite with General Sheridan, and together attack *Lee's* Army of Northern Virginia (now heavily engaged by Grant) from the rear. Orders were sent to Generals Averell and Crook at Meadow Bluff to join Hunter near Staunton. While Averell and Crook readied their forces, Hunter's army of around 8,500 men met a Confederate force of around 5,000 men under General *W. E. Jones* and on June 5 decisively defeated the Confederates and killed General *Jones* at Piedmont, near Staunton.

²⁴ Eckert, p. 393

²⁵ Walker, *Hunter's Fiery Raid*, pp. 9-10 and 17-18

²⁶ Walker, *War in Southwestern Virginia*, pp. 97-104

²⁷ Eckert, p. 395

²⁸ Lang, *History of Second West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry*

²⁹ OR, (S#70) Series I, Vol. XXXVII, Part 1, p. 8

Forces under General Crook departed Meadow Bluff on May 30. According to the official report written by Averell, who was now at Bunger's Mills, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, he was in desperate need of supplies. He stated:

"The detachments and supplies for which we had so long waited failing to arrive, I followed Crook's division on the 3d to White Sulphur Springs with 3,200 mounted and 1,200 dismounted men; 600 men were without shoes, and many other articles of clothing were much needed. From the 18th of May until this day we had waited near Lewisburg upon half rations, most of the time for necessary supplies of horseshoes, nails, and clothing; but owing to the miserable, inadequate, and insufficient transportation furnished from the Kanawha we were obliged to set out again almost as destitute as when we arrived. The march from Sulphur Springs to Staunton was made in five days via Morris' Hill, Warm Springs, Goshen, and Middlebrook. My barefooted men suffered terribly, but without complaint on this march. At Staunton the much needed supplies were received."³⁰

The forces under Generals Averell and Crook met with Hunter at Staunton on June 8th, bringing the combined Federal forces to around 18,000 men. The army was reorganized and two cavalry divisions were formed. The First Cavalry Division, under General Duffie, was comprised of two brigades made up of New York and Pennsylvania regiments. The Second Cavalry Division, under General Averell, was comprised of three brigades comprised mostly of West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania regiments. The 1st and 2nd West Virginia Cavalry regiments were assigned to the 3rd Brigade commanded by Col. William H. Powell, formerly the commander of the 2nd WV Cavalry, a regiment made up almost entirely of volunteers from Ohio. The army then proceeded to destroy everything in Staunton of military value to the Confederacy and several miles of the Virginia Central Railroad in either direction. It is of interest to note that under General Crook were two officers who were later to become Presidents of the United States. Crook selected Col. Rutherford B. Hayes, who was in command of the 23rd Ohio Infantry, as his 1st Infantry Brigade Commander. Col. Hayes in return selected as one of his staff officers Lieutenant William McKinley.

The fall of Staunton, which up to that time had been the rock of Confederate resistance in the Valley, again got *Lee's* attention. On June 7 he ordered General *Breckenridge's* infantry division (which had defeated Sigel at New Market) back to the defense of Lynchburg. Later, after learning that Crook's and Averell's forces had joined Hunter's army, *Lee* further ordered, on June 12, Lieutenant General *Jubal A. Early*, one of his ablest generals, to march his veteran Second Corps, *Stonewall Jackson's* old Corps and part of the Army of Northern Virginia, west to the Valley to stop Hunter before he could destroy Lynchburg. *Early* was far away from Lynchburg when he received his orders and it was highly doubtful that he could make it to Lynchburg in time to stop Hunter. Just before *Early* left, *Lee* told him of his bold plan. If *Early* could make it in time to stop and defeat Hunter, *Lee* wanted *Early* to capture Hunter or chase him out of the Valley and then march the 2nd Corps down the Valley and threaten Washington, D. C. If the plan worked, *Early's* forces would draw away Federal forces from Grant that were pressing so hard against *Lee*.

Grant had ordered Hunter to take Lynchburg via Charlottesville so he could tear up the tracks of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad between the two cities. This would prevent the railroad from being used by the Confederacy to send reinforcements to Lynchburg and prevent Lynchburg supplies from reaching *Lee* and the Confederate government in Richmond. *Breckenridge* expected this. On arrival at Charlottesville, he positioned his division at Rockfish Gap located between Charlottesville and Staunton. *Breckenridge's* Division of around 5,000 men, combined with about 4,000 Confederate cavalry in the area, had only a small hope of stopping Hunter's army of 18,000 men, but he would try. Perhaps he could delay Hunter's army long enough for *Early* to arrive with the Second Corps.

On June 9, Hunter held a meeting of his officers to decide on the route to take to Lynchburg. He could take the route that Grant wanted him to take (which was shorter but would mean a fight with *Breckenridge*) or he could take a longer route via Lexington and approach Lynchburg from the southwest. General Crook, who history tells us was a better soldier than Hunter, wanted to move immediately against *Breckenridge* before he could be reinforced, and take Lynchburg via the shortest route. Crook knew that time

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145

was important and that the Federal army had to get to Lynchburg before it was reinforced by the Confederates. But Hunter wasn't so sure; why tackle *Breckenridge* when he had no information that would say *Lee* would or could send any reinforcements? Besides, Grant sent him word that he was sending General Sheridan and his cavalry division against Charlottesville from the east. So when Averell suggested that they could make it to Lynchburg in 5 days via Lexington and avoid *Breckenridge*, Hunter directed him to draw up the plan. The plan Averell drew up was sound, but what neither Averell nor Crook knew was that Hunter was hellbent on plundering and destroying towns and making the Southerners pay for starting the war. Valuable time would be lost by Hunter's plundering and it would take his army more than 5 days to reach Lynchburg.

Averell's plan called for the army to move out in the morning of June 10. The 1st Cavalry Division headed by General Duffie was to make a feint toward Charlottesville to keep *Breckenridge* occupied. The rest of the army would march south to Lexington, then to Buchanan, then to Bedford, and from there attack Lynchburg from the southwest.

In accordance with the plan, the army was formed into three columns and started the march south on parallel paths some two miles apart. Almost immediately, Confederate Cavalry General *McCausland*, who had been monitoring Crook's movement since he left Meadow Bluff, commenced his hit-and-run tactics aimed at delaying Hunter's army. Averell made several attempts to capture *McCausland*, but all failed. The crafty *McCausland* succeeded in burning the bridge across the North River leading into Lexington, which caused delays in getting the Federal wagons across.

During their protracted stay in Lexington, the Federals, at Hunter's command, burned the Virginia Military Institute. The VMI cadets had already vacated the grounds and were on canal barges headed down the James River for Lynchburg. Hunter's burning of buildings and plundering in Lexington met with opposition among many of the Federal officers, but VMI was recognized by most as having strategic military value to the South and they felt it should be destroyed.

By 2 am on the morning of June 13, Averell's force was headed down the road toward Buchanan intent upon saving the covered bridge across the James River leading into the city. Averell's troopers covered the 24 miles between Lexington and Buchanan in 6 hours and arrived at the bridge around 8 am, catching *McCausland* by surprise. In preparation for burning, hay had already been set along the bridge and *McCausland* personally lit the hay, jumped into the water, and swam across to the other side to avoid capture. The fires could not be put out and the bridge burned. Wind carried sparks from the burning bridge, which caught several houses afire. Federal troopers tried to put out the fires by carrying water buckets from the river, but the river level was low and the houses burned down, leaving eleven families homeless.

Averell soon received instructions from Hunter that he intended to stay in Lexington for awhile longer and he wanted Averell to wait in Buchanan for him. Not only did Hunter want to do some more burning and plundering, he had recalled General Duffie's cavalry division from his feint toward Charlottesville and needed to await his arrival. Hunter also had a supply train that he had to wait for that was supposed to be carrying needed ammunition. Much to Hunter's dismay, when the wagon train arrived, it had everything he needed except the ammunition. On the 14th, while awaiting Hunter's arrival, Averell traveled to Fincastle with his division, where they destroyed "...some important iron furnaces in the neighborhood of Fincastle."

On the 15th, the army started its march toward Bedford with Averell's division following Crook's. Averell wrote in his official report:

"On the 15th my division followed Crook's over the Blue Ridge between the Peaks of Otter to Fancy Farm, where General Crook, having received information that *Breckenridge* was at Balcony Falls, desired me to wait until the arrival of the main body, as our left flank would be too much exposed. The brigade of Colonel Powell [1st and 2nd WV Cavalry] was sent forward to Liberty, and the country in that direction was most thoroughly scouted by him that evening. Scouts were sent to Lynchburg and every other direction."³¹

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 147

The Battle of Lynchburg - June 17–18, 1864

On the 16th, the army led by Averell's division pushed into Bedford. Averell wrote in his official report³²:

“The following morning my command pushed on through Liberty [now Bedford], rebuilt the bridge over Little Otter River, forded Big Otter, and attacked *McCausland* at New London about dark. He had been re-enforced by *Imboden* with 400 men and two guns, but relinquished his position after a short action, in which he lost about a dozen men.”

Hunter made a triumphal entry with army bands playing. He was now near Lynchburg and two days behind the schedule Averell had put together for him. He planned an attack for the following day. Regarding his intelligence about the defense of Lynchburg, he wrote:

“The best information to be obtained at this point of the enemy's forces and plans indicated that all the rebel forces heretofore operating in the Valley and West Virginia were concentrated in Lynchburg, under the command of General *Breckenridge*. This force was variously estimated at from 10,000 to 15,000 men, well supplied with artillery, and protected by strong works.”³³

Hunter had no information on *Lee's* plans, if any, to reinforce *Breckenridge*. Hunter was cautiously optimistic. Before him in Lynchburg he would get needed supplies, especially ammunition. However, he would have to fight for it against a foe that had routed his predecessor at New Market. He would commence his attack in the morning.

While Hunter and the Federal army slept, *Early* was frantically trying to reach Lynchburg. In his memoirs *Early* wrote:

“On the morning of the 13th, at two o'clock, we [his 8,000 man strong 2nd corps] commenced the march; and on the 16th arrived at Rivanna River near Charlottesville, having marched over eighty miles in four days.

From Louisa Court-House I had sent a dispatch to Gordonsville, to be forwarded, by telegraph, to *Breckenridge*; and, on my arrival at Charlottesville, on the 16th, to which place I rode in advance of my troops, I received a telegram from him, dated at Lynchburg, informing me that Hunter was then in Bedford County, about twenty miles from that place and moving on it.

The railroad and telegraph between Charlottesville and Lynchburg had been, fortunately, but slightly injured by the enemy's cavalry, and had been repaired. The distance between the two places was sixty miles, and there were no trains at Charlottesville except one which belonged to the Central road, and was about starting for Waynesboro. I ordered this detained, and immediately directed, by telegram, all the trains of the two roads [the other being the Orange and Alexandria Railroad] to be sent to me with all dispatch, for the purpose of transporting my troops to Lynchburg. The trains were not in readiness to take the troops on board until sunrise on the morning of the 17th, and then only enough were furnished to transport about half my infantry. [General] *Ramseur's* division, one brigade of [General] *Gordon's* division and part of another were put on the trains, as soon as they were ready, and started for Lynchburg. [General] *Rodes's* division, and the residue of *Gordon's*, were ordered to move along the railroad, to meet the trains on their return. The artillery and wagon-trains had been started on the ordinary roads at daylight.”³⁴

³² *Ibid.*, p. 147

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 99

³⁴ *Early*, pp. 372-373

So when Hunter planned his attack on Lynchburg early for the morning of the 17th, *Early* was just boarding half his men on trains 60 miles away. The railroad over which the trains traveled was in such bad repair that the trains could make only about 10 to 15 miles per hour. Even though Hunter had lost two days in getting to Lynchburg, he still had time to defeat *Breckenridge* before reinforcements arrived.

Hunter wrote in his official report about his attack on June 17:

“Early in the morning of the 17th orders were given for the troops to move, but the march was delayed for several hours at the Great Otter River, owing to the difficulty in crossing the artillery, and in consequence we did not overtake the enemy until 4 o’clock in the afternoon. At that hour Averell’s advance came upon the enemy, strongly posted and entrenched at Diamond Hill, five miles from Lynchburg. He immediately attacked, and a sharp contest ensued. Crook’s infantry arriving at the same time, made a brilliant advance upon the enemy, drove him from his works back upon the town, killing and wounding a number and capturing 70 men and 1 gun. It being too late to follow up this success, we encamped upon the battle-field.”³⁵

In his official report Averell wrote:

“At sunrise on the 17th my command moved by the old road toward Lynchburg, some two miles to the right of Crook, who moved on the direct road from New London. The enemy resisted our advance at every step after arriving within eight miles of the city, but it was not until we came in sight of the stone church [at Diamond Hill], four miles from Lynchburg, that he seemed determined to give battle. I constantly advised General Crook of my progress, and after a brief reconnaissance of the position, opened the attack. The ground was difficult for cavalry, and its peculiar formation made the following disposition necessary: Schoonmaker’s brigade furnished a strong skirmish line, mounted, across the open ground, supported by squadrons with intervals in columns of fours, open order, ready to charge or dismount to fight: Oley’s brigade on the right in column, Powell’s [1st and 2nd WV Cavalry] on the left, in the same order. The enemy retired as the attack was developed, with very little skirmishing, but as it approached the crest of the hill upon which the church stands a rapid artillery fire was opened upon us, and their small-arms became unmasked. Schoonmaker’s and Oley’s brigades dismounted and ran to the front; the section of artillery with my division galloped up to the church, supported by Powell, and opened its fire. The enemy signally failed in his ruse to draw us into a position from which he expected to drive us. After a short but sharp contest he was driven nearly a mile toward Lynchburg. Crook brought up two brigades, which were soon deployed and advanced to the support of my line, and two of his batteries also arrived at the front. The enemy, driven to his field-works, received reinforcements, and confidently advanced to charge my line. Had the infantry support been in position, to have carried on our success, then we might have achieved some important advantages. As it was my line had a hard struggle to maintain its position until the infantry arrived, but with it came the dusk of evening, and although the boldness of the enemy was severely punished, our attack was delayed until the morning.”³⁶

It appears from these reports that Hunter took his time attacking Lynchburg. He had not really prepared for an early morning attack on Lynchburg. His army was more than 8 miles away from Lynchburg and his lead attacking units, Crook’s and Averell’s divisions, didn’t get started until around 10 am. Even after they were in position, around noon, Hunter ordered them to wait until the rest of the army moved up and was in position. In the meantime, *Early* arrived with half of his 2nd Corps around 1 PM and quickly moved them into position in the outer defenses west of the city, blocking the two main roads leading into the city from that direction. Around 2 PM the rest of Hunter’s army began reaching the rear of Crook’s division and moving into position. But it wasn’t until 4 PM that Hunter was satisfied he could commence the attack. Then, for some reason, Hunter ordered his cavalry to attack first rather than his infantry. It was generally understood in 1864 that mounted cavalry was not effective in attacking entrenched enemy forces. General Duffie was ordered to attack on the left and General Averell on the right. Crook was very upset over the delays and the

³⁵ OR, (S#70) Series I, Vol. XXXVII, Part 1, p. 99

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148

misuse of the cavalry. He already knew precious time had been lost first in getting to Lynchburg, then in delaying the attack and now in attacking first with cavalry instead of infantry. Regardless of these blunders, when Crook's infantry went to the support of Averell, they routed the Confederates and drove them back, both sides suffering many casualties. Crook and Averell both felt with one more push they could break through the Confederate lines.

Hunter came up to survey the situation and decided it was getting too dark to carry on. Many a commanding officer was upset. Colonel Powell went to see Hunter and registered strong objections to stopping the fight. Hunter would hear nothing of it; his orders would stand. That night as the Federal army camped, Hunter recalled what happened:

“During the night the trains on the different railroads were heard running without intermission, while repeated cheers and the beating of drums indicated the arrival of large bodies of troops in the town, yet up to the morning of the 18th I had no positive information as to whether General *Lee* had detached any considerable force for the relief of Lynchburg.”³⁷

What Hunter heard was not reinforcements arriving. It was *Early's* decoy to make Hunter think many more Confederate troops were arriving. *Early* simply ordered one train to run up and down the tracks all night. Each time the train arrived, the bands played and the men whooped and hollered, and beat drums. The second half of *Early's* Corps did not arrive until around 1 PM on the 18th. What *Early* was hoping was that Hunter would not make an all-out attack in the early morning. Instead, *Early* hoped he would poke and prod to test the strength of the city's defenses. This might give the second half of the 2nd Corps time to arrive and get into position.

Apparently, *Early's* ruse worked and made Hunter and his generals cautious. Averell sent Powell's Brigade to circle Lynchburg to the south to obtain intelligence on troop arrivals and to cut the Southside Railroad. Hunter sent scouts forward to probe and test the enemy's strength. It wasn't until around 11 AM that Hunter finally ordered his attack. Hunter wrote about his actions in his official report:

“I massed my two divisions of infantry in front of the works on the Bedford road ready to move to the right or left as required, the artillery in commanding positions, and Averell's cavalry division in reserve. Duffié was ordered to attack resolutely on the Forestville road, our extreme left, while Averell sent two squadrons [four companies] of cavalry to demonstrate against the Campbell Court-House road on our extreme right. This detachment was subsequently strengthened by a brigade. Meanwhile I reconnoitered the lines, hoping to find a weak interval through which I might push with my infantry, passing between the main redoubts, which appeared too strong for a direct assault. While the guns were sounding on the two flanks, the enemy, no doubt, supposing my center weakened by too great extension of my lines, and hoping to cut us in two, suddenly advanced in great force from his works, and commenced a most determined attack on my position on the Bedford turnpike. Although his movement was so unexpected and rapid as almost to amount to a surprise, yet it was promptly and gallantly met by Sullivan's division, which held the enemy in check until Crook was enabled to get his troops up. After a fierce contest of half an hour's duration, the enemy's direct attack was repulsed, but he persistently renewed the fight, making repeated attempts to flank us on the left and to push between my main body and Duffié's division. In this effort he was completely foiled, and at the end of an hour and twenty minutes was routed and driven back into his works in disorder and with heavy loss. In the eagerness of pursuit, one regiment (One hundred and sixteenth Ohio) entered the works on the heels of the flying enemy, but being unsupported, fell back with trifling loss. Our whole loss in this action was comparatively light. The infantry behaved with the greatest steadiness, and the artillery, which materially assisted in repelling the attack, was served with remarkable rapidity and efficiency. This affair closed about 2 p.m. From prisoners captured we obtained positive information that a portion of *Ewell's* corps [this was the Confederate 2nd Corps] was engaged in the action, and that the whole corps, 20,000 strong, under the command of Lieutenant-General *Early*, was either already in Lynchburg or near at hand. [Early says his corps was only 8,000 strong.] The detachment sent by General Averell to operate on our right had returned,

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99

reporting that they had encountered a large body of rebel cavalry in that quarter, while Duffié, although holding his position, sent word that he was pressed by a superior force. It had now become sufficiently evident that the enemy had concentrated a force of at least double the numerical strength of mine, and what added to the gravity of the situation was the fact that my troops had scarcely enough of ammunition left to sustain another well contested battle. I immediately ordered all the baggage and supply trains to retire by the Bedford turnpike, and made preparations to withdraw the army as soon as it should become sufficiently dark to conceal the movement from the enemy. Meanwhile, as there still remained five hours of daylight, they were ordered to maintain a firm front, and with skirmishers to press the enemy's lines at all points. I have since learned that *Early's* whole force was up in time to have made a general attack on the same afternoon (18th)—an attack which under the circumstances would probably have been fatal to us but rendered cautious by the bloody repulse of *Breckenridge*, and deceived by the firm attitude of my command, he devoted the afternoon to refreshment and repose, expecting to strike a decisive blow on the following morning. As soon as it became dark I quietly withdrew my whole force, leaving a line of pickets close to the enemy, with orders to remain until 12 o'clock (midnight), and then follow the main body. This was successfully accomplished without loss of men or material, excepting only a few wounded who were left in a temporary hospital by mistake."³⁸

Skirmish at Hanging Rock - June 21, 1864

So ended the battle for Lynchburg. Hunter's army, low on ammunition and food, was in hostile territory confronted by what Hunter believed to be a larger enemy force led by one of the Confederacy's ablest generals. Hunter's army was several hundred miles from its home base and was cut off. Hunter decided his only option was to retreat south toward Salem (contiguous to Roanoke) and then make his way over the mountain to Lewisburg, West Virginia via New Castle, Virginia. There was more fighting along the way as Early tried to overtake and destroy Hunter's army. One noteworthy engagement occurred at the present intersection of Interstate 81 and VA Route 311. This is the route that Carol and I follow when traveling from Roanoke to our home near Oriskany, Virginia. There is a precarious rock formation at this junction called Hanging Rock. Early in the morning on June 21, *McCausland's* cavalry came upon the tail end of the Federal supply train and artillery being led up the mountain by General Duffie's cavalry division. The cannons and wagons had camped there overnight and were being hitched up to their horses in preparation for the trip up the mountain. They were unprotected by infantry or cavalry. General Duffie, who was supposed to be protecting the artillery and wagons, was busy clearing the road up the mountain of trees cut by Confederate rangers attempting to stop Hunter's retreating army. *McCausland* wasted no time in taking advantage of the situation. He rushed artillery to the top of a ridge overlooking the cannons and wagons and commenced pounding them with his artillery. The Federal artillerist could not return fire due to the closeness of the ridge and its elevation. The Confederates laid waste to the wagons, killed numerous horses and captured a number of the Federal cannons. When word of the disaster reached Averell, he rushed his cavalry division to the scene, drove *McCausland* from the field and recaptured most of the cannon. But *McCausland* had managed to render many of the cannons useless so they were abandoned.³⁹

The road leading from the area of Hanging Rock to the top of Catawba Mountain is three miles long and very steep. The ascent would be a rigorous climb for a well-fed and rested army. It was a painful ordeal for the half-starved men and horses of Hunter's army. Stragglers were everywhere and some men and horses just couldn't make it. Those horses that gave out were shot so the enemy couldn't use them later. Those men who gave out were left to be captured by the Confederates. The men, having no food to eat, stripped bark from trees and ate it. In spite of these hardships, most men, animals, and wagons made it over the mountain and camped in New Castle on the night of June 22.⁴⁰ Hunter would eventually march his army all the way to the Ohio River before turning around and heading back to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. On the march back, near Meadow Bluff, Private Lewis was hurt when his horse slipped and fell on him. This injury would plague him for the rest of his life and lead to his application for a Civil War pension in the early 1890s. During the

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100

³⁹ Walker, *Hunter's Fiery Raid*, pp. 385-399

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 405

entire campaign, the army had 938 officers and men killed, wounded or captured. The 1st West Virginia Cavalry had been lucky; they had only one officer and one trooper killed, and one trooper wounded.⁴¹

July 2–August 7, 1864 - Early's Raid on Washington, D. C.

Hunter's retreat across the mountains into West Virginia was an immense break for General *Early* and the Confederacy, as it opened the Shenandoah Valley for *Early's* march on Washington, D. C. Hunter could never see that he had done anything wrong by retreating over the mountains. Hunter even had the audacity to write to General *Lee* after the war asking him if he did not agree that the retreat into the mountains had been strategically sound. *Lee*, who did not like Hunter, simply replied that he could not comment on Hunter's motives, but that Hunter's actions had helped him (*Lee*) personally and the Confederacy in general.⁴²

Indeed, Hunter's retreat back into West Virginia opened up the Valley to General *Early*, who was quick to take advantage of the situation. He crossed the Potomac near Harpers Ferry, West Virginia in early July and, after defeating a scratch Federal force hurriedly assembled by Federal General Lew Wallace (later to become famous as the author of *Ben Hur*) at the confluence of the Monocacy and Potomac Rivers, hurried on to Washington, D.C. Grant, who by then was alerted to the impending disaster, detached the veteran Sixth Corps under General Wright and rushed it to the defense of Washington, D.C. just in time to meet *Early*, who was by then within sight of the Capital. *Early* had accomplished his mission and but for the day's delay caused by the encounter with General Lew Wallace's force, might have captured Washington, D.C. After probing the defenses of Washington on July 12 and finding General Wright's veterans manning the forts, *Early* and his forces began their retreat back into the Shenandoah Valley, satisfied they had given President Lincoln and all of Washington, D.C. the fright of their lives.⁴³

While Washington was being frightened by *Early*, General Hunter's long, circuitous march through West Virginia and up the Ohio River had finally brought him back to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, where he re-crossed the Potomac River and entered Virginia. There Hunter made a feeble attempt to block *Early's* returning forces. The 1st West Virginia Cavalry took part in the attempt to stop *Early's* forces from crossing the Shenandoah River at Snicker's Ferry, Virginia on July 17–18. On July 20, the regiment attacked a part of *Early's* force under Confederate General *Ramseur* at Carter's Farm, near Stephenson's Depot, throwing *Ramseur's* force into confusion and causing it to retire with the loss of artillery and many wounded. At Kernstown, Virginia on July 24, the forces of Hunter and *Early* met in a full-fledged but short-lived battle, ending with Hunter's forces being routed and pursued down the Valley through Winchester, Virginia, Martinsburg, West Virginia, and on across the Potomac River to Maryland Heights. Averell's cavalry posted rearguard action during the retreat and saw action at Martinsburg on July 25. For the second time within one month's time, *Early* had cleared the Shenandoah of Federal troops, just as *Stonewall Jackson* had done the year before. The South was jubilant, and the Southern press drew analogies between *Early* and *Jackson*.⁴⁴

Once again *Early* saw an opportunity to further harass and embarrass the Federals. This time he intended to pay back the Federals for Hunter's June plundering in the Valley by burning Chambersburg, Pennsylvania unless the city paid the Confederates \$100,000 in gold or \$500,000 in U.S. currency. Confederate Cavalry General *McCausland* was ordered on July 28 to take his command up the Cumberland Valley, deliver the ransom note and either collect the ransom or burn the city. Meanwhile General Averell's cavalry division, which had been positioned across from *McCausland*, was supposed to have been alert to any such possible movements of the Confederate cavalry. *Early* had anticipated possible movement of Averell and sent Confederate infantry and cavalry against Averell to confuse him, while *McCausland* slipped away. Averell's division then moved north to Greencastle, Pennsylvania about 10 miles south of Chambersburg, arriving there near dusk on July 29 at around the same time *McCausland* was arriving in Chambersburg. Federal Major General Darius N. Couch, commanding the Department of Susquehanna, sent repeated telegrams to Averell in an

⁴¹ OR, (S#70) Series I, Vol. XXXVII, Part 1, p. 105

⁴² Catton, p. 258

⁴³ Stackpole, pp. 50-75

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-89

attempt to get him to come to the rescue of the city. The telegrams reached Averell's division, but Averell could not be found. Couch with only a few hundred men made the decision to leave Chambersburg when he received no reply from Averell. Early in the morning of July 30, *McCausland* made his final demand on the city to pay the ransom or see their city torched. The city officials, believing that Averell would come to their aid at any moment, refused. The Confederates then set fire to the city and the conflagration raged unchecked for several hours. Around 11 a.m. the Confederates left the city. Finally, Averell's division arrived on the scene, too late to save the city.^{45, 46} General Averell was deservedly blamed for the disaster. It was one of the West Virginia cavalymen's darker hours.

August 7–November 28, 1864 - The Shenandoah Valley Campaign

Grant had had enough. The confused command structure north of the Potomac River and in the Shenandoah Valley had brought about much of this chaos. Now Grant felt it was seriously interfering with his campaign of attrition being waged against *Lee* around Richmond and Petersburg. It had caused him to divert troops from his front to Washington to cope with the fears and alarms generated by *Early's* army. By this time, Grant had become most impressed with General Phillip H. Sheridan, his new cavalry commander assigned to the Army of the Potomac. Under Sheridan's aggressive tactics, the Federal cavalry had managed in a few short months in the spring of 1864 to nullify the freedom of action the Confederate cavalry had enjoyed throughout the first three years of the war. On August 3, Grant traveled to Hunter's camp along the Monocacy River fully intent on assigning Sheridan to command all of the Federal troops in the Valley. Hunter was more than happy to step aside and so General Sheridan was given effective command of all Federal troops in the Shenandoah Valley, with orders from Grant to once and for all destroy the Confederate army in the Valley and render the Valley unfit to supply *Lee* with food and forage.⁴⁷

Cavalry Fight at Moorefield, WV - August 7, 1864

While General Sheridan was on his way to his new assignment, General Averell, who had been pursuing *McCausland*, partly redeemed his fallen image and that of his division by surprising Confederate Cavalry General *Bradley Johnson's* brigade (under *McCausland*) at Moorefield, West Virginia on August 7. Powell's Second Brigade composed of the 1st West Virginia Cavalry under Col. Henry Capehart; the 2nd West Virginia Cavalry under Lieut. Col. John J. Hoffman; and the 3rd West Virginia Cavalry under Lieut. Col. John L. McGee, played a major role in this victory. Averell wrote in his official report:

“There, as I anticipated, the enemy endeavored to make a stand. Colonel Powell, of the Second [West] Virginia Cavalry, commanding Second Brigade, was immediately ordered forward, and, crossing the river in the face of a severe fire, soon routed the enemy a second time, rolling the tide of fugitives back toward Moorefield.”⁴⁸

Col. Powell in his official report spoke highly of his command, saying:

“The colonel commanding desires to compliment in the highest terms the conduct of the entire brigade in saying: that you were called upon to fight twice your number; you fought well, and gave the enemy a severe whipping, driving him from his position, his guns: and from his battle-flag, because we were united and made the attack fully determined to ‘conquer or die’.”⁴⁹

Averell's force captured four pieces of artillery, 27 officers and 400 enlisted men. He lost 9 killed and 32 wounded. *Early* wrote in his war memoirs, “The balance of the [Confederate Cavalry] command made its

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Early, p. 397

⁴⁷ Stackpole, pp. 102-108

⁴⁸ OR, (S#90) Series I, Vol. XLIII, Part 1, p. 494

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 736

way to Mount Jackson in great disorder, and much weakened. This affair had a very damaging effect upon my cavalry for the rest of the campaign.”⁵⁰

The remaining weeks of August and the first week of September were spent by both sides taking stock and building their armies. By the beginning of the second week, Sheridan’s Army of the Shenandoah had about 37,000 men organized into three infantry corps and one cavalry corps. The infantry corps were commanded by Major Generals Wright (VI Corps), Emory (XIX Corps), and Crook (VIII Corps or “Army of West Virginia”). Sheridan placed Brig. Gen. Alfred Torbert, an officer who had served under him when he was with Grant, in charge of his Cavalry Corps. Under Torbert were three cavalry divisions: the First Division commanded by Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt, the Second by Bvt. Maj. Gen. William Averell, and the Third by Brig. Gen. James Wilson. The Second Brigade in Averell’s division was commanded by Col. Henry Capehart and consisted of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd West Virginia and the 1st New York (Lincoln) cavalry regiments. The organization of this brigade would remain unchanged for the duration of the war.

Cavalry Corps Commander Torbert was junior to Second Cavalry Division Commander Averell. Placing a junior officer over a senior officer was highly unusual practice. This act reflected the stern manner in which Grant expected Sheridan to meet the enemy. Grant had written earlier to Sheridan, “Do not hesitate to give command to officers in whom you repose confidence, without regard to claims of others on account of rank. If you deem Torbert the best man to command the cavalry, place him in command and give Averell some other command, or relieve him from the expedition and order him to report to Hunter.”⁵¹ This new, hard-hitting type of thinking by the Commander-in-Chief of all the Federal Armies was what had been lacking in the generals up to this point in the Civil War. Grant and Sheridan both knew *Early* was an aggressive general leading veteran troops that could only be defeated by even more aggressive Federal generals.

When Sheridan took command, *Early*’s army was about the same size as it had been when he chased Hunter out of the Valley in June. *Lee*, even though he was hard pressed by Grant, knew Sheridan was being reinforced and felt compelled to send *Early* reinforcements. This he did in the form of another infantry division (*Kershaw*’s) and General *Fitzhugh Lee*’s cavalry division. The four cavalry brigades under Generals *Imboden*, *McCausland*, *Jackson* and *Johnson* were combined into a single division under Maj. Gen. *Lunsford L. Lomax*. All totaled, *Early*’s army had around 17,000 men, about half the size of Sheridan’s army, although neither side knew this at the time.

⁵⁰ Early, p. 405

⁵¹ Stackpole, p. 149

Battle of Winchester (Opequon) - September 19, 1864

While much time was being spent by both sides maneuvering for position, *Lee* recalled *Kershaw's* infantry division. Sheridan found out about this and, after waiting a few days to make sure the division was far enough away, commenced a well-planned attack early in the morning of September 19 on *Early's* forces located just north of Winchester, Virginia. Sheridan's infantry, led by Wilson's cavalry division, were to attack from the east while Averell's cavalry divisions would attack from the north along the Valley Pike (now US 11 running parallel to Interstate 81). Merritt's cavalry division would move in from the east and join Averell's attack along the Valley Pike. *Lomax's* cavalry division was assigned to oppose Wilson's cavalry division and protect the flanks of one of *Early's* infantry divisions. *Fitzhugh Lee's* cavalry division was assigned to oppose Averell and protect *Early's* other infantry divisions as they moved down from the north.

A bottleneck developed early in the morning as the Federals moved into position. This prevented the deployment of their infantry until just before noon. By that time, *Early* had gathered all his Confederate infantry in one place, just in time to meet the coordinated Federal infantry attack made by their VI and XIX Corps. The Federal infantry slowly drove back the Confederate infantry in fierce fighting, but the Confederate lines did not break. Gaps occurred in the Federal lines. The Confederates seized the opportunity and counterattacked, nearly routing the Federals. At this crucial point in the battle, Crook's Army of West Virginia, which up to this time had been held in reserve, was thrown into the battle and turned the tide in favor of the Federals. As Crook's Corps attacked, they were joined by Merritt's cavalry division, which had joined up with Averell and was moving down on the left side of the Valley Pike toward Winchester. While Averell pushed *Fitzhugh Lee's* cavalry into Winchester, Merritt's cavalry, now free to attack the Confederate infantry, repeatedly ripped into their left flank and rear. The overwhelming force of the Federals was too much and the Confederate infantry lines began to give way, slowly at first and then in panic. By 6 PM the Confederates were in full retreat running through Winchester and down the Valley Pike. Only the fading rays of sunlight saved the Confederates from annihilation.

There is a good possibility that Private Joseph P. Lewis was not in the saddle during this battle. His War Department records indicate he had typhoid fever on September 5–6 and again on 7–8. A Joseph Lewis of Company "E" was signed into the hospital at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia for "Diarrhea" on September 8 and released on September 20, presumably our Joseph Lewis. What is known is that sanitary precautions, as we know them now, were not known at the time of the Civil War. Typhoid fever and diarrhea, contracted from drinking contaminated water and eating bad food, took a great toll on the men on both sides. Many men died of these common ailments and a significant percentage of men were unfit for duty at any given time. If Private Lewis did miss this battle, it was a good one to miss. Sheridan's army had 4,662 men killed and wounded and some 300 captured as prisoners. That amounted to about 13% of the total fighting force.⁵² The 1st West Virginia Cavalry, although not as heavily engaged as the other cavalry divisions, still had one officer (2nd Lieut. Sylvester W. Donley, Company "L") and one trooper killed, one trooper wounded, and one trooper missing. Confederate losses were numerically less than the Federals but amounted to about 22% of their total fighting force. Among the Confederate dead was Col. George S. Patton, commanding the 22nd Virginia Infantry Regiment. He was the grandfather of the famous World War II Army Commander General George S. Patton.

Battle of Fisher's Hill - September 22, 1864

While Sheridan's plan had called for Wilson's cavalry division to block the escape of the Confederates, *Lomax's* cavalry division put up a stubborn resistance and prevented Wilson from blocking the retreat. Crook's Corps pursued the retreating Confederate forces, but darkness called a halt to his pursuit. *Early* made good his retreat and took up defensive positions at Fisher's Hill some 20 miles south of Winchester. Where the North Fork of the Shenandoah River makes a 90-degree turn around the tip of the Massanutten Mountain, *Early* anchored his right flank. His line then ran almost due west toward the foothills

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 238

of North Mountain. The Confederate ranks were thin due to the losses suffered at Winchester. Sheridan waited a few days while he planned his attack. During this time, the Confederates improved their line by digging trenches and building defensive works. *Lee*, once again feeling pressure from Grant, recalled a part of *Early's* infantry, further thinning the Confederate lines. To secure the left of his line, *Early* stationed *Lomax's* cavalry (dismounted). *Fitzhugh Lee's* cavalry was sent to Luray on the east side of Massanutten Mountain to prevent Sheridan from working his way around to *Early's* rear.

On the eve of his attack, Sheridan positioned his army. Averell's cavalry division and half of Merritt's were positioned with the infantry and artillery in front of *Early's* fortified line. Torbert led Wilson's cavalry division and the other half of Merritt's around the east side of Massanutten Mountain for the purpose of cutting off *Early's* retreat should he be routed from his position at Fisher's Hill. Late in the evening Sheridan inspected *Early's* works and concluded that a frontal assault on his lines would be too costly. *Early's* left, on the other hand, looked weak and might be attacked and rolled-up by a corps of infantry if it could move along the base of North Mountain undetected. That evening, Sheridan met with his generals and discussed the plan. Crook's VIII Corps was chosen to attempt the flank attack.

On September 22, while Averell's cavalry division and one infantry division pressed against *Early's* right, Crook's Corps slipped away and marched south near the foot of North Mountain in two columns under the cover of the woods. Once his corps worked its way to the rear of the Confederate line, Crook ordered his columns to move left for the attack. When Crook's forces emerged from the woods and the Confederates saw what was happening, they panicked and ran. Crook's corps rolled along the Confederate line, routing regiment after regiment.

The role played by the cavalry in this action is confusing. According to Averell's official report:

"General Crook's command passed along my rear through a ravine to my right and assaulted the enemy's extreme left in conjunction with one of my brigades, which leaped the works and scattered the enemy in wild confusion, pursuing the fugitives seven miles up the Valley, while Crook's command passed toward the center. The country was only practicable for cavalry along the Back road; toward the center of the enemy's position it is broken and wooded. The guerrillas were busy with Crook's rear, picking up his stragglers, and my remaining brigade protected it, pursuant to a request from Major-General Crook, to whom I had been directed to report, and guarded our own and the captured artillery, collecting prisoners and property. The Second Brigade [1st, 2nd, and 3rd WV and 1st NY (Lincoln) Cavalry regiments] captured 110 prisoners, 175 horses, 14 wagons, 8 ambulances, 4 guns, 4 caissons, and 2 battle-flags."⁵³

Believing he had performed his duties for the day, Averell sent his division into camp for the night. This is not what Sheridan expected him to do. Sheridan's report states:

"On the morning of September 23, General Devin, [half of Merritt's cavalry division] with his small brigade of cavalry, moved to a point directly north of Mount Jackson, driving the enemy in his front, and there awaited the arrival of General Averell's division, which for some unaccountable reason went into camp immediately after the battle."⁵⁴

Sheridan was very angry with Averell. General Devin had pushed his brigade all night in pursuit of the enemy just as Sheridan had pushed the infantry. He had certainly expected the senior cavalry commander to have done the same. So when Averell did arrive, Sheridan sent him packing after Devin. Shortly afterwards, Sheridan received a report from Averell stating he had been advised by Federal signalmen that the enemy was turning his flank. Sheridan shot back that he didn't want Averell to be bluffed by the enemy. Then, on second thought, he had had enough of Averell's cautious maneuvering and sent him the message that ruins an officer's career:

⁵³ OR, (S#90) Series I, Vol. XLIII, Part 1, p. 499

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49

“Bvt. Maj. Gen. W. W. Averell, commanding Second Cavalry Division, Department of West Virginia, is relieved from duty with that command and will at once proceed to Wheeling, W. Va., there to await orders from these headquarters or higher authority. General Averell will only take with him his personal staff. Col. William H. Powell, Second West Virginia Cavalry, is assigned to the command of the Second Cavalry Division, Department of West Virginia, until otherwise ordered.”⁵⁵

Thus ended Averell’s involvement with the 1st West Virginia Cavalry Regiment. The duntrodden general made his way back to his home in Bath, New York, where he attempted, to no avail, to get the ear of the War Department to review his case. Averell was certainly not a bad general; he was simply a victim of change. The entire Federal Army was now being led by a hardened general who meant to defeat all of the Confederate armies and bring war to the people of the Confederacy. He would go through Federal generals with impunity, until he was left with only those who knew when and how to attack, defeat, and capture the enemy. Grant entrusted Sheridan with carrying out his mission in the Shenandoah Valley, just as he had entrusted Sherman, who by now had taken Atlanta, and Admiral Farragut, who had broken into Mobile Bay, with carrying out their missions further South.

Powell’s ascendancy to command of the Second Cavalry Division left a vacancy for a Second Brigade Commander. Powell filled it with Col. Henry Capeshart of the 1st West Virginia Cavalry; the surgeon had now moved a long way from his medical profession. Maj. Harvey Farabee was given command of the regiment. The troopers were saddened by the sacking of Averell. They had grown to trust and like him. He had looked out for them and they felt his caution had saved many of their lives. Most hated to see him go.

Sheridan was also not pleased with the performance of his Cavalry Corps Commander. Torbert had failed in his mission to march around behind *Early*. *Fitzhugh Lee’s* cavalry had succeeded in blocking his southward movement and Sheridan felt Torbert hadn’t tried hard enough. Rather than remove him, however, Sheridan would later give Torbert a chance to redeem himself. So *Early’s* army, defeated twice in four days, avoided capture and slipped south to safety.

Sheridan pushed *Early’s* army south, making every attempt he could to get the Confederates to stop and fight. Finally, after numerous skirmishes, Sheridan gave up the pursuit near Harrisonburg, Virginia. As distasteful as it may have been to Sheridan, it was now time to execute his orders to burn the Confederate granary that was the Shenandoah Valley.

On October 6, Sheridan began his march north with his infantry and artillery in the lead, his cavalry covering his rear. His destruction of the Valley was systematic. The soldiers were ordered to burn everything of military value while respecting the homes of civilians. Barns, silos, stables, and fields of wheat, corn, hay, and other crops were burned. Livestock was killed or driven before the Federal army. Families were left with barely enough to survive the winter and marauding bands of guerrillas and stragglers often took that. The effect on the people, many of whom were Dunkers and Mennonites who had settled there from Pennsylvania, was devastating. A Confederate officer later wrote, “I saw mothers and maidens tearing their hair and shrieking to Heaven in their fright and despair, and little children, voiceless and tearless in their pitiable terror.”⁵⁶ Sheridan had carried out Grant’s orders to clean out the Valley “so crows flying over it for the balance of the season will have to carry their own provender with them.”⁵⁷

Battle of Cedar Creek - October 19, 1864

As Sheridan’s army made its way back toward Winchester, it encamped just north of Cedar Creek near Fisher’s Hill where Cedar Creek flows into the North Fork of the Shenandoah. *Early*, who never knew what the word defeat meant, plotted to deal the Federals a mortal blow. *Lee* had returned *Kershaw’s* infantry division to *Early* bringing around 4,000 fresh veteran troops to the Confederate army. At the very northern tip

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 505

⁵⁶ Douglas, p. 315

⁵⁷ Catton, p. 275

of the Massanutten Mountains, the Confederates had a signal station that provided a spectacular view of the Valley ahead. General *Gordon*, one of *Early's* most competent division commanders, scaled the mountain for the purpose of determining if he could spot any potential weaknesses in the defensive works of the Federals. *Gordon* told *Early* that it appeared that the Federal's left was unprotected and if a way could be found around the nose of the Massanutten Mountains, a Confederate infantry corps might just surprise the enemy and deal them a death blow. The Federals had not guarded their left flank, believing that only a desperate army would attempt to maneuver around the base of the mountains. Powell's cavalry division was stationed at Front Royal guarding the eastern side of the Massanutten Mountains from invasion, but it was too far away from the Federal encampment to be of much assistance in an emergency.

Early's army was desperate and "had to take fantastic risks anyway—the desperate, fifty-to-one sort of gamble that led Washington to take his army across the Delaware to attack the Hessian camp at Trenton."⁵⁸ To lessen the risk, he ordered his cavalry and a part of his infantry toward the Federals' right to attack when the moment was right. Then on the night of October 18, he ordered General *Gordon* to march his corps all night in single file along a small path at the base of the Massanutten Mountains. Canteens, cooking utensils, and everything else that would rattle was left behind. It took the corps all night to make the march. Then before daybreak, without any sleep, *Gordon's* corps crossed the North Fork of the Shenandoah and moved into position on the left and rear of the Federal army. At the precise moment, the Confederates launched a coordinated attack against the Federal army. Crook's Corps, the Army of West Virginia, was the first to take the blow. *Gordon's* men caught them asleep in their tents and with little effort routed the complete corps and sent them in panic flight toward Winchester. Emory's XIX Corps, somewhat alerted by now to what was happening, was next to feel the Confederate tidal wave. They put up some resistance but were soon routed and joined Crook's Corps in flight.

All that was left now was the Federal VI Corps under Wright and the two cavalry divisions under Merritt and Custer (formerly Wilson's division). This corps had been fully alerted by the Federal cavalry who had already been up and having breakfast when the attack started. Unbeknownst to *Early*, Sheridan had been called off to Washington and was just returning when the battle started. He had left Wright in command. Wright fell back in good order attempting to rally the retreating XIX Corps, but to no avail. Wright protected his flanks with the two divisions of cavalry and prepared to meet the Confederate onslaught. Many of the Confederates, who had had no sleep and nothing to eat, couldn't pass up the opportunity to loot the Federal camps. *Early* rounded up his troops and reformed his divisions for a final thrust. He sent skirmishers forward who reported that the Federals had dug in and were in a strong position. *Early* wrote in his memoirs of this moment:

"It was now apparent that it would not do to press my troops further. They had been up all night and were much jaded. In passing over rough ground to attack the enemy in the morning, their own ranks had been much disordered, and the men scattered, and it had required time to re-form them. Their ranks, moreover, were much thinned by the advance of the men engaged in plundering the enemy's camps. The delay which had unavoidably occurred had enabled the enemy to rally a portion of his routed troops, and his immense force of cavalry, which remained intact, was threatening both of our flanks in an open country, which of itself rendered an advance extremely hazardous."⁵⁹

Early's delay gave Sheridan, who had spent the night in Winchester on his return trip from Washington, time to make his famous ride from Winchester to the scene of the battle, a distance of about 20 miles. Sheridan's appearance on the battlefield was electrifying. His men cheered wildly as he rode up and down their lines. Then all together with artillery blasting and cavalry charging, Wright's VI Corps with the partially reformed XIX Corps attacked the Confederate line. Wild hand-to-hand combat followed. Slowly the Confederate line started to give way. Custer in his characteristic dashing manner seized the moment and charged into the Confederate infantry time and time again. The Confederate line broke and panic swept their ranks. Federal artillery pounded the retreating Confederates and the cavalry hacked away at the retreating men. In bitter defeat, *Early* wrote in his memoirs:

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 307

⁵⁹ *Early*, pp. 447-448

“This was a case of glorious victory given up by my own troops after they had won it, and it is to be accounted for on the ground of the partial demoralization caused by the plunder of enemy’s camps, and from the fact that the men undertook to judge for themselves when it was proper to retire.”⁶⁰

During all this fighting, Powell’s Cavalry Division, which had been stationed at Front Royal, was mostly not engaged. In his official report he wrote:

“October 19, all quiet on my front since the 13th. At daylight this a.m. I heard heavy artillery and musketry firing on my right. Held my command well in hand for any emergency. At 8 a.m. received a dispatch from Colonel Moore, commanding First Brigade [8th OH, 14th PA and 22nd PA cavalry regiment], stationed on my right at Buckton Ford, that he was moving back toward Middletown, but gave no reason for doing so. At 9 a.m. Captain Berry, of Major-General Torbert’s staff, reached my headquarters with verbal orders to fall back at once, stating that the enemy was between me and our main force and some three miles in my rear, on my right. I moved back slowly on the Front Royal and Winchester pike. On my leaving Guard Hill the enemy charged my picket-line at South Branch Ford, but were repulsed with a loss of four men killed. The enemy’s force on my rear following at a respectful distance was said to be *Lomax’s*, *Imboden’s*, *Johnson’s*, and *McCausland’s* cavalry, 3,000 strong. On my arrival at the cross-roads leading to Winchester, White Post, and Newtown I formed line of battle, with a view to attacking the enemy on his approach. From this position and previous to the arrival of the enemy I was ordered by General Torbert to join him at once, which I did by moving across to Newtown, where I remained awaiting orders. Having dispatched General T. the movements of the enemy on the Front Royal and Winchester pike, I was ordered to move my command back to the crossroads and prevent the advance of the enemy to Winchester.”⁶¹

Both Moore’s and Capehart’s brigade had to have seen some of the action at Cedar Creek as casualties were reported for both brigades. The 1st West Virginia Cavalry regiment had one officer and one trooper wounded and one trooper missing.

Early halted his troops in the entrenchments at Fisher’s Hill during the night of the 19th to give them a few hours of badly needed rest and sleep. But before dawn on October 20, *Early* had the remnants of his army underway. The cavalry divisions of Merritt and Custer pursued the Confederates relentlessly and recaptured most of the artillery pieces the Confederates had captured in the morning at Cedar Creek. *Early* finally took up defensive positions in New Market, but he would never be able to take the offensive again in the Valley.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 451

⁶¹ OR, (S#95) Series I, Vol. XLVI, Part 1, p. 475 and p. 501

Cavalry Fight at Nineveh - November 12, 1864

During the remaining months of 1864, the federal cavalry was engaged in ridding the Valley of partisan rangers, guerillas, and the rest of *Early's* cavalry. On November 12, Powell's cavalry division met Maj. Gen. *Lomax's* cavalry division at Nineveh on the road between Winchester and Front Royal (now US 340/522). Powell wrote in his official report:

"I moved my command at daylight of the 12th from camp at Parkins' Mills, on Winchester and Front Royal pike, moving in the direction of Front Royal, and to the crossing of the road leading from Newtown, Va., to White Post. Before arriving at this point orders reached me from Major-General Torbert (by Captain Martindale) to send one brigade on a reconnaissance toward Cedarville. On my arrival at the cross-roads I sent my First Brigade, commanded by Col. William B. Tibbits [he had replaced Moore], Twenty-first New York Cavalry, immediately forward on the reconnaissance. Soon after Colonel Tibbits had moved out I again received orders from chief of cavalry (by Captain Reno) to move my whole command to Nineveh, and thence across the country to Middletown. On my arrival at Nineveh, while in the execution of the latter order, I found Colonel Tibbits engaged with the enemy about half a mile south of the village. I moved Second Brigade [1st, 2nd, 3rd West Virginia and 1st NY (Lincoln) cavalry regiments under Col. Capehart] forward at once to his support, and learned from him that he had driven the enemy back to under cover of his guns. Colonel Tibbits was then falling back, in compliance with my orders to move across to Middletown. While forming my division for a charge, the enemy charged my advance. I moved my whole line forward at once with drawn sabers (having the lines well supported on each flank and the center), charged the enemy, broke his lines, and drove him in great confusion beyond Front Royal and pursued him so closely as to prevent the possibility of his rallying or reforming his lines. The close of the day prevented farther pursuit.

The conduct of the officers and enlisted men throughout the entire command was most gallant—seldom equaled, rarely excelled.

The enemy's force consisted of the Fourteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Twenty-first, and Twenty-second Regiments of Virginia Cavalry, Sixty-second Regiment Mounted Infantry, and Lurty's battery-two guns. My command was composed of Eighth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and Twenty-first New York Cavalry, commanded by Col. William B. Tibbits (First Brigade), and the First [West] Virginia Cavalry, Third [West] Virginia Cavalry, and First New York [Lincoln] Cavalry (Second Brigade), commanded by Col. H. Capehart, First [West] Virginia Cavalry.

The enemy's loss was 20 killed, 35 wounded, and 161 prisoners, including 19 commissioned officers (prisoners), from the grade of lieutenant-colonel down. Among the enemy's killed was Colonel Radford, of the Twenty-second Virginia Cavalry, a major on General Early's staff, and a captain on McCausland's staff. I captured of the enemy 2 pieces artillery (all he had), 2 caissons, 2 wagons and 1 ambulance, and 50 horses, and 2 battle-flags. I was obliged to destroy, for want of means to bring from the field, one of the caissons, one wagon loaded with ammunition, and the ambulance. The enemy had strewn the ground with small-arms in his flight; these were broken up as far as practicable.

The prisoners reported that General McCausland was slightly wounded, and escaped by taking to the woods. My own loss was 1 commissioned officer and 1 enlisted man killed and 15 enlisted men wounded. Among the killed was Capt. R. G. Prendergast, acting provost marshal on my staff. I brought the wounded of my command and most of the enemy's wounded off the field, and returning reached camp at Parkins' Mills at 9.30 p.m. same day."⁶²

Two Medals of Honor were won by men from the 1st West Virginia Cavalry Regiment during this engagement, Sergeant Levi Shoemaker of Co. A (Private Lewis's company) won his medal for the "Capture of flag of 22nd Virginia Cavalry" and Private James F. Adams of Company D won his for the "Capture of State flag of 14th Virginia Cavalry."⁶³

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 512-513

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 500-501

Dec 19–28, 1864 - Expedition to Gordonsville

Gordonsville, located at the intersection of present-day US 33, US 15 and VA Route 231, about 25 miles northeast of Charlottesville, was an important railroad junction during the war and Grant wanted this lifeline to *Lee* broken up. It was in mid-December when Sheridan received orders from Grant and it was cold. The temperature had already dipped below zero. The Valley would look back on the winter of 1864–65 as one of the most severe winters ever experienced. On December 19 Torbert moved out with Merritt's and Powell's cavalry divisions. Custer's cavalry division was sent to Staunton to keep *Early* occupied. *Lomax*'s cavalry and *Wharton*'s infantry division were sent to Gordonsville to stop the Federals.

As the Federal cavalry departed, it began to rain. By the night of the 20th the rain had turned to hail and sleet and by the 21st to hail and snow. On the 22nd, the Federals encountered *Jackson*'s and *McCausland*'s Confederate cavalry brigades. These were driven back over a bridge across the Rapidan River where the Confederates had erected strong breastworks. The Confederates immediately destroyed the bridge, leaving the Federals to find other ways across the river. Two brigades of Merritt's division were sent upstream about 2 miles to a ford while Capehart's brigade was downstream about 3 miles to another ford. After numerous delays in getting across the icy cold river, both units converged on the Confederates around dark and drove them from their works. That day and night was extremely cold and the men on both sides suffered greatly. At first daylight on the 23rd, the Federals engaged the Confederates again and drove them back to Gordonsville while capturing all (two pieces) of their artillery. At Gordonsville, the Confederate cavalry dismounted and filled the breastworks they had prepared. While Torbert brought up his reinforcements, the Confederate infantry division arrived and relieved the Confederate cavalymen. Torbert knew he could not successfully attack infantry in a fortified position, so he withdrew. The expedition turned out to be a failure and the men suffered greatly. Many troopers reported frostbite and Private Lewis may have been one of them. His medical records of Jan 5, 1865 show him listed as having "Frozen feet." Powell's Second Division had one man killed, four wounded and twenty missing.

As 1864 drew to a close, the bitter winter in the Shenandoah Valley foreshadowed the demise of the Confederacy. In his memoirs *Early* wrote:

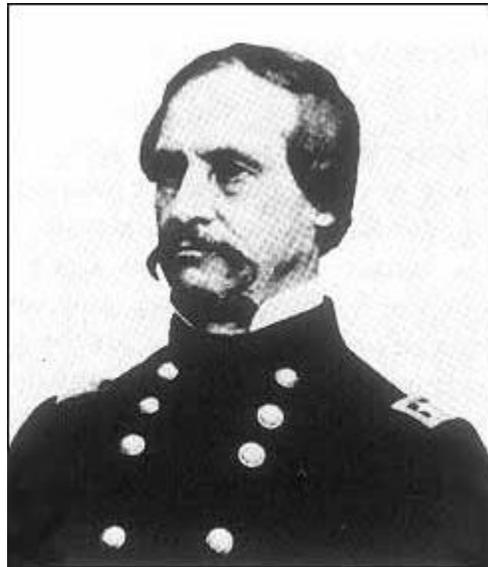
"... as Sheridan had destroyed a considerable quantity of small grain and hay, I found it impossible to sustain the horses of my cavalry and artillery where they were and forage could not be found elsewhere. I was therefore compelled to send *Fitz. Lee*'s two brigades to General *Lee* and *Lomax*'s cavalry was brought across the Blue Ridge, where the country was exhausted of forage, and sent into the counties of Pendleton, Highland, Bath, Alleghany and Greenbrier, where hay could be obtained. *Rosser*'s brigade had to be temporarily disbanded, and the men allowed to go to their homes with their horses, to sustain them, with orders to report when called on,—one or two companies, whose homes were down the Valley, being required to picket and scout in front of New Market."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Early*, p.459



Brevet Major General of Volunteers William Woods Averell, U.S.A.

An 1855 graduate of the United States Military Academy (West Point), he was rapidly promoted at the outbreak of the war and became a Brigadier General on July 5, 1862 at the age of 29. He was regarded as an excellent drill master and was loved by his men. Many regarded him as overly cautious and he was relieved of command twice: once by Army of the Potomac commander General Hooker in April 1863 and again by Army of the Shenandoah commander Major General Phillip H. Sheridan in October 1864.

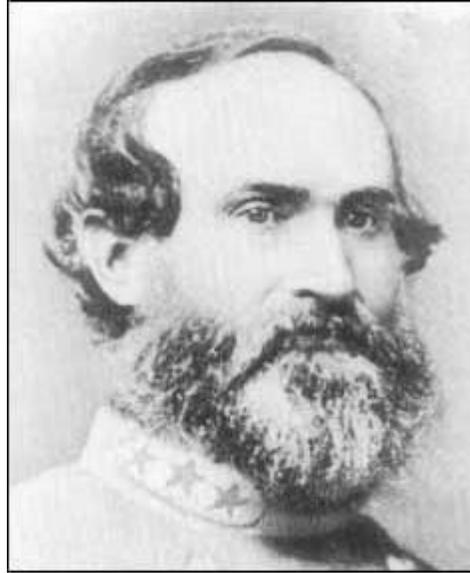


Major General David Hunter, U. S. A.

For his wanton destruction of property in the Shenandoah Valley during his June 1864 campaign, he became one of the most hated Federal generals by the Confederacy. General Hunter was actually a harbinger of things to come. Under General Grant, war would be brought to the people of the South in a far worse manner than ever executed under Hunter. He is probably most remembered as the Federal general who retreated into the mountains of West Virginia and left the “back door” to Washington, D.C. open, through which Lieutenant General *Jubal A. Early* quickly moved.



Major General Phillip H. Sheridan, U.S.A.



Lieutenant General *Jubal A. Early*, C.S.A.

Two of the most brilliant and audacious American generals who ever lived, they were destined to dual with one another in the Shenandoah Valley in the fall/winter of 1864–65. *Jubal Early* was fighting a lost cause and his defeat was inevitable, as the superiority of the North's industry and manpower was brought to bear against the South.



Federal General Sheridan rallying his demoralized troops just before the Federal counterattack at the Battle of Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864. At this battle, General *Early's* Confederate army, after making an incredibly brilliant surprise attack that routed the Federal army, was in turn decisively defeated for the third time and would never again be able to launch an offensive in the Shenandoah Valley.



Major General Alfred T. A. Torbert, U.S.A.



Major General George Crook, U.S.A.

Torbert was Sheridan's Cavalry Corps Commander and Crook led the VIII Infantry Corps (Army of West Virginia) during the Shenandoah Valley campaign. Like Sheridan, Crook was equally at home with the infantry as well as the cavalry. After the Valley Campaign, Crook led the Second Cavalry Division, Army of the Potomac. Crook was a very good general and he would later become an equally famous Indian fighter, being responsible for the defeat of the Apaches during the Indian Wars.



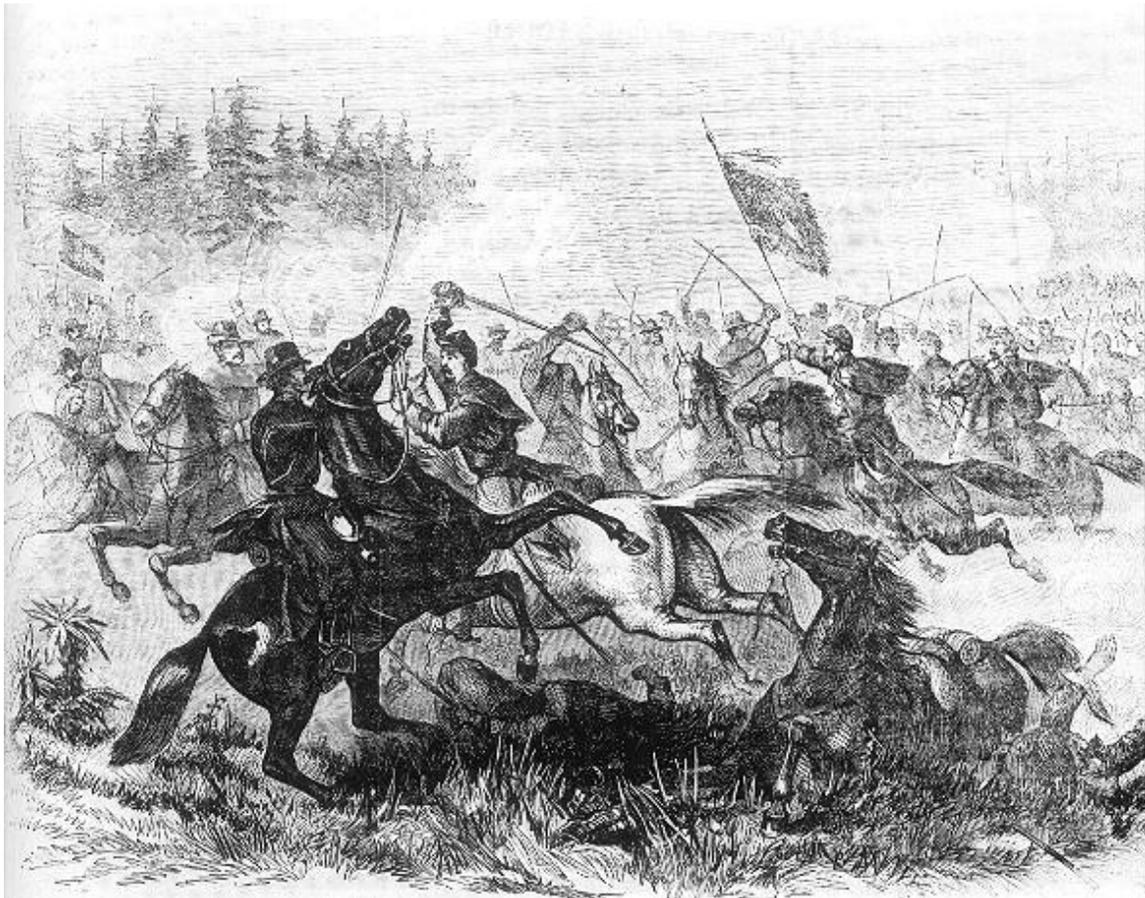
Major General George Armstrong Custer, U.S.A.

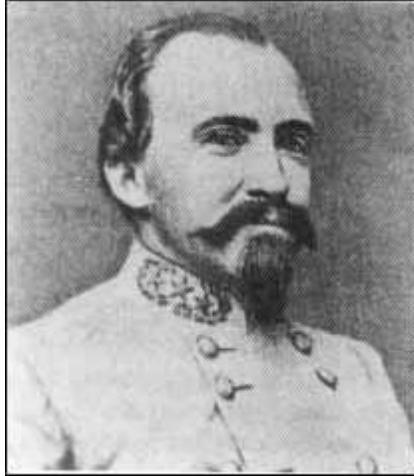
Most people know of General Custer as the Indian fighter who lost his life in the Battle of Little Bighorn. During the Civil War, Custer was arguably the best Federal cavalry officer. His daring and boldness, in large part, led to the capture of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865. This portrait was made in Hanover, Pennsylvania, June 30, 1863 just after Custer made Brigadier General.



Major General *Fitzhugh Lee*, C.S.A.

An old friend and West Point classmate of Federal General William A. Averell, *Fitzhugh Lee* was one of the Confederacy's great cavaliers. Averell and *Fitz. Lee* met many times on the battlefield, including the cavalry fight at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock River on February 25, 1863, depicted below.





Lieutenant General *John Hunt Morgan*, C.S.A.
One of the finest American cavalry officers that ever lived.



Major General *Lunsford Lomax*, C.S.A.



Major General *Thomas Rosser*, C.S.A.



Brigadier General *John McCausland*, C.S.A.



Brigadier General *Bradley T. Thomas*, C.S.A.

1865 Civil War Campaigns

The winter of 1864–65 took its toll on the Federals as well as the Confederates. Private Lewis, like many of Sheridan's soldiers, suffered not only from the cold ("Frozen feet" on January 5) but also from tainted food (Diarrhea on January 6 and again on February 9). As spring began to stir in the Valley, it brought new hope to the men that this might be the last year of this war. Sheridan's three infantry corps had already been sent to Grant and changes were made in the Cavalry Corps in preparation for the spring campaigns. Gen. Torbert had taken a leave of absence and in his place Gen. Wesley Merritt was assigned as Sheridan's new Cavalry Corps Commander. Gen. Devin was placed in charge of the First Cavalry Division. Powell, formerly head of the Second Cavalry Division, had also taken a leave of absence on January 13, 1865. Powell's First Brigade was placed under Devin's command and Capehart's Second Brigade was placed under Custer, becoming the Third Brigade of the Third Cavalry Division.

February 27 to March 28 - Expedition from Winchester to front of Petersburg

In a cold steady rain that began melting the snow covering the charred Valley, Sheridan with his two divisions of cavalry, two sections of artillery and an ammunition and supply train, nearly 10,000 men, moved out of Winchester on February 27 with the objective of rendering the Virginia Central Railroad and the James River Canal useless for supplying *Lee's* army in the trenches around Petersburg. They marched south on the Valley Pike (now US 11 running parallel to Interstate 81), encountering swollen streams, mud, and more rain as they marched. At the end of the second day, they camped at Lacey Spring about 9 miles north of Harrisonburg. So far, they had not encountered any Confederates save a few guerilla bands who watched and reported their movements to *Early* in Staunton.

The Battle of Waynesboro - March 2, 1865

As the march continued on March 1, the column approached Mount Crawford, where *Rosser*, with about 200 to 300 men, set fire to the covered bridge over the North River in an attempt to delay the advance of the column. Capehart's Brigade, which was leading the column, reached the bridge first. He immediately ordered the 1st WV and 1st NY (Lincoln) regiments to swim the swollen river and flank *Rosser's* men. In the same instance he rushed a column of men across the burning bridge. The Confederates were routed by the 1st WV and 1st NY regiments, and the column that had been rushed across the bridge were able to extinguish the fires. The 1st WV and 1st NY chased *Rosser* about 4 miles, capturing 37 men including 5 officers. Five men from Capehart's Brigade were wounded.⁶⁵ After learning of *Rosser's* rout, *Early* quickly moved his infantry forces out of Staunton to Waynesboro, where he could make a better stand.

Sheridan entered Staunton on the morning of March 2. Having learned that *Early* had moved his force to Waynesboro, he considered the alternative of moving on to Lynchburg, leaving *Early* in his rear, or moving against *Early* at Waynesboro. Sheridan decided that the best alternative for accomplishing his objective was to fight *Early*, even though he would be throwing cavalry against infantry, and end the thing once and for all. Sheridan ordered Gen. Custer to attack *Early* with his division. Gen. Custer's own words best describe the battle that led to *Early's* final defeat:

"My orders were to proceed to Waynesborough, ascertain something definite in regard to the position, movements, and strength of the enemy, and, if possible, to destroy the railroad bridge over the South River at that point. The roads were almost impassable, owing to the mud caused by the heavy rains of the past few days. Our march was necessarily slow. Upon reaching Fishersville, six miles from Staunton, our advance struck the enemy's pickets, and drove them

⁶⁵ OR, (S#90) Series I, Vol. XLIII, Part 1, p. 501

in the direction of Waynesborough. Upon arriving at the latter point we found the enemy in force, posted behind a formidable line of earth-works. His position was well chosen, being upon a range of hills west of the town, from which his artillery could command all the approaches, while his infantry could, by their fire, sweep the open space extending along their entire front. The Second Brigade, Colonel Wells commanding, was at once moved against the enemy to compel him to display his force. A short but brisk engagement convinced me that while our success would be doubtful, it would involve a large loss of life to attack the enemy in his front. A careful reconnaissance along his entire line convinced me that the enemy had a heavy force of infantry behind his works, while ten pieces of artillery were in position and completely covered his front. But one point seemed favorable for attack. The enemy's left flank, instead of resting on South River, was thrown well forward, leaving a short gap between his left and the river. The approach to this point could be made under cover of the woods. I directed Lieutenant-Colonel Whitaker, of my staff, to conduct three regiments of Pennington's brigade to our extreme right. Selecting three regiments armed with the Spencer carbine, they were moved, dismounted, under cover of the woods to the point previously indicated, where they were held in readiness to charge the enemy's left. Colonel Wells, commanding the Second Brigade, had been instructed to keep the enemy's attention engaged in front by displaying a heavy force of mounted skirmishers, while Colonel Capehart, commanding the Third Brigade, was ordered to place his brigade in readiness to charge the enemy in front the moment the attack on the right began. The remaining two regiments of the First Brigade were under similar instructions. Woodruff's section of horse artillery, which, to deceive the enemy, had previously been moved to the rear in open view of their line, was again brought to the front, under cover of the woods, and placed in position to open on the enemy's lines. At a given signal the three dismounted regiments charged on our right. Woodruff opened his guns upon the enemy, compelling them to lie down behind their works, while the brigades of Wells and Capehart moved to the attack in front, at the charge. So sudden was our attack and so great was the enemy's surprise that but little time was offered for resistance. The artillery, however, continued to fire till the last moment and till our troops had almost reached the muzzles of their guns. One piece was captured with the sponge-staff still inserted in the bore and the charge rammed half way home. The rout of the enemy could not have been more complete; no order or organization was preserved. The pursuit was taken up by my entire command, and continued through Rockfish Gap for a distance of twelve miles.

Among some of the substantial fruits of this victory we had possession of about 1,800 prisoners, 14 pieces of artillery, 17 battle-flags, and a train of nearly 200 wagons and ambulances, including General *Early's* headquarters' wagon, containing all his official desks and records. The result of this engagement was of the highest value and importance to us for another reason; it opened a way across the Blue Ridge Mountains through Rockfish Gap, and thereby saved us from several days' delay and marching."⁶⁶

In *Early's* memoirs he describes the final moments of his once great and audacious army:

"I rode across it [his line] myself to try and stop them [his routed troops] at the bridge and check the enemy; but they [his troops] could not be rallied, and the enemy forded the river above and got in our rear. I now saw that everything was lost, and the enemy had got between the mountain and the position where I was, and retreat was thus cut off, I rode aside the woods, and in that way escaped capture. I went to the top of the hill to reconnoitre, and had the mortification of seeing the greater part of my command being carried off as prisoners, and a force of the enemy moving rapidly towards Rock-fish Gap."⁶⁷

This battle effectively ended *Early's* military career. During the remainder of March, he made feeble attempts to stop Sheridan with what forces he could muster, but without fighting men there was no hope. The Confederacy needed a scapegoat, so on the 30th of March, with great reluctance, *Lee* relieved his beloved Lieutenant General and ordered him home. There, at least, he was spared the agony and humiliation that was

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 502-503

⁶⁷ *Early*, p. 463

about to befall *Lee* and his army. After *Lee*'s surrender at Appomattox, *Early* choose to leave the country rather than be subjected to "Yankee" rule. He returned to the U.S. in December of 1868, when President Andrew Johnson issued blanket amnesty for all ex-Confederates. He spent the rest of his life canonizing *Robert E. Lee*, who he deeply respected. He died on March 2, 1894, exactly 29 years to the day after his defeat at Waynesboro. He was buried in Lynchburg, the city he helped save from destruction, with full military honors rendered by the Virginia Military Institute. Far to the east in Richmond, flags were flown at half mast in his honor. He was a great general who contributed immensely to our American heritage.

The following morning Custer's division pushed on to Charlottesville, where they skirmished with a small force of Confederates resulting in their rout, the capture of three guns and one battle flag. Sergeant Richard Bowey, of Company. C, 1st West Virginia Cavalry, was awarded a Medal of Honor for the "Capture of flag at Charlottesville." Over the next several days, parties were sent out toward Lynchburg and Gordonsville to destroy railroad bridges, rails and ties for 15 miles in either direction, while Devin's division was systematically destroying the locks and dams that made up the James River Canal.

Having accomplished his main objective, Sheridan now pondered his next move. Grant's orders had directed him to join Sherman, if possible, after accomplishing his objective. However, the Confederates, believing that Sheridan's main objective was Lynchburg, had reinforced that city with infantry. Sheridan believed he could do the most good by working his way back to Petersburg and rejoining Grant's army. After receiving Grant's approval, Sheridan moved his forces east toward Richmond, destroying railroad bridges along the way. His forces moved around Richmond on the north side and then made their way to Petersburg arriving at Hancock's Station, on the railroad, on March 27. "Grant's great guns from his works boomed out on the air in recognition of Sheridan's arrival, which must have fallen on *Lee*'s ears as portents of his fast-coming doom."⁶⁸

March 28 to April 9, 1865 - Appomattox Court House Campaign

The sun was about to set on the Confederacy. Sheridan's army had robbed *Lee*'s of its supplies from the Shenandoah Valley and now Sheridan's cavalry had cut all but one of the railroads supplying his weary troops in the Petersburg trenches. This one railroad, the Southside Railroad that ran between Petersburg and Lynchburg, was dangerously close to *Lee*'s extreme right flank. Long before Sheridan arrived, Grant had been extending his left flank trying to get around *Lee*'s right. *Lee*'s lines were stretched thinner and thinner each time Grant stretched the line another mile. With the arrival of Sheridan's veteran cavalry, Grant now had a highly mobile strike force that might break through, cut the Southside Railroad, and force *Lee*'s army out of Petersburg, where it could be destroyed.⁶⁹

Battle of Dinwiddie Court House - March 29–31, 1865

Soon after Sheridan arrived, Grant sent him to the small village of Dinwiddie Court House, several miles west of *Lee*'s outpost at Hatcher's Run, which protected the Southside Railroad terminus. Humphrey's II Corps (infantry) and Warren's V Corps (infantry) were also moved into the area to entice *Lee* to extend his line. As the Federals moved into position it rained and it rained. "By noon on March 30, the whole area was a swamp, Sheridan put Custer's entire division to work corduroying the roads in the rear of his position."⁷⁰ The mud got so bad, that Grant decided to call the whole thing off, but Sheridan would hear nothing of this. He went to see Grant, his horse only managing to do a walk as it sank knee deep in the mud with every step. There he told Grant that now was the time to strike. "I tell you I'm ready to strike out tomorrow and go smashing things."⁷¹ Grant gave him the go-ahead.

⁶⁸ Lang, Chapter XXIII, p. 169

⁶⁹ Catton, pp. 342-343

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 344

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 345

On the morning of March 31, while Custer's division continued to prepare the road for their supply wagons, Sheridan sent Devin's division north to a crossroads known as Five Forks. There Devin met five brigades of Confederate infantry under the legendary Maj. Gen. *George Pickett* who had led the glorious but ill-fated charge at Gettysburg. Devin dismounted his division and got ready to fight on foot. "*Pickett* immediately obliged him, rolling forward a heavier battle line than Devin's troopers could handle, and before long the blue cavalry was in full retreat."⁷² When word got to Sheridan, he immediately placed Custer's division in a battle line in front of Dinwiddie Court House and when Devin's men fell back, they too were placed in the line. Sheridan even ordered all the regimental bands into the line and made them play. Then he rode up and down the line to let his troopers know they were not going to fall back. The line held and near dusk Sheridan even ordered Custer's troopers (portions of Pennington's and Capehart's Brigades) to attack. But the mud was so deep that the charge led to nothing.

Things did not look too good for the cavalry. *Pickett's* men had them outnumbered and would likely rout them in a coordinated attack in the morning. But Sheridan saw it differently. It was the Confederates who were exposed. So off raced his couriers to Grant asking for one of the infantry corps to be marched all night so the Federals could wipe out *Pickett's* force. Grant agreed and ordered Warren and his V Corps, which was not more than 12 miles away, to march all night and come up in the rear of *Pickett*. Unfortunately, things did not go well for the V Corps that day and they had trouble pulling out. It was not until noon that they showed up at Dinwiddie Court House and by that time, *Pickett*, alerted to the trap, had pulled back his entire force into the breastworks at Five Forks.

Sheridan was furious! However, the Confederates were still in trouble, at least to his way of thinking. They were quite far from *Lee's* line, and in that gap Sheridan saw great opportunity. If he kept *Pickett's* men busy with his dismounted cavalry, Warren's 16,000 man veteran V Corps (infantry) could march through the gap and come crashing down on *Pickett's* left flank. Warren agreed with this plan, but his men were tired. They had fought yesterday and were up all night marching. Nonetheless, the V Corps was a crack unit and the men, encouraged by Sheridan and not to be outdone by the cavalry, were up to the challenge. So on the morning of April 1, one of Custer's brigade and all of Devin's dismounted and started moving toward the Confederates, while Warren marched his men north, got them in a four-deep battle line extending for a mile, and started marching. All divisions were marching in good order, but unfortunately they were marching in the wrong direction and only a part of the line came in on *Pickett's* forces. Sheridan meanwhile had pushed the Confederates as hard as he could with the cavalry. So off he rode to find out where Warren's Corps was. Fortunately, the part of the line that was just brushing the Confederates was being led by the hero of Gettysburg, Joshua Chamberlain of Maine, now a brigadier general. When Sheridan came riding up, he cried out to him, "By God, that's what I want to see! General Officers at the front!" He asked where Warren was, but Chamberlain only got out a gesture pointing northward before Sheridan interrupted, telling Chamberlain to take charge of all the infantry in the immediate vicinity. Then Sheridan rode off looking for Warren. Slowly, by riding all over the field, Sheridan got most of the V Corps divisions turned around and headed in the right direction. At the sound of the infantry muskets, the mounted cavalry consisting of Custer's Second and Third (Wells' and Capehart's) brigades, attacked the Confederate's right flank; the dismounted cavalry charged the Confederate's center; while Warren's line crashed into the Confederate's left. The mounted cavalry succeeded in getting behind the Confederate line, thus cutting off retreat. The cavalry and infantry crushed the Confederate forces and starting taking prisoners, first by the score and then by the hundreds. *Pickett's* force was wrecked and well over 5,000 Confederates were captured. Later, when Warren finally found his way back, it was all over. Sheridan relieved him of command.

The way to the Southside Railroad now lay open as well as the way to *Lee's* rear. When Grant heard the news, he ordered an all-out attack across the whole of his Petersburg lines. *Lee's* lines, already stretched and thin, were now further depleted by the loss of men at Five Forks. The men in the Confederate trenches fought bravely, but they were greatly outnumbered and soon the Federals poured through their lines. *Lee* telegraphed Richmond that he could no longer protect that city and the government had best evacuate immediately. *Lee's* only chance now was to retreat and attempt a juncture with General *Joe Johnston's* army in North Carolina. Sheridan and Grant knew this was the only chance *Lee's* army had and they were

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 346

determined to prevent this juncture. Sheridan would push his cavalry and Grant would push the infantry harder than ever before. The Federals had to prevent *Lee* from moving south.

Cavalry Fight at Namozine Church - April 3, 1865

While Sheridan's cavalry moved toward *Lee*'s army on the road to Amelia Court House, they encountered Gen. *Fitzhugh Lee*'s cavalry looking for a way south. A sharp fight broke out near Namozine Church. Custer's division had the lead and succeeded in driving the Confederate cavalry back toward their main army. Prisoners, guns, and battle flags were captured all along the path of retreat. *Lee* now realized his immediate path to the south was blocked. He telegraphed to Lynchburg to have trains loaded with supplies, mainly rations for his hungry army, waiting for him at Appomattox Station. Then his long columns of infantry and wagon trains marched as fast as they could, due west to that railroad station.

Battle of Sailor's Creek -April 6, 1865

Near Deatonville (on VA Route 616) *Lee*'s retreating column was discovered making its way toward Farmville (on US Route 460). Sheridan wrote in his official report:

“When near Deatonsville the enemy's [wagon] trains were discovered moving in the direction of Burkeville or Farmville, escorted by heavy masses of infantry and cavalry, and it soon became evident that the whole of *Lee*'s army was attempting to make its escape. Crook was at once ordered to attack the trains, and if the enemy was too strong one of the divisions would pass him, while he held fast and pressed the enemy and attack at a point farther on, and this division was ordered to do the same, and so on, alternating, and this system of attack would enable us finally to strike some weak point. This result was obtained just south of Sailor's Creek and on the high ground over that stream.”⁷³

It was Custer's division that found a weak spot. With sabers swinging, the Third Division attacked the train, crossing the road and isolating a large part of the wagon train as well as three Confederate infantry divisions comprising the rear guard of *Lee*'s army. While Federal infantry was being force marched to the scene, Custer had his hands full. He wrote:

“... we charged and routed the forces guarding the enemy's wagon train, capturing over 300 wagons. While engaged in securing and destroying this train two divisions of rebel infantry, commanded by Generals *Kershaw* and *Curtis Lee*, the whole under command of Lieutenant-General *Ewell*, attacked my command with a view to recapturing their train. After a severe engagement, during which my command was several times driven back, the enemy's line of battle was broken by a charge of the Third Brigade [Capehart's Brigade], supported by a portion of the First. The enemy was driven from his breast-works in great confusion. Thousands of his men were captured on the spot, others surrendered after a short pursuit. Besides these advantages already gained we secured a strong position in rear of that of the enemy's force engaging the Sixth Corps, which eventually compelled the surrender of the entire force of the enemy engaged on that part of the field. Lieutenant-General *Ewell* and six other general officers were captured at this point by my command. In addition, we captured 15 pieces of artillery and 31 battle-flags.”⁷⁴

An entire Confederate corps was captured. “Far in the distance, *Lee* on a hilltop watched it all and told an officer beside him: ‘That half of our army has been destroyed.’”⁷⁵ Capehart's Brigade and the 1st West Virginia Cavalry performed heroically. Six Medals of Honor were received by the regiment. One of these was won by Corporal Emisire Shahan of Company A (Private Lewis's company) for capturing the 76th Georgia battle flag.

⁷³ OR, (S#95) Series I, Vol. XLVI, Part 1, p. 1107

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1132

⁷⁵ Catton, p. 371

Fight at Appomattox Station - April 8, 1865

All during April 7 and 8, Custer's Third Division, now in the lead of Sheridan's cavalry corps, marched day and night in order to get ahead of *Lee's* Army. On the afternoon of the 8th, a captured Confederate prisoner informed Custer that a part of *Lee's* army was at Appomattox Station (west of Appomattox Court House) loading supplies off four railroad trains. Custer had been ordered into camp, but he could not pass up this opportunity. He sent back to Sheridan a message saying that unless he was ordered to do otherwise, he would take the Third Division to Appomattox Station and attack the railroad trains. Without waiting for a reply, off dashed the audacious general with his division. By this time it was dark. Undaunted, Custer ordered the cavalry to dismount and attack the Confederate infantry and artillery guarding the trains. "Forming line, the West Virginia brigade moved in intense darkness through the forest until nearing a field, when it met a blaze of canister and musketry, which developed the position of the enemy's guns and battle-line, and proved the signal for a charge, with the result of driving the enemy from the field in disorder, taking many prisoners and the guns."⁷⁶ Chief bugler Charles Schorn of Company A, 1st West Virginia Cavalry [listed in Company M in the regimental roster on the Ohio Civil War Central website], would later win a Medal of Honor for capturing the battle flag of Sumter Flying Artillery during this fight. The former railroad men in Capehart's Brigade drove the trains back toward Lynchburg several miles so there would be little chance that *Lee* might retake the trains. Custer was not to be stopped; he pushed his dismounted troopers up the road until they encountered the campfires of the main camp of *Lee's* army. He was due west of them and had finally managed to get in the front of *Lee's* army. Sheridan rushed Devin's First Division up and put it in line alongside Custer's Third Division. Then Sheridan sent word back to Grant saying if he marched a couple of divisions of infantry all night and got them into place behind the cavalry, the whole thing might be over in the morning.

Surrender at Appomattox Court House - April 9, 1865

The XXIV and V Corps, having marched all day with little to eat, were just about to bed down when the orders came to march. These were fine men, being asked to do the near impossible. They would march all night with nothing to eat, to do battle with *Lee's* army in the morning. While the infantry marched, Sheridan ordered Crook's Second Cavalry Division to relieve Custer's and Devin's divisions so they could get some sleep. Both division commanders were ordered to be mounted and ready for attack early in the morning. Sheridan ordered Crook to hold as long as he could against the expected westward push by the Confederate infantry in the morning, then fall back and let the Federal infantry move against them. Sheridan then moved west to await the arrival of the Federal infantry.

Just as the Federal infantry began to arrive, Sheridan could hear musketry fire beginning. The Confederates, with a great rebel yell, burst from the woods and moved forward against Crook's dismounted troopers. As the Confederates began pushing the troopers out of their way, the Federal infantry, now formed, began to move forward. As the last of the Federal cavalry got pushed aside, the way appeared clear for the Confederates. Just then the Federal infantry began appearing over the next hill in long, endless lines. The Confederate infantry lines stopped. For a moment all seemed to stand still. The Confederates' position was hopeless. To the south were the two fine-mounted cavalry divisions of Custer and Devin, sabers drawn, ready to attack. Behind them came more Federal infantry moving into position. Well behind the Confederates' rear came more Federal infantry marching over the road they had traveled last night. All roads of escape were blocked except those to the north, and they led nowhere that would help the once mighty Army of Northern Virginia.

As the crisp notes of cavalry battle bugles broke the silence, out of the Confederate lines rode a staff officer with a white flag. He raced across the field toward the West Virginia Brigade where Col. Capehart, realizing his desire, escorted him along the line to General Custer. To Custer the officer in gray said, "I have the honor to bear the compliments of General *Longstreet* to the officer in command, and to say that Generals

⁷⁶ Lang, Chapter XXIII, p. 172

Lee and Grant are in correspondence touching the surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, and to request a cessation of hostilities until the result is made known.” Custer, not trusting the Confederates after they had just made a breakout attempt, replied, “Tell General *Longstreet* that I am not in command of all the forces here, and that I will accept nothing but unconditional surrender.” He then sent his Chief of Staff along with the Confederate officer to deliver the message to *Longstreet*. Growing impatient, Custer placed Col. Capehart in charge of the Third Division and rode over to talk with General *Longstreet*. While *Longstreet* and Custer were talking, Grant rode up. Together, they rode off to the McLean house, where the terms of surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia were written.

Perhaps it was fitting that this white flag of truce would be brought to General Custer. He, more than any other officer in the Army of the Potomac, had become the commander of Sheridan’s and Grant’s strike force. With a glowing recommendation from Sheridan, General Custer was promoted to the full rank of Major General of Volunteers and placed in charge of the Cavalry Corps. Col. Capehart, with a similar glowing recommendation from Sheridan and Custer, was promoted to brigadier general on April 18 and placed in charge of the now-famous Third Cavalry Division. Major General Custer obviously thought highly of Dr. Henry Capehart as well as the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd West Virginia and 1st New York (Lincoln) Cavalry regiments he had led for so long, since the Third Cavalry Division was his pride and glory, as one can tell from his farewell address to the men of that famous cavalry division:

“SOLDIERS OF THE THIRD CAVALRY DIVISION: With profound gratitude toward the God of battles, by whose blessings our enemies have been humbled and our arms rendered triumphant, your commanding general avails himself of this his first opportunity to express to you his admiration of the heroic manner in which you have passed through the series of battles which today resulted in the surrender of the enemy’s entire army. The record established by your indomitable courage is unparalleled in the annals of war. Your prowess has won for you even the respect and admiration of your enemies. During the past six months, although in most instances confronted by superior numbers, you have captured from the enemy in open battle 111 pieces of field artillery, 65 battle-flags, and upward of 10,000 prisoners of war, including general officers. Within the past ten days, and included in the above, you have captured 46 pieces of field artillery and 37 battle-flags. You have never lost a gun, never lost a color, and have never been defeated, and notwithstanding the numerous engagements in which you have borne a prominent part, including those memorable battles of the Shenandoah, you have captured every piece of artillery which the enemy has dared to open upon you. The near approach of peace renders it improbable that you will again be called upon to undergo the fatigues of the toilsome march, or the exposure of the battlefield, but should the assistance of keen blades, wielded by your sturdy arms, be required to hasten the coming of that glorious peace for which we have been so long contending, the general commanding is proudly confident that in the future, as in the past, every demand will meet with a hearty and willing response. Let us hope that our work is done, and that, blessed with the comforts of peace, we may soon be permitted to enjoy the pleasures of home and friends.

For our comrades who have fallen, let us ever cherish a grateful remembrance. To the wounded and to those who languish in Southern prisons, let our heartfelt sympathies be tendered.

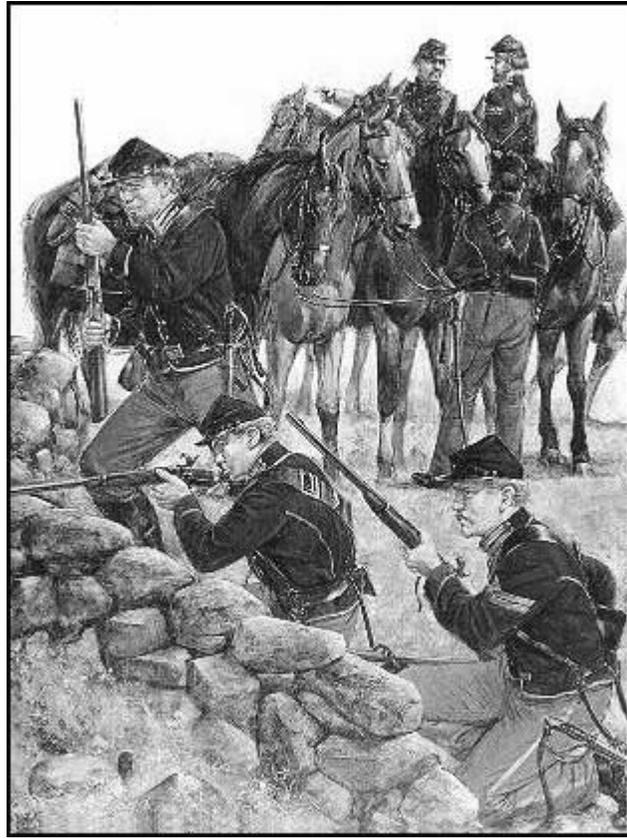
And now, speaking for myself alone, when the war is ended and the task of the historian begins; when those deeds of daring which have rendered the name and fame of the Third Cavalry Division imperishable, are inscribed upon the bright pages of our country’s history, I only ask that my name may be written, as that of the commander of the Third Cavalry Division.”⁷⁷

Shortly after *Lee*’s surrender at Appomattox Court House, General *Joe Johnston* surrendered his army and the Civil War came to an end.

The Army of the Potomac marched to Washington, D.C., where on May 29 and 30, 1865 the Army marched in review down Pennsylvania Avenue before the President of the United States, Andrew Johnson. Fittingly, Capehart’s brigade, including the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry, led the parade. They were described in the *New York Times* as “Capehart’s brigade of West Virginia Veterans, as trusty a body as ever drew a sabre...” Ninety-two years later, in January of 1957, I had the pleasure to march with the Corps of Cadets of the United States Coast Guard Academy down these same streets in review before President Dwight D. Eisenhower at his second inauguration. I like to think if Private Joseph Paul Lewis could have seen this, he would have been proud – as his great-grandson is surely proud of him and his service to his country.

⁷⁷ OR, (S#95) Series I, Vol. XLVI, Part 1, pp. 1133-1134

he would have been as proud of his great-grandson's service to his country as his great-grandson is proud of his.



Dismounted Tactics

When cavalry troops dismounted and formed a battle line, something had to be done with their horses. One trooper would take care of his horse plus three others, as shown here. The lead trooper would then take the horses out of range of enemy cannon fire. Often these horses would become excited and panicky as a battle raged and it was all one trooper could do to keep four fidgeting horses under control. The old saying “he swears like a trooper” likely arose from this dismounted tactic developed during the Civil War.

Toward the end of the Civil War, the Federal cavalry were equipped with the Spencer carbine. This rifle, the forerunner of the Winchester rifle, could be preloaded with seven rounds of ammunition and loaded into the chamber with a lever actuator. The weapon could be fully discharged in 15 seconds, creating an awesome fire power. In contrast, most infantry carried muzzle-loading “muskets,” which could not fire more than four rounds per minute. However, the carbine was shorter than the musket, so its range was less. That meant the cavalry had to wait until infantry got closer in order to make their shots hit the mark. Many a trooper died from musket fire waiting for the infantry to get closer.

Post Civil War Lewis Family History

According to Joseph's pension records, he and his regiment mustered out at Wheeling, West Virginia on July 6, 1865. He returned to Morgantown where he lived until July 1867. He then moved to Bruceton Mills, West Virginia. He married Mary Melcina Sullivan of Gibbons Glade, Pennsylvania on July 21, 1867 and then moved to Gibbons Glade "after 1868." He also lived in the following places: March 1869 - Elliotts Mills, PA; August 1870 - Haydentown, PA; After 1871 - Uniontown, PA; 1871 - Fairchance, PA; 1873 - Dunbar, PA; 1876 - Lemont, PA; and 1880 - Oliphant Furnace, PA. Joseph filled out the form on which this information is recorded on July 20, 1900, at which time he was living in Oliphant Furnace, Pennsylvania. It is likely that these frequent moves were associated with finding work in the area. In the 1890 Fayette County census, Joseph listed his occupation as fireman - stationary. I believe this means he shoveled coal into, and possibly maintained, stationary steam boilers used to create power for coal-mining operations in the area.

In his pension records, Joseph was asked on July 20, 1900 the question, "Have you any living children? If so, please state their names and the dates of their birth." His answer was:

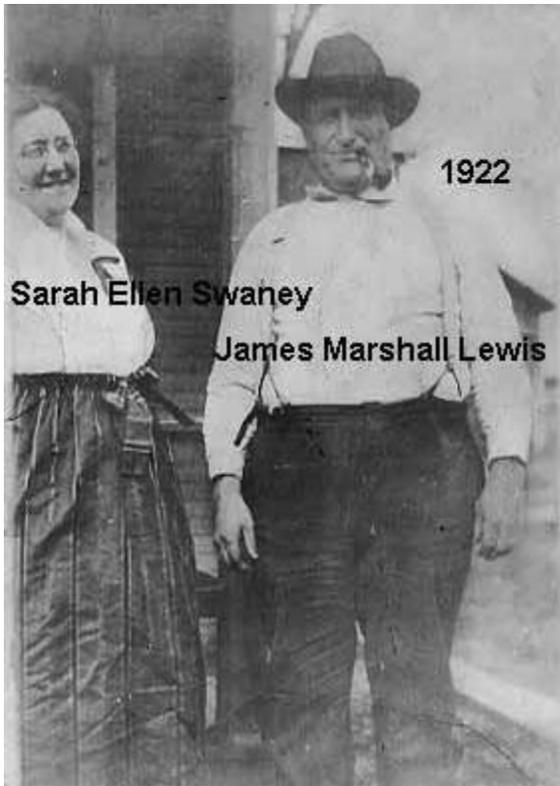
- July 10, 1868 - James M. Lewis [my Grandfather, married Sarah Ellen Swaney on May 31, 1890]
- Aug 20, 1869 - Anna Doyle [married (1) Frank Hagan and (2) George Doyle on October 20, 1887]
- Feb 28, 1872 - Thomas Tate Lewis [married Nancy Elizabeth Hoon on December 24, 1890]
- May 24, 1874 - Elizabeth J. Price [married Stephen R. Price on December 25, 1891]
- May 27, 1876 - William M. Lewis [married Nora Mae Warman on December 22, 1894]
- Sept 21, 1878 - Pauline B. Gastkill [married Walter Otho Gaskill on December 22, 1891]
- Jan 31, 1881 - John R. Lewis [never married]

In the listing of these children that Kathryn Cooley Miller gave me, there was a first son Charles, who married Ethel Downs, but no birthdate is given. This was apparently a child of Mary's by a first marriage or out of wedlock. The newspaper obituary for Joseph and Mary's son James M. Lewis mentioned a half brother named Charles, living in Coolspring, Pennsylvania in 1923.

Joseph Paul Lewis died at the age of 59 on May 28, 1903. He was struck by a passenger train while walking home, no more than 50 feet from his house, and was killed instantly. His wife Mary died in 1916. I do not think Mary is buried at White Rock Cemetery with Joseph, since Joseph's headstone lists her name and birth date, but not her date of death. Mary filed for a continuation of Joseph's Civil War pension on Jan. 18, 1904. In this application she listed herself as living at #124 Lebanon Avenue, Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

Joseph's pension records show that neither he nor Mary could write their names. I can only presume that they, like so many Americans of the 19th century, could not read or write. Today, after we have for the most part solved the national problem of illiteracy, most of us find this hard to understand. What is it like to not be able to read and write? I have often pondered this question. The fact remains that a very large percentage of Americans living in the North and South could not read or write at the time of the Civil War. Since that time we have created a strong nation by educating our population, and, I believe, we added reality to those famous words of our constitution: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal." Certainly, during the Civil War, volunteers who could read and write had a better chance of being chosen, often by their own men, to become officers.

I did not know my grandfather, James Marshall Lewis, nor did I know my father, Lindsay Chester Lewis, as an adult. It saddens me that the heritage of my Lewis ancestors was lost to my family for such a long time. I hope that any descendants of Joseph and Mary Lewis who read this paper and have any information on my ancestors would contact me and share that information.



Sarah Ellen Swaney

James Marshall Lewis

My grandmother and grandfather Lewis



My father, Lindsay Chester Lewis, in the Army during World War I



My mother Margaret Mae McCormick



Me, in Cadet First Class dress uniform at graduation ceremonies, United States Coast Guard Academy, 1960

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Wheeling, WV · 6, 44

Whitaker, Lieut. Col. · 37

White Rock Cemetery · 4, 44

White Rock Church · 4

White Sulphur Springs, WV · 10

Wilson · 23, 24, 25, 27

Winchester, battle of · 24

Winchester, VA · 11, 21, 24, 28

Woolson, Albert · 4

Wright · 21, 23, 27

Wytheville, VA · 8, 14

X

XIX Corps · 23, 24, 27

XXIV Corps · 41

APPENDIX A

Services of the 1st West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry as listed in Dyer's Compendium of the War of the Rebellion with notations regarding Joseph Paul Lewis interspersed

June - December 1863

Regiment assigned to 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac

June - December 1863

*Company A attached to Averell's 4th Separate Brigade, Dept. of West Virginia
(NOT Joseph Paul Lewis's Company A)*

August 25–31, 1863 - Averell's raid through Hardy, Pendleton, Highland, Bath, Greenfield and Pocahontas Counties, WV

August 26–27, 1863 - Rocky Gap, near White Sulphur Springs

Nov 1–17, 1863 - Averell's raid from Lewisburg to Virginia and Tennessee Railroad

Nov 6, Droop Mountain

Dec 8–25, 1863 - Averell's raid from New Creek to Salem

Jan–Mar 1864

Regiment assigned to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division, Dept. of West Virginia

Jan–Apr 1864

Company A attached to 2nd Brigade, 4th Division, Dept. of West Virginia

Apr–May 1864

Regiment unassigned, Dept. of West Virginia

May 5–19, 1864 - Averell's raid on Virginia and Tennessee Railroad

May 5, 1864 - Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, between Bloomfield and Piedmont

May 8, 1864 - Abb's Valley, Jeffersonville

May 10, 1864 - Grassy Lick, Cove Mountain, near Wytheville

May 12, 1864 - Dublin Station

May 14, 1864 - Rude's Hill and New Market

May 20, 1864 - Lewisburg

June 1864

Regiment to 3rd Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division, Dept. of West Virginia

May 26-July 1, 1864 - Hunter's raid on Lynchburg

June 8, 1864 - Staunton

June 10, 1864 - White Sulphur Springs

June 11, 1864 - Lexington

June 13-15, 1864 - Scout around Lynchburg

June 13, 1864 - Near Buchanan

June 16, 1864 - New London
June 17, 1864 - Diamond Hill
June 17-18, 1864 - Lynchburg
June 18, 1864 - Snicker's Ford
June 19, 1864 - Liberty [Bedford]
June 20, 1864 - Buford's Gap
June 21, 1864 - Catawba Mountain and about Salem

July - Nov 1864

Regiment assigned to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division, Dept. of West Virginia

July 17-18, 1864 - Snicker's Ferry, Va.
July 20, 1864 - Carter's Farm, near Stephenson's Depot
July 22, 1864 - Newton
July 24, 1864 - Kernstown, Winchester
July 24, 1864 - Falling Waters
July 25, 1864 - Martinsburg
July 29, 1864 - Hagerstown
July 31, 1864 - Hancock
Aug 5, 1864 - Williamsport and Hagerstown
Aug 7, 1864 - Near Moorefield
Aug 26, 1864 - Williamsport
Aug 31, 1864 - Martinsburg
Aug 31, 1864 - On detached service (source - War Dept Records)
Sept 3-4, 1864 - Bunker
Sept 5, 1864 - Stephenson's Depot
Sept 5-6, 1864 - Joseph Lewis medical report -Typhoid fever, Private Co. A
Sept 7-8, 1864 - Joseph Lewis medical report -Typhoid fever, Private Co. A
Sept 8-20, 1864 - Joseph Lewis medical report -Diarrhea, Private Co. E (more confusion over company names)
Sept 10, 1864 - Darkesville
Sept 13, 1864 - Bunker Hill
Sept 14, 1864 - Berryville and near Brentsville
Sept 14, 1864 - Centreville
Sept 17, 1864 - Charlestown
Sept 19, 1864 - Winchester
Sept 22, 1864 - Fisher's Hill
Sept 23-24, 1864 - Mt. Jackson
Sept 24, 1864 - Forrest Hill or Timberville
Sept 25, 1864 - Brown's Gap
Sept 26-27, 1864 - Weyer's Cave
Oct 19, 1864 - Battle of Cedar Creek
Oct 23, 1864 - Dry Run (detachment)
Oct 25, 1864 - Milford (detachment)
Oct 31, 1864 - Joseph Lewis muster report -Absent dismounted camp
Nov 12, 1864 - Nineveh
Nov 22, 1864 - Rude's Hill near Mt. Jackson

Dec 1864 - Feb 1865

Regiment assigned to 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, Cavalry Corps, Middle Military Division

Dec 19-28, 1864 - Expedition to Gordonsville

Dec 23, 1864 - Gordonsville
Jan 3, 1865 - Joseph Lewis medical report - no diagnosis
Jan 5, 1865 - Joseph Lewis medical report - Frozen feet
Jan 6, 1865 - Joseph Lewis medical report -Diarrhea

Feb 9, 1865 - Joseph Lewis medical report - Diarrhea

Mar - July 1865

Regiment assigned to 3rd Brigade, 3rd Division, Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac

Feb 25-Mar 25, 1865 - Sheridan's Raid from Winchester

Feb 28, 1865 - Mt. Crawford
Mar 2, 1865 - Waynesboro
Mar 3, 1865 - Charlottesville
Mar 10, 1865 - Augusta Court House
Mar 12, 1865 - Haydensville
Mar 15, 1865 - Beaver Dam Station
Mar 26, 1865 - White House
Mar 12, 1865 - Haydensville

Mar 28-Apr 9, 1865 - Appomattox Court House Campaign

Mar 29-31, 1865 - Dinwiddie Court House
Apr 1, 1865 - Five Forks
Apr 2, 1865 - Namozine Church and Scott's Corners
Apr 4, 1865 - Jetersville
Apr 5, 1865 - Amelia Court House
Apr 6, 1865 - Sailor's Creek
Apr 7, 1865 - Stoney Point
Apr 8, 1865 - Appomattox Station
Apr 9, 1865 - Appomattox Court House - Surrender of *Lee* and the Army of Northern Virginia
Apr 23-29, 1865 - Expedition to Danville
May, 1865 - March to Washington, D. C.
May 23, 1865 - Grand Review in Washington, D. C.

Grand Review of the Armies [from *Wikipedia*, "1st West Virginia Cavalry Regiment"]



Photo: Unknown cavalry in Grand Review of the Armies

The Grand Review of the Armies began on May 23, 1865, as a Union celebration of the end of the Civil War. Union troops paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC. The parade was led by Custer's Third Division, which was led by Capehart's brigade. The *New York Times* described men in Custer's division as "being decorated with a scarf or tie, known as the Custer Tie, red in color ..." It also said "Capehart's brigade of West Virginia Veterans, as trusty a body as ever drew a sabre, are singled out for their fine appearance ..."

APPENDIX B

**National Archives Pension and Military Records for Joseph Paul Lewis, First West
Virginia Volunteer Cavalry, Company A
[missing]**