

STAPLETON CRUTCHFIELD: STONEWALL JACKSON'S  
CHIEF OF ARTILLERY

by

Phillip Andrew Egelston

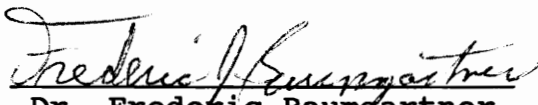
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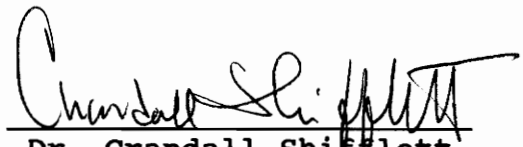
MASTER OF ARTS

in

HISTORY

  
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Committee Chairman: James I. Robertson  
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(ABSTRACT)

No Virginian was more dedicated to the Confederate cause than Stapleton Crutchfield. Born into a prominent and wealthy family, Crutchfield enjoyed and embraced the southern aristocratic lifestyle. He was a Virginian first and a United States citizen second.

When Crutchfield was sixteen, he enrolled at the Virginia Military Institute. The young man had been enamored with the military tradition of his family and the extreme militancy of the South. Graduating at the top of his class in 1855, Crutchfield stayed on at the Institute as a mathematics professor.

As Virginia prepared for war in 1861, Crutchfield resigned from his post and joined the Confederate army as an officer. The former mathematician was anxious for a fight. He believed that Virginia and the southern lifestyle was endangered of being destroyed by the North. Crutchfield's military training and family connections helped him receive appointment to the rank of major.

In 1862, Gen. Thomas Jackson appointed Crutchfield to

chief of artillery of his division. While Crutchfield had received training in artillery at the Institute, the instruction he received would not prepare him for the Civil War. New technology and the massive size of the armies had drastically changed the role of artillery in battle. His experience would come through trial and error on the battlefield.

As Jackson's successes catapulted him to the top of the Confederate army's hierarchy, Crutchfield assumed additional commands and responsibilities. He became one of the few men to command artillery corps in the Civil War. During his tenure as artillery chief, the "long arm" of the Army of Northern Virginia experienced its largest growth. Furthermore, it is when Lee's army had its greatest successes on the battlefield.

Yet, Stapleton Crutchfield has been overlooked by Civil War historians. They have failed to investigate the complexities of being artillery chief during the arm's greatest period of growth and success. Crutchfield played an invaluable role in the shaping of the Army of Northern Virginia's artillery. His actions influenced the artillery corps even after his wound forced him to retire from his post.

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Chapter I  
THE SOLDIER SCHOLAR

When Stapleton Crutchfield was born June 21, 1835, at "Spring Forest" to Oscar Minor Crutchfield and Susan Elizabeth Gatewood, he entered one of Virginia's most prominent families. His grandfather, Stapleton Crutchfield, had been a successful planter, politician, and militia officer. He had fought in the War of 1812 and served in the Virginia General Assembly for many years.<sup>1</sup>

Oscar Crutchfield, in adulthood, quickly followed in his father's political footsteps. In 1829 he was appointed to the post of justice of Spotsylvania County. While Oscar Crutchfield began his rise in Virginia politics, he had still not yet found a wife. At the age of 33, his quest ended. In 1833 he married his "up-country cousin," Susan Elizabeth Gatewood. Two years later, they had Stapleton.<sup>2</sup>

It was apparent at an early age that Stapleton was an unusual child. His cognitive abilities developed at

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<sup>1</sup>Maury Genealogy, Richard L. Maury Papers, Duke University. The genealogical chart is extremely confusing. It is impossible to know when the first Crutchfield arrived in America or who were the parents of Stapleton Crutchfield. James Roger Mansfield, A History of Early Spotsylvania (Orange, VA: 1977), 243.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 222; Charles D. Walker, Memorial, Virginia Military Institute: Biographical Sketches on VMI Graduates Who Died in the Civil War (Philadelphia, 1875), 146. Stapleton's sister Susan provided the biographical information for the sketch.

particularly early age. In Spotsylvania County, he could read long before any other child of the same age. As he grew older, Crutchfield became a prolific reader. In addition to reading, he loved tinkering in the carpenter's shop on the family estate.<sup>3</sup>

When the lad was eight, Oscar Crutchfield moved his family to a newly acquired house bequeathed to him by his late uncle. "Green Branch," situated three miles from "Spring Forest," was the "great house of the district." It was a magnificent playground for Stapleton and his younger siblings, Edgar, Oscar, Susan, and Gilmer. Along with 1,700 acres of tobacco were a mill, a pond, meadows, orchards, and carpenter's shop.<sup>4</sup>

As Stapleton moved toward his teenage years, he enjoyed the fruits of Southern aristocratic lifestyle. He hunted and fished constantly. When not outdoors, the industrious lad worked on a rowboat. Finally after hundreds of hours of painstaking work, the mechanically gifted boy tried a test-run on the pond to see if the craft would float. It did. So proud was Crutchfield of his vessel that he wanted to take his mother out for a ride. After much cajoling, she reluctantly agreed to a trip around the pond.<sup>5</sup>

At the age of twelve, Crutchfield left the security of

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 146-47.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.; United States Agricultural Census of 1860.

<sup>5</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 147.



the family estate to attend the Mount Airy boarding school under Miss E. H. Hill. The lifestyle of leisure ended. Already educated in part by his mother, Crutchfield easily mastered his subjects. After two years at Mount Airy, his parents transferred him to a more challenging school under his godfather, Rev. John McGuire. For another two years, Crutchfield continued to advance his education. However, by the age of sixteen Crutchfield had outgrown the school. He needed a bigger challenge to placate his thirst for knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

In 1851, Crutchfield enrolled at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington. The military heritage and tradition of his family led him to the Institute. On both his mother's and father's side of the family, his ancestors had gallantly served their country in time of war. Crutchfield's great-grandfather was Revolutionary War Gen. John Minor Gatewood. His grandfather, Stapleton Crutchfield, served thirty-five years later as a colonel in the state militia during the War of 1812. Moreover, Oscar Crutchfield and his brothers continued to hold important positions in the militia. Inundated since birth with the military achievements of the family, Crutchfield aspired to continue the tradition.<sup>7</sup>

Arriving at the Virginia Military Institute in September, 1851, Crutchfield received assignment to the

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 148.

<sup>7</sup>Maury Genealogy.

third, or sophomore, class. His prior schooling had provided the necessary knowledge to skip the freshmen class. Therefore, if things went as scheduled, Crutchfield would graduate in 1854.

While he easily handled the academic rigors of the Institute during his first year, Crutchfield failed to conform to the military aspects of the education. Unwilling to follow orders and regulations, the immature sixteen-year-old was close to being dismissed from school. The Institute gave Crutchfield several chances to atone for his misconduct. However, after several months of failing to conform to disciplinarian lifestyle, school officials expelled Crutchfield.<sup>3</sup>

The reasons for Crutchfield's misconduct and eventual dismissal were a combination of his age, or lack of maturity, and the rooming situation at V.M.I.. Crutchfield and his roommate, Robert Garnett, were the only first year cadets housed with upper classmen. Placed in a large double room that extended into one of the towers, Crutchfield and Garnett never had the opportunity to escape the wrath of the senior cadets. When not in class or on the drillfield, they were under the watchful eyes of their roommates, Thomas Thorton, the ranking cadet officer, and Thomas T. Munford. For the sixteen-year-old, the loss of freedom was too much to handle. Instead of following the authority of the older cadets, he

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<sup>3</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 148.

rebelled against the system.<sup>9</sup>

After his dismissal, Crutchfield spent the next several months contemplating his future at home. His misconduct had besmirched the family name. Oscar Crutchfield, who had recently reentered politics after a short hiatus, was furious. Resuming office in the Virginia legislature in 1850, the politician who was a "mixture of Whig and Democrat" set out to regain the family's lost honor. Elected Speaker of the House in the year of Stapleton's dismissal, Oscar Crutchfield used his powerful position to ask the superintendent of the Institute to readmit his son. The superintendent, Francis H. Smith, granted the Speaker the favor and reinstated the seventeen-year-old. While readmission gave Crutchfield a reprieve from the mistakes of the previous year, the Institute found a new and powerful ally in the state legislature.<sup>10</sup>

In late December, 1852, Stapleton Crutchfield returned to the Institute. His father brought him to Lexington and met with the superintendent to make sure that future problems would not arise. Crutchfield was once again assigned to the third class. This time, however, Crutchfield was a model

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<sup>9</sup>William Couper, One Hundred Year at V.M.I., (Richmond, 1939), I, 246. In addition to Crutchfield, Garnett left the school shortly after enrollment. Thomas Munford eventually became a colonel in the Army of Northern Virginia's cavalry.

<sup>10</sup>The Fredericksburg News, Apr. 30, 1850; Oscar Minor Crutchfield to Col. Francis Smith, Aug. 12, 1852, Stapleton Crutchfield Papers, Virginia Military Institute.

student. In the subjects of mathematics, language, the sciences, drawing, and military tactics Crutchfield excelled to the extent of gaining the number one ranking in his class.<sup>11</sup>

Outside the classroom, Crutchfield drilled in the art of war. He was taught infantry and artillery tactics. The artillery instructor, Thomas Jackson, was a former West Point officer who had served as a cannoneer in the United States army during the Mexican War. Having received some acclaim for his military exploits, the Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy incorporated into the training his battle experiences alongside the tactics expounded in the Kingsbury manuals.<sup>12</sup>

With Jackson's instruction, Crutchfield learned the basic fundamentals of operating a gun. He and the other cadets practiced deploying the guns and attacking targets from various angles. In addition, Crutchfield discovered the tactics and methods used to produce a concentrated fire. Most importantly, he learned how to read and react to the enemy's movements.

It was no surprise that Crutchfield became an expert in artillery. His intellect easily allowed him to understand the fundamentals and tactics of this military wing.

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<sup>11</sup>Oscar Crutchfield to Francis Smith, Dec. 18, 1852, ibid.

<sup>12</sup>William Couper, One Hundred Years at V.M.I., I, 314.

Moreover, Crutchfield's strong background in mathematics made the operations of guns seem easy. Yet, this training would not adequately prepare Crutchfield for the Civil War. The large scale armies and new technology dramatically changed how the artillery functioned. A cannoneer had to throw away much of his previous training and adapt to these changes for his guns to be effective.

While Crutchfield's academic honors erased the embarrassment of his previous tenure at the Institute, success could not alleviate the pain of his mother's death. In late November, 1853, his mother became seriously ill. His uncle, Stapleton Crutchfield, asked Superintendent Smith to grant his nephew leave. Susan Crutchfield was about to pass away; she wanted to see her eldest son once more before she drew her last breath.<sup>13</sup>

Seeing his mother bedridden was extremely upsetting and painful for Crutchfield. "I gazed upon her features for my last time ... feeling ... as if she was no more," he stated. With his father constantly away in Richmond for the majority of his childhood, his mother had raised him. A bond of undevoted love existed between the two. She was proud of the accomplishments of her eldest son. Yet on December 12, 1853, Susan Crutchfield passed away, leaving her son

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<sup>13</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis Smith, Nov. 20, 1853, ibid.

"friendless and deserted."<sup>14</sup>

As Crutchfield entered his final year at the Institute, he was appointed acting Assistant Professor of Mathematics. He was only nineteen years old, but the faculty had watched Crutchfield emotionally mature over the last three years into a adult. His cognitive abilities had never been doubted. Since 1842, the Institute had annually selected several senior cadets as instructors to insure that every student received proper attention in a given subject. In addition of the honor of receiving the appointment, the cadet received a small stipend.<sup>15</sup>

Crutchfield impressed Institute officials in his new role as instructor. Upon graduating in 1855, Crutchfield received a permanent appointment to the faculty position he held.

For the next three years, the assistant professor instructed cadets in mathematics. During this time, Crutchfield moved into a room over John Barclay's store. A strong friendship formed between the two. In addition to Barclay, he made strong ties with several individuals who would in later years hold important commands in the Army of Northern Virginia. He became friends or acquaintances with Thomas Jackson, Robert Rodes, William Nelson Pendelton, and

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<sup>14</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Oscar Crutchfield, Dec. 12, 1853, Maury Papers, Duke; Maury Genealogy.

<sup>15</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 149; Henry Wise, Drawing Out the Man: The VMI Story (Charlottesville, VA, 1978), 66.

his son, Alexander "Sandie" Pendelton.

As the fall semester began in 1858, Crutchfield received good news from the Board of Visitors. He had been promoted to Adjunct Professor of Mathematics. The young professor was the first to assume the newly created adjunct position. With the new title, Crutchfield now chaired the mathematics department. The promotions continued for Crutchfield. In the following year, the twenty-four-year-old mathematician received a major's commission from the Institute and a pay raise to \$1,200 to coincide with the new rank.<sup>16</sup>

Around the same time, the young mathematician experienced "the happiest event" of his life. He had rediscovered the Lord. On June 26, 1859, Bishop John Johns confirmed him in the Episcopalian Church.<sup>17</sup>

This alliance brought a sense of "tranquility and piece of mind" to Crutchfield. He believed that he needed to give back all he could to the church and to the Lord. Crutchfield became a prominent and active member of the church. Like Thomas Jackson at the Presbyterian church, he conducted Sunday school classes in the Episcopal church. In addition, Crutchfield hoped to spread the word of the Lord to those who were "little inclined to the service of the merciful God."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 149; Stapleton Crutchfield to Oscar Crutchfield, July 2, 1859, Maury Papers, Duke.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.; Walker, VMI Memorial, 150.

<sup>18</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Oscar Crutchfield, July 2, 1859, ibid; Walker, VMI Memorial, 150.

As clouds of civil war hovered over the country early in April, 1861, Virginia prepared for battle. The Institute halted classes. The services of the faculty and cadets were desperately needed by the Confederate government. At the beginning of the month, 250 cadets went to Richmond to help drill and instruct Confederate recruits, leaving only forty-eight behind to guard the arsenal. In addition to the depleted student body, many professors and administrators had accepted posts in the army or government. Most of the faculty and cadets were soon stationed throughout Virginia, but Crutchfield remained in Lexington.<sup>19</sup>

The mathematician had been ordered to stay at the Institute as the acting superintendent so he could oversee the training of the newly formed companies from the surrounding areas. In addition, Crutchfield had to run the arsenal. Numerous weapons had been stockpiled at the Institute by the state of Virginia.

During the next three months, Crutchfield and his assistants introduced green recruits to the various aspects of military drill. Alongside the training of the new soldiers, Crutchfield supervised the shipment of the Institute's 10,000 muskets to Richmond. With the assistance from a company of Confederate infantry, they delivered the

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<sup>19</sup>Wise, Drawing Out the Man, 35.



weapons to their new capital.<sup>20</sup>

Crutchfield's work at the Institute quickly lost its appeal. The mathematician did not want to stay at the school and let the war pass him by. He sought to assume the leadership position for which he had trained all these years. Crutchfield wanted to lead men into battle. The southern aristocratic lifestyle, in which he had been raised, was in danger of being overthrown. On June 15, 1861, he submitted his resignation to Francis Smith.<sup>21</sup>

For the anxious twenty-six-year-old to assume a leadership role in the army, he planned on raising a company of infantry. The mathematician scoured the surrounding counties to find volunteers. However, he found less than twenty applicants. In despair, Crutchfield confided to Francis Smith that to participate in active service he might have to "volunteer as private in some good company."<sup>22</sup>

Fortunately, Crutchfield had friends in high places at the Confederate War Department. The day his resignation from the Institute took effect, he received the commission of major in the Confederate army. He was immediately assigned to the 9th Virginia Infantry Regiment, under the command of Institute colleagues Col. Francis H. Smith and Lt. Col. John

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<sup>20</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis Smith, Apr. 29, 1861, ibid.; Couper, One Hundred Years, I, 106-7, 116-17.

<sup>21</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis Smith, June 15, 1861, ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

T. L. Preston. While commissioned as an infantry regiment, the soldiers actually manned the heavy guns on the waterways outside of Norfolk. The majority of the 9th Virginia was stationed at Craney Island. The garrison guarded the strategic mouth of the Elizabeth River and thus the entrance to Norfolk from the sea.<sup>23</sup>

Even though he had joined the army, Crutchfield did not escape the boredom and monotony he had experienced at the Institute. The routine never changed. Under the supervision of officers, troops marched and drilled while awaiting an expected attack from the Union navy. Yet the only Union movements the Confederates witnessed were the Federal fleet running maneuvers off shore. The major's youthful enthusiasm and zeal to fight could not handle the tedium at Craney Island. Crutchfield requested a transfer to a more active field of service.<sup>24</sup>

In October, he received his wish. Crutchfield was transferred to the 58th Virginia Infantry stationed in Staunton. The exuberant major arrived just in time to participate in the campaign into western Virginia. He was finally going to see the action he had craved for the past sixth months. However, a measles epidemic raging through the regiment struck Crutchfield. The combination of the

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<sup>23</sup>Benjamin Trask, 9th Virginia Infantry (Lynchburg, VA, 1984), 4.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

strenuous marches over mountains and unseasonably cold and wet weather exacerbated the problem. In late November, Crutchfield entered a hospital and thus missed all of the fighting.<sup>25</sup>

The enfeebled Crutchfield soon went to Fredericksburg to recuperate. By late January, 1862, he had regained some of his strength. However, the incessant bad weather limited the major from performing the "proper exercise" to expedite the recovery. In his absence from the 58th Virginia, Crutchfield had received some good news: he rose in rank to lieutenant colonel.<sup>26</sup>

In March, Crutchfield was still unfit for active duty but accepted temporary assignment to Brig. Gen. William Nelson Pendelton's staff. Pendelton was the ranking artillerist in the Confederacy. Crutchfield assisted the general in evaluating the capabilities of various artillery batteries in northern Virginia. While he was performing various tasks for Pendelton, he renewed his acquaintance with his old artillery instructor and colleague, Gen. Thomas Jackson. Unknowingly, the lieutenant colonel had met the man who would finally give him the field assignment that he had long desired.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Robert J. Driver, 58th Virginia Infantry ( Lynchburg VA, 1990) 3, 5; Walker, VMI Memorial, 152.

<sup>26</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis H. Smith, Jan. 28, 1862, ibid.; Driver, 58th Virginia Infantry, 11.

<sup>27</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Mar. 14, 1862, William Nelson Pendelton Papers, Duke University.

## Chapter II

### EDUCATION ON THE BATTLEFIELD

As Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was about to begin the most successful leg of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, his division needed a competent chief of artillery. The previous artillery chief, a former Virginia Military Institute instructor, Maj. Daniel Truehart, had been relieved of command and arrested due to "drunkenness on duty and extreme insubordination." For Jackson, there was only one choice for the position, Lt. Col. Stapleton Crutchfield.<sup>1</sup>

Even though Crutchfield lacked battle experience, Jackson's familiarity and respect for the young man's talents made the decision an easy one. Jackson had witnessed the cognitive abilities of his former cadet and fellow professor for the last ten years at V.M.I.. Moreover, Jackson knew that Crutchfield was a man of high moral character. Crutchfield like Jackson, devoted himself "to the service to the merciful God." For both men, God came first. In addition, he had pledged on his mother's death bed "to never touch a drop of liquor."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Jackson Letterbook, May 16, 1862, Jedediah Hotchkiss Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Oscar Minor Crutchfield, July 2, 1859, Maury Papers, Duke; Stapleton Crutchfield to Oscar Crutchfield, December 12, 1853, ibid.

Because of the years Jackson and Crutchfield had spent together before the war, they had formed a "relation of mutual confidence." So on May 16, 1862, at the age of twenty-six, Crutchfield officially assumed the post of chief of artillery. The transition to the new position was easy for the newly promoted colonel. During the previous week, Crutchfield had temporarily commanded Jackson's artillery at the battle of McDowell. However, none of the batteries participated in the Confederate victory because the terrain was unsuitable for artillery. Jackson did not want to risk the capture of any of his cannon.<sup>3</sup>

Even without participating in battle, Crutchfield experienced the different nuances of the position. He learned that Jackson required extra duties from his chief of artillery. Early in the morning of May 9, he and Maj. Jedediah Hotchkiss, Jackson's topographer, were ordered to scout the position of the defeated Union forces under General Milroy at McDowell. They discovered from Confederate pickets that the enemy had evacuated their position. Hotchkiss immediately sent this information back to Jackson. While in

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<sup>3</sup>Jennings Cropper Wise, The Long Arm of Lee: The History of the Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia (New York, 1959), 170; United States War Dept. (comp.) War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. XII, pt. 1, 472. Hereafter cited as O.R., with all references being to Ser. I.

the end the mission itself did not hold much importance, Crutchfield realized that Jackson was confident he could assume other important roles. In the upcoming weeks, the Confederate general increasingly relied on the young artillerist as a scout, messenger, and independent commander.<sup>4</sup>

As Jackson's army moved down the Valley to meet Gen. Richard S. Ewell's division at New Market, the artillery under the newly appointed chief consisted of 27 cannons and 369 men. However, this number dramatically changed five days later. On May 21, Jackson's and Ewell's divisions junctioned and formed the Army of the Valley. Crutchfield's command now consisted of 47 guns and several hundred more additional men. Even though the ranking artillerist of the army had not led any batteries into battle.<sup>5</sup>

The Confederate artillery's effectiveness was often determined by the quality of the cannon and its ordnance. At the beginning of the war, the South's artillery mainly consisted of antiquated guns from as far back as the War of 1812. When Crutchfield assumed command in May, 1862, the

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<sup>4</sup>Archie P. McDonald, (ed.), Make Me a Map of the Valley: The Civil War Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer (Dallas, 1973), 42.

<sup>5</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 164, 170. When the an army was marching "down" the Shenandoah Valley, it actually meant that the army was heading north.

Richmond Tredegar Works was the only major "cannon foundry and rolling mill" in the South. As a means of augmenting the lack of production in the South, the Ordnance Bureau purchased additional weapons abroad. The Confederacy imported the British Blakely, Whitworth, and Armstrong fieldpieces to the production starved South. Yet, the Federal blockade limited the number of these weapons. To increase the quality and quantity of their arms, the South had to look elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

The most desired cannons were manufactured in the North. Early victories in the first year and half allowed the Confederacy to enlarge its artillery corps and to replace some obsolete cannons. Northern smoothbore and rifled guns soon constituted a large percentage of the Confederate arms.

The Napoleon or smoothbore cannon was the predominant gun in the early stages of the war. Though it had limited range and firepower compared to that of the rifled guns, many generals North and South preferred the smoothbore. They had witnessed its abilities during the Mexican War. The rifled gun, on the other hand, had seen limited action. The properties of that gun were unknown. Thus, generals such as Joseph E. Johnston were reluctant to part with the

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 36; Warren Ripley, Artillery and Ammunition of the Civil War (New York, 1970), 137.

smoothbore.<sup>7</sup>

Several generals were aware of the rifled gun's superiority before the war. General Jackson had recognized the advantages that the rifled gun held over the smoothbore when an instructor of artillery at V.M.I.. In the summer of 1860, Jackson test-fired the Parrott cannon for the state of Virginia. The Parrott was an inexpensive rifled gun invented by a fellow West Pointer. In his report on the test-firing, Jackson praised the gun for its accuracy and distance and recommended that the state purchase the weapon. The state complied and bought twelve.<sup>8</sup>

With Jackson holding the gun in such high esteem, it was natural for Crutchfield to become one of its major advocates. Unfortunately for Jackson, Crutchfield, and the rest of the artillery arm in 1862, the coveted piece formed only a small percentage of the Confederate fieldpieces. As a means to alleviate the paucity of rifled guns, the Confederate Ordnance Bureau rifled smoothbores. Yet with all these attempts to improve and update their cannons, the artillery arm still remained a mixture of old and new. The need for

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 17; Grady McWhiney and Perry Jamieson, Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage (University, AL, 1982), 37, 123; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 65.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 63-64; Ripley, Artillery and Ammunition, 109; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 64.



fieldpieces outweighed the fact that many of the cannon were obsolete and rendered little service in battle.<sup>9</sup>

While the Federals held a major numerical and technological advantage with cannon, the difference was even greater in quantity and quality of the ammunition. In the spring of 1861, the South did not have a single munitions factory in operation. Powder and shells supplied to the Confederate batteries for the first year of the war came either from the North or the Federal arsenals captured at the outbreak of hostilities. Eventually the Confederacy built munitions factories, but there was still a shortage of ordnance. Lack of skilled artisans, a paucity of workshops, and the tremendous consumption by Confederate batteries resulted in a continually low supply of ammunition. In addition, the problem of the South's hodgepodge collection of fieldpieces meant that the Ordnance Department could not make a shell that was uniform to a rifle or smoothbore gun. A rifled gun that had the same characteristics of the Parrot often required a different shell.<sup>10</sup>

The scarcity of ammunition often dictated battle strategy. According to foremost artillerist of the South,

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<sup>9</sup>Ripley, Artillery and Ammunition, 17.

<sup>10</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 41; Edward Porter Alexander, "Confederate Artillery Service," Southern Historical Society Papers, XI (1883), 104.

Gen. Edward Porter Alexander, "The order 'save your ammunition' was reiterated on every battle-field, and many an awful pounding had to be borne in silence from the Yankee guns, while every shot was reserved for their infantry."<sup>11</sup>

With the quantity of ammunition limited, the Ordnance Bureau had to make up the difference with quality. Every shell needed to find its mark. The truth, however, was that the quality of the ammunition was unbelievably poor. General Alexander termed it "the greatest incubus under which the artillery labored." Smoothbore and rifled ordnance often failed to reach their target. Shells had a tendency to explode prematurely or not at all. Premature explosions also effected the Confederate infantry. They, instead of the enemy, were often the recipients of a wayward shell. Therefore, at times, Confederate batteries were wary of firing over their own infantry's head.<sup>12</sup>

Artillerists sought to compensate for such handicaps through their own abilities, ingenuity, and experience. Yet the paucity of ammunition eliminated most batteries from firing practice rounds. Education and experience had to come on the battlefield. Many batteries "passed through the war

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 104-5.

without aiming a gun at any target but the enemy."<sup>13</sup>

While most Southern artillerists gained experience on the battlefield, the Virginia Military Institute had trained cadets on the intricacies of artillery. Under the tutelage of Prof. Thomas Jackson, the Institute produced many of the top commanders for the Army of Northern Virginia's artillery corps. In the newly formed Army of the Valley, alone, Joseph Carpenter, Robert Preston Chew, Wilfred Cutshaw, and Joseph Latimer all served at the head of a battery. Moreover, many other cadets filled the ranks as privates and noncommissioned officers.<sup>14</sup>

For the new chief of artillery, familiarity with several of his subordinates must have been reassuring. Crutchfield knew these officers' abilities and personalities. As a professor at V.M.I., he had witnessed their talents in and out of the classroom. Therefore, Crutchfield could focus his attention to important things such as the arrival of Ewell's division.

The main problem Crutchfield faced while preparing for battle was not his unfamiliarity with certain batteries, but the inefficient organization of the Army of the Valley's artillery. This problem plagued all Confederate armies. The

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 104.

<sup>14</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 103; O.R., vol. XII, pt. 1, 727.

success of artillery depended on teamwork. From the gunner to the chief of artillery, a misunderstanding of orders could negatively effect the outcome of a battle. The proper use of the firepower of one gun or battery, however, could halt an enemy's advance or support one's own advancing infantry to victory. The organization and operation of the artillery not only defined the possibilities for success but also its shortcomings and limitations.

Typically, a Confederate battery consisted of four cannon. While the optimal battery had six guns, the "scarcity of horses and ordnance" made this option unfeasible. At the head of the battery was a captain. His responsibilities consisted of carrying out orders, insuring the welfare of about 100 men and the battery's horses, and directing the maintenance of cannon. In battle, it was commonplace for the captain to lose communication with his immediate superiors. Thus, he often made important military decisions on his own. A first Lieutenant and two second lieutenants commanded the individual guns. They implemented the firing orders, positioned the weapon, and supervised the actions of the crew. The remainder of the men manned the guns or worked in support services. The most important members of the battery were the horses. Without healthy animals, batteries were impotent; mobility was quintessential for success. The ebb and flow of battle rarely allowed for

artillery to remain in one position. On average, artillery units moved at least two to three times during an engagement.<sup>15</sup>

The success of Confederate artillery depended on a concentration of fire. For the artillery to produce a heavy fire, several batteries needed to work in cooperation with one another. The chief of artillery was responsible for coordinating and deploying his division's batteries to produce this desired effect. Confederate structuring of the artillery corps at the beginning of the war, however, often restricted the chief of artillery from achieving this objective. Instead of the artillery arm acting as a separate entity from the infantry, a portion of an army's batteries were placed with infantry brigades. The brigadier general who commanded a brigade also supervised the battery. As a result, where the general's infantry went, so did his battery.<sup>16</sup>

Two major problems emerged with this system. First, the brigadier general could not effectively direct both his infantry and artillery when in battle. It was too much work

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<sup>15</sup>Alexander, "Confederate Artillery Service," 99; Wise, The Long Arm of Lee, 110. In reports, batteries were named after the captains who command them (Poague's Battery), but their formal names were from the counties or towns they originated (Rockbridge Artillery).

<sup>16</sup>Alexander, "Confederate Artillery Service," 99.

for one man. Secondly, and more importantly, since batteries followed the infantry, artillery units became scattered on a battlefield and made it difficult to concentrate cannon fire.

The chief of artillery in this system "was to exercise a general supervision over the brigade-batteries of the division" and the reserve artillery. This power of supervision, however, could be usurped by the brigade-batteries because it was the brigadier and not the chief of artillery who supplied rations, forage, and orders to the units. Therefore, batteries were often able to gain a sense of "independence" from their chief of artillery. Many brigadiers helped foster this independence because they resented any interference with their command. While an artillery chief might supervise the brigade-batteries in battle, a lack of authority with the men could result in ineffective guns.<sup>17</sup>

The unorganized and weak state of the Confederate artillery placed severe restrictions on Jackson's new chief of artillery. Yet some of the organizational problems were easy to overcome. Crutchfield needed to establish a strong relationship with the batteries and the brigadiers. He would have to act as a politician to soothe and limit any animosity until the system was changed. The fact that several of the

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 99-100.

battery captains were graduates of V.M.I. probably helped foster a sense of community rather than independence. They would not question his authority. Moreover, Crutchfield had Jackson's backing. A brigade-battery that failed to act on Crutchfield's order would have to answer to Jackson. The general, a stickler for obedience, easily might arrest those disrupting the chain of command. Thus, the main concern of the brigade batteries for Crutchfield was not the command structure but the feasibility of creating a concentrated fire. The physical location of the brigade batteries could result in a logistics nightmare. Grouping enough of these artillery units together required careful coordinating and deployment.

As a means of alleviating the pressure on Richmond, Jackson continued his campaign after the battle of McDowell. On May 16, Gen. Robert E. Lee informed Jackson that an offensive against Union Gen. Nathaniel Banks might possibly prevent his men from junctioning with Irwin McDowell's troops at Fredericksburg. If the Federals united at Fredericksburg, they could support Gen. George B. McClellan's move on Richmond. Already half of Banks's army, James Shields's division of 11,000 men, was marching toward Fredericksburg.

With this in mind, Jackson quickly planned his attack.<sup>18</sup>

Banks had stationed his main body at Strasburg. But in doing so, he left his troops in a vulnerable position. Since the battle of McDowell, Banks had lost contact with the Confederate army. Union forces under Gen. John C. Fremont were unable to inform Banks of the whereabouts of the Army of the Valley. Jackson's cavalry controlled the line of communications between McDowell and Strasburg. Union scouts sent to ascertain Jackson's position were in a predicament. Confederate cavalry guarded the roads, and the mountains formed a natural barrier to block any intelligence operations. Screened, Banks did not know when or where Jackson was going to strike first. Jackson chose to strike the small garrison guarding the strategic village of Front Royal.<sup>19</sup>

Front Royal, a village situated two miles from the North and South Forks of the Shenandoah River, was part of a Banks's communications and supply line. The Manassas Gap

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<sup>18</sup>Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command (New York, 1942), I, 363; William Allan and Jedediah Hotchkiss, History of the Campaign of Gen. T.J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, (Dayton, OH, 1974), 86.

<sup>19</sup>Robert G. Tanner, Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862, (New York, 1976), 177; Robert U. Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, (eds.), Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, (New York, 1887), II, 288.



Railroad, which ran near the village, served as the umbilical cord to Banks's 7,600 Federals at Strasburg. Through the railroad, Banks received his orders and supplies. Jackson's plan was to cut communication and supply lines at Front Royal, and capture the 1,000 men who garrisoned the village. If all went well, 16,000 Confederates would be on the flank of Banks's army. That would compel the Union general to retreat from fortified Strasburg.<sup>20</sup>

On May 22, the lead brigades of Ewell's division encamped ten miles from Front Royal. That night troops were ordered to clean their weapons. Battle was imminent. While the infantry prepared for combat, so did Crutchfield and his artillery. Crutchfield was going to see his first action as chief of artillery.<sup>21</sup>

At dawn, the lead elements of Ewell's division began their march toward Front Royal. When within four and a half miles of town, the Confederate forces turned right onto a secondary road called Gooney Manor. This allowed Jackson's lead elements to get closer to the village without informing the enemy of their whereabouts. In addition, this new path eliminated a possible Federal bombardment which could tie

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<sup>20</sup>Tanner, Stonewall in the Valley, 212; Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 94-95; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, I, 374.

<sup>21</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 702; Tanner, Stonewall in the Valley, 205.

down the advancing troops. At around 2 p.m. the hostilities began. The 1st Maryland Regiment and Wheat's Battalion quickly pushed the outnumbered bluecoats through the village. Retreating Union soldiers rejoined their main body which occupied a "commanding height" named Richardson's Hill.<sup>22</sup>

As Confederates advanced toward the hill, Union resistance stiffened. Two 10-pounder Parrotts detached from a battery and 1,000 Union infantry opened with a deadly fire. The Rebel attack faltered. If the assault was to continue, Crutchfield's artillery must silence the Parrot guns. Viewing the plight of the Confederate troops on a ridge above town, the chief of artillery immediately ordered forward "all the batteries of Major-General Ewell's division." In the meantime, while Crutchfield waited for their arrival, he reconnoitered the terrain in order to find a suitable place to deploy his guns.<sup>23</sup>

After a careful survey of the situation, Crutchfield realized that the only guns capable of knocking out the Federal artillery were his rifled pieces. These guns were required because of the "nature of the approaches to the enemy's position." Only rifled guns could match the distance

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<sup>22</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 702; Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 93-95; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, I, 375-76; Tanner, Stonewall in the Valley, 212.

<sup>23</sup>Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 94; O.R., XII, pt. 1, 725.

and accuracy of the enemy's artillery. The first of Ewell's batteries to arrive contained three smoothbores. Crutchfield promptly ordered it aside. The next unit, Courtney's Battery, had only one rifled gun. Desperate to respond to the Federals, Crutchfield quickly positioned the one gun. An artillery duel began. The result of the exchange was negligible. As a means to bringing more guns into the duel, Crutchfield deployed two smoothbores from Brockenbrough's Battery. These guns, however, did little more than make noise.<sup>24</sup>

The failure of Jackson's artillery forced the Confederate infantry to take action of its own. The 6th Louisiana moved to flank the Union force, while Wheat's battalion and the 1st Maryland attacked straight ahead. Outmanned and about to be overrun, the Federal forces retreated. The Yankee commander withdrew his troops toward the bridges over the forks of the Shenandoah River.<sup>25</sup>

As Jackson witnessed the Federals retreating cross the Shenandoah with little resistance and impediment, he exclaimed: "Oh, what an opportunity for artillery! Oh, that

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 702; Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 95.

my guns were here!"<sup>26</sup>

The excited general sent a messenger with an order to bring "up every rifled gun" in the army. As time slowly passed, the bluecoats disappeared from sight on the road to Winchester. The Confederate batteries still had not arrived with the rifled guns. Several batteries and regiments had taken a circuitous route to the battlefield.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, two rifled guns from Lusk's Battery reached the field. Crutchfield immediately began pursuit. As Lusk's guns neared the burned bridge over the North Fork, a Union cannon deployed to retard Confederate pursuit began firing. Crutchfield promptly ordered his two guns to unlimber and return fire. After sending a few rounds at the enemy, the Federal gun withdrew. Confederate cavalry and Crutchfield's artillery could now cross the river and pursue the retreating Union forces. However, the "jaded condition" of the battery's horses eliminated the opportunity for the artillerymen to catch the Federals. Colonel Thomas Flournoy's cavalry pushed on alone, leaving Crutchfield's guns behind. Fortunately for Jackson, a daring charge by Flournoy's men left the Union troops in disarray. Shortly thereafter, a majority of the Yankees were captured, as were

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<sup>26</sup>Robert L. Dabney, Life and Campaigns of Lieut-Gen Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson (New York, 1866), 365-66.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid, 367.

the two Parrotts.<sup>28</sup>

While the battle of Front Royal was a success for the Army of the Valley, Crutchfield could not share in the victory celebration. He had failed his first assignment. The young chief of artillery put the event in proper perspective when he stated: "In this affair our guns were badly served and did no execution."<sup>29</sup>

The main cause of the artillery's poor showing was Crutchfield's failure to learn the composition of all the batteries in Ewell's division. In his official report, Crutchfield cited brevity of time as the main reason for not surveying Ewell's guns. Crutchfield wrote: "The division of Major-General Ewell had only joined us a day or so previous, and I was, therefore unfamiliar with the composition of the batteries, which I found to contain but three rifled guns in all."<sup>30</sup>

In his report, Crutchfield incorrectly stated that he was unfamiliar with any of Ewell's batteries. While working for Gen. Pendelton in the winter of 1862, Crutchfield did a detailed inspection of Raine's Battery. Thus, he knew the contents of at least one of Ewell's units. Crutchfield only

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<sup>28</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 702, 725.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 725.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

needed to discover the composition Courtney's, Lusk's, and Rice's guns. A task his assistant, Lt. Ed Willis, could have easily handled. Crutchfield should have made this his number one priority, especially after discovering that Ewell's division was leading the attack. Traffic on the road and the brevity of battle made it next to impossible to bring up Jackson's batteries. If he had known the composition of Ewell's division, Crutchfield could have ordered Lusk's two rifled guns up first. Instead, Lusk's fieldpieces were the last to arrive.<sup>31</sup>

With time, Crutchfield would correct the mistakes he made at Front Royal. Minor errors in judgement at battles such as Front Royal had little impact on the outcome, but Crutchfield needed to sharpen his skills and his batteries before a true test emerged. In addition, he would have to work around the handicaps placed on the artillery. Front Royal illustrated the shortage of rifled guns. Even if Ewell's three rifled guns had arrived in time to duel with the Federals, it is uncertain that the Union guns could have been silenced.

Crutchfield had little time to contemplate his mistakes. The next morning, May 24, Gen. Banks withdrew from Strasburg. By leaving the town, Banks put his Federal forces in a

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<sup>31</sup>S. Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Mar. 14, 1862, Pendelton Papers, Duke.

vulnerable position. Union soldiers were strung out for miles on the road between Strasburg and Winchester. This was the moment Jackson had wanted. If his forces from Cedarville hurried to Middletown, he could split the Union army in two and possibly destroy it. Leaving Trimble's brigade, the 1st Maryland Regiment, and Courtney's and Brockenbrough's batteries with Ewell on the road from Front Royal to Winchester, the remainder of the Army of the Valley advanced west toward Middletown.<sup>32</sup>

At the front the column, Turner Ashby's cavalry formed the vanguard. Jackson hoped that the daring Ashby could hinder the Federals until the main body of Confederate infantry arrived. To increase the firepower of Ashby's force, Jackson ordered Crutchfield to detail two of Poague's rifled guns to the horse artillery under Capt. Preston Chew. Crutchfield himself would supervise the enlarged battery.<sup>33</sup>

At 3:30 p.m., the advance guard reached the southern outskirts of Middletown. Ashby's cavalry quickly brushed away the Union pickets. As the Confederates closed in on the road, they saw a beautiful sight: Federal wagon trains lined the Valley Pike for nearly two miles. Crutchfield immediately ordered his battery to unlimber and open fire on

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<sup>32</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 703.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 725.

the wagon train. The shells easily found their targets and "created a stampede." Panic and confusion abounded among the teamsters. They abandoned their wagons and attempted to escape by either horse or on foot. Desperately needed supplies fell into the Confederacy's hand.<sup>34</sup>

Crutchfield's pursuit of Banks's army was about to continue when Union cavalry under Gen. John Hatch appeared. The rearguard of the Federal army planned to breakthrough the Confederates in order to rejoin the main body. Understanding Hatch's motives, Jackson's chief of artillery moved his guns within eighty yards of the pike. In addition to the guns, Wheat's battalion crouched behind a stone fence adjacent to the pike. A deadly reception awaited the charging cavalry.<sup>35</sup>

The cannons, filled with canister, fired a volley into the head of the thundering cavalry. Combined with the volleys from the infantry, riddled bodies of Northerners and horses covered the road. Those not hit quickly scattered back toward Strasburg or were captured. Jackson witnessed the massacre and later stated: "The turnpike, which had just

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<sup>34</sup>Tanner, Stonewall in the Valley, 221; William Thomas Poague, Gunner with Stonewall (Jackson, TN, 1957), 22; O.R., XII, pt. 1, 725; Henry Kyd Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall (Chapel Hill, 1940), 53.

<sup>35</sup>Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 104; O.R., XII, pt 1, 726; Edward A. Moore, The Story of a Cannoneer Under Stonewall Jackson (Freeport, NY, 1907, 1991), 54.



teemed with life, presented a most appalling spectacle of carnage and destruction."<sup>36</sup>

It seemed that the Union cavalry was not ready to give up. A body of cavalry and a battery of artillery stood south of Middletown. Dust and smoke, however, made it questionable whether or not those men were Union or Confederate. Crutchfield asked Turner Ashby if "they belonged to him." Ashby immediately replied that they were not his men. Once he discovered the nature of the cavalry, Crutchfield ordered his guns to open up on the Union forces. The shells fired from Poague's and Chew's cannons, however, exploded "50 feet from the muzzle." While the Yankees went unharmed, the sight and sound of Crutchfield's guns combined with Gen. Richard Taylor's advancing troops forced the cavalry back to Strasburg.<sup>37</sup>

The repulse of the Union cavalry confirmed to Jackson that the majority of Banks's army had already passed Middletown. With this information in hand, Crutchfield and Ashby continued their pursuit of the Union army north toward Newtown. The vanguard promptly regained contact with what was left of the wagon train. The horse artillery and cavalry peppered the unprotected wagons with a deluge of fire.

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<sup>36</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 703, 726.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 726.

Artillery barrages snapped off huge segments of the train. Banks was losing most of his supplies.<sup>38</sup>

Closing in on Newtown, Crutchfield discovered that he had lost most of his support. Only fifty cavalrymen under Maj. Oliver Funsten remained. While all of the artillery personnel had remained at their position, Ashby's cavalry plundered Union wagons. Half-starved from the previous days' marches and activities, these Confederates could wait no longer to eat. Yet Ashby's undisciplined men did not stop for a quick bite and then continue. They were intent on grabbing every horse that the Federals left behind.<sup>39</sup>

Crutchfield halted his guns. He was furious. Reinforcements were needed if his men were to continue the pursuit. Riding back toward Middletown, Jackson's chief of artillery met 100 men from the 7th Louisiana. He hurried the exhausted infantry towards his guns. Yet, Crutchfield's plea for support failed with Ashby's troops. They were too intent on plundering the wagon train. After consulting with Ashby, they "concluded it would be imprudent to push the pursuit farther until other infantry should come up."<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime, the Union army used the break in the

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.; Poague, Gunner with Stonewall, 23; Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 55.

<sup>40</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 726.

action to deploy four pieces of artillery on the northern outskirts of Newtown. While the Rebel gunners waited for the arrival of some support, a duel ensued between them and the Union battery. When reinforcements finally arrived, the Confederate army attempted again to advance. However, the now reinforced Union rearguard held the Confederate forces in check. Not until after dusk, when the Union troops withdrew, did the Confederates begin to move north toward Winchester. As night fell, Poague's and Chew's guns could no longer render service. Casualties were minimal, three men wounded and two horses dead, but the guns were low on ammunition.<sup>41</sup>

Throughout the night, the army marched toward Winchester. Burning wagons set by the Federals lit the way. Exhaustion filled the ranks of the Army of the Valley. Soldiers quickly fell by the wayside. The heavy marching of the last two days was having its effect. Dismayed at the prospect of getting little or no sleep, Crutchfield muttered to fellow members of Jackson's staff: "This is uncivilized." A sharp report from Union Enfields, however, quickly woke the somnolent staff. A pocket of Union resistance, missed by the advance guard, fired a harmless volley.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 704, 726.

<sup>42</sup>Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 56. According to Douglas, Crutchfield was the "descendent of the man who invented sleep."

Early on the morning of May 25, Jackson halted his army two miles from Winchester. The general, uncertain of the whereabouts of Ewell's division, dispatched Crutchfield with orders for Ewell to move his troops to Newtown. While most men slept, Crutchfield was on a circuitous route of twenty-nine miles trying to find Ewell. Unwilling to reveal his plans to anyone with the exception of certain members of his staff, Jackson used his trusted friend Crutchfield to deliver the message. The general believed that the remaining Federal forces at Strasburg were being reinforced. Ewell's troops could block any threat to his rear while he crushed Banks. Yet when Crutchfield finally found Ewell on the southeastern side of Winchester, the general was engaged with Banks's left flank. Ewell ignored the order. Crutchfield took command of Ewell's batteries--the same ones with which he had problems two days earlier.<sup>43</sup>

Predawn fog shrouded the countryside. At 5:40 a.m., Ewell began his attack on Winchester without knowing how Jackson's advance was proceeding. The general could hear Jackson's fire but was unable to view his superior's troops. Meanwhile, two of Trimble's regiments, the 21st Georgia and 21st North Carolina, quickly pushed back the Union pickets. As the Rebels cautiously moved forward, resistance stiffened.

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<sup>43</sup>O.R., XII. 12, pt. 726; Memoirs of Campbell Brown, Brown Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Union troops hidden behind stone fences repulsed the probe with a sharp and deadly fire. However, the Federals' success was short-lived. Confederate forces flanked the Union soldiers while the artillery enfiladed the stone fences. Outnumbered and under tremendous fire, the Yankees retreated into Winchester. The eastern outskirts of the town fell into Ewell's hands.<sup>44</sup>

As the rout of the Federals continued, Brockenbrough's men silenced a Union battery. Crutchfield then turned Brockenbrough's guns on the fleeing Yankees. Cannon fire peppered the ranks of the Federals until they retreated out of range.<sup>45</sup>

The news, however, was not good from his other unit. Lieutenant Latimer, in temporary command of Courtney's Battery, accidentally fired "repeated rounds" at Confederate troops who controlled the western side of town. These men from Jackson's division quickly sought shelter. The reason why this accident occurred is unknown. In all likelihood, Crutchfield's and Latimer's vision, limited by the mist and smoke over the battlefield, could not determine if the troops in the western part of Winchester were friend or foe. They probably thought the troops were Union because they were

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.; O.R., XII, pt. 1, 779.

<sup>45</sup>Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 112; O.R., XII, pt. 1, 727.

unaware that Jackson's forces had gained that side of town.<sup>46</sup>

Friendly fire was commonplace during the war, and the lack of visibility was a major factor in this occurrence. The powder from cannon and rifle fire created a thick smoke. In a battle such as Winchester, the discharge of over 20,000 weapons would insure limited visibility. Moreover, the combination of fog with smoke decreased visibility tenfold. Trees, ridges, and buildings offered additional obstructions to the artillerist. Even if Crutchfield and Latimer knew that the troops were Confederate, the poor quality of ammunition often resulted in shells exploding inadvertently over their own troops.

Fortunately for the Confederates, Latimer's guns inflicted no perceivable damage. The incident did not impede the Army of the Valley's advance. Soon Confederate infantry enveloped the right and left flank of Banks's army. Federal opposition crumbled. Banks retreated toward Martinsburg. Winchester had been recaptured.<sup>47</sup>

The ramifications of Jackson's offensive ruminated throughout the Confederacy. The magnificent stores of Winchester fell to the supply-starved South, and General

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 726.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 727.

Irwin McDowell at Fredericksburg was immobilized. General Joseph Johnston now had one less threat to worry about in his defense of Richmond.

After three days of battle, Crutchfield could finally get the sleep he needed. However, after a church service the next morning, a tremendous amount of work awaited him. With all the fighting and marching that had occurred in the last several days, Crutchfield had to determine the condition of the artillery. He needed to know if any equipment required replacement or repair. If so, Crutchfield would have to requisition the necessary replacement or materials. In addition, the chief of artillery had to attend Jackson's daily staff meetings. As the general wanted to ascertain the condition of troops and equipment, he required supply and transportation reports from his staff.<sup>46</sup>

For the next several days, the Army of the Valley continued to pressure Union forces north of Winchester. Jackson, carrying out Gen. Lee's wish, drove the Federals back to the Potomac River. Yet the Confederates were close to extending themselves too far. A perilous situation arose. Jackson's line of retreat became threatened. Fremont's army from the west and Shields's enlarged division from the east were closing in on Jackson's troops. They were attempting to

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 707; Jedediah Hotchkiss to William Chase, Mar. 30, 1992, Hotchkiss Papers, Library of Congress.

concentrate "a heavy force" in the rear lines of the Army of the Valley.<sup>49</sup>

Jackson had only one choice: abandon Winchester and the harassment of Banks' army and retire up the Valley toward Harrisonburg. If the Army of the Valley lost the race, the junction of Fremont and Shields combined with Banks's army in the north would block all avenues of escape. Thus entrapped, Jackson's force could be destroyed by the numerically superior Union forces.

On May 31, Jackson's supply wagons and troops started to withdraw from Winchester. The Confederates began their long arduous march up the Valley. Shields's capture of Front Royal the previous day had closed off one avenue of escape and forced Jackson's men to march quickly to Strasburg to escape the closing pincers. Unfortunately for Crutchfield, a valuable Blakely gun from Brockenbrough's Battery was lost during the melee at Front Royal. Yet this was of minor concern. Both Union forces were within striking distance of Jackson's sole escape route, Strasburg. Shields at Front Royal was only twelve miles away, while Fremont needed to move but twenty miles. From Jackson's position at Winchester, Strasburg was a distant eighteen miles. Thus the question remained whether or not the Confederates would be

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<sup>49</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 707.



the first ones to reach Strasburg, the doorway to the lower Shenandoah Valley.<sup>50</sup>

As the Confederates approached their objective, a wide sense of relief passed through the ranks. Strasburg was unoccupied. The foot cavalry's speed and durability had allowed the Confederates to escape the Union trap. With Jackson's forces concentrated at Strasburg, the Union generals changed plans. The two Union forces no longer planned to junction. Instead, Shields's army on the eastern side of the Massanutten Mountain would march toward New Market, while Fremont's army continued the pursuit of Jackson up the Valley Pike. The Federals hoped that when Shields cleared the Massanutten, the general would block Jackson's exit from the mountain range. This would leave the Confederate army trapped between Shields, Fremont, and the Massanutten.

To give his troops time to clear the range, Jackson had to delay Shields. On June 1, the general ordered a detachment of cavalry to burn the White House and Columbia bridges over the South Fork of the Shenandoah. Uncertain of the reliability of Ashby's cavalry, Jackson sent Crutchfield to inspect the bridges. Crutchfield discovered that the spans had been destroyed. Reporting his finding, Jackson

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<sup>50</sup>McDonald, Make Me a Map, 49-50; O.R., XII, pt. 1, 727; Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 131.

relaxed a bit easier.<sup>51</sup>

Throughout the retreat, Fremont's cavalry harassed the rear of Jackson's army. In order to help parry the Federals' advances, Crutchfield detached batteries to the rearguard to assist Ashby's cavalry. Successfully blocking the thrusts of Fremont, the artillery's losses were minimal. At Strasburg, a gun from Captain Lusk's Battery malfunctioned and killed two men; on the pike, a rifled gun of Captain Chew's battery was disabled. Yet to the dismay of Crutchfield, it was the second rifled gun lost in last week.<sup>52</sup>

For over a week the Confederate army retreated up the Valley. On June 6, the journey ended. Exhausted troops and weakened horses reached their final destination, Port Republic. Jackson had stopped his army at the village to prevent the junction of Fremont's and Shields's forces. Without Shields crossing the South Fork of the Shenandoah, the two Union bodies could not link up. To junction with Fremont, Shields had to ford the South River into Port Republic and then cross the wooden bridge over the North River. All other bridges over the South Fork had been destroyed by the Confederates during their retreat. In addition, the heavy rains during the week made fording the

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<sup>51</sup>McDonald, Make me a Map, 51.

<sup>52</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 727.

river at any other point implausible. Port Republic was the only remaining crossing for Shields.<sup>53</sup>

As information on the Federals' movements flowed into headquarters, Jackson formulated his battle plan. The commander deployed Ewell's division four miles northwest at Cross Keys to oppose Fremont's forces advancing from Harrisonburg. Jackson's own division occupied a commanding ridge north of town and the river. The ridge offered several strategic advantages. From the height, a battalion of Crutchfield's "artillery was at hand to command the town and bridge and plain by which Shields must approach." Moreover, the position allowed Jackson the possibility to shuttle reinforcements to Ewell in the event of battle.<sup>54</sup>

For the next two days, Crutchfield saw to the needs of his batteries. The grueling march had taken a toll on his guns. Crutchfield requisitioned supplies, positioned cannon, and attended to various other tasks. With the batteries refitted, Crutchfield's artillery was now prepared for battle.

On June 8, a major oversight almost cost the Confederacy the services of Thomas Jackson and Stapleton Crutchfield.

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<sup>53</sup>The South Fork of the Shenandoah split to form the North and South rivers at Port Republic.

<sup>54</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 712-13; Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 147.

When deploying his forces, Jackson had failed to place a sufficient number of troops on the eastern bank of the Shenandoah, the side of the river on which Shields's cavalry was fast approaching.

A Union cavalry officer, Col. S. S. Carroll, had discovered from informants that only a small Confederate detachment guarded the town and Jackson's supply train. If his men destroyed the supply wagons, the Federals would strike a major blow against the Army of the Valley. With that in mind, early the next morning a contingent of Carroll's cavalry advanced toward Port Republic with hopes of destroying Jackson's valuable commodities.<sup>55</sup>

At 9 a.m., Union cavalry approached Port Republic and made contact with Rebel pickets. The numerically superior Union cavalry easily pushed back the Confederates. Carroll's cavalry entered the outskirts of the town. In the meantime, Jackson and his staff congregated at the Kemper house on the southern edge of Port Republic. Some of his men were outside enjoying the beautiful weather of the Sabbath while others such as Crutchfield were catching up on lost sleep. The relaxing morning was interrupted when a courier arrived with disturbing news. He reported that Union cavalry had entered the outskirts of town. Immediately after Jackson received

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 149.

this information, Union shells began to hammer the village.<sup>56</sup>

Quickly Jackson and his staff mounted their horses. Crutchfield and his assistant, Ed Willis, still in bed, were the last reach their mounts. The pack of officers, with the chief of artillery bringing up the rear, galloped towards the North bridge and the safety of the Confederate lines. As the Confederates scurried toward safety, Carroll's troopers forded the South River. The Union cavalry was now in the town and in striking distance of the Confederate officers.<sup>57</sup>

Carroll's cavalymen spied the fleeing Confederates. A race ensued between the two groups. As the opposing forces reached the bridge, Jackson, Henry Kyd Douglas, and Sandie Pendelton scurried over to safety. Stapleton Crutchfield, on the other hand, was not so fortunate. He along with his assistant were captured.<sup>58</sup>

Resigned to his fate, Crutchfield handed over his artillery sword to a Union colonel. The officer only posted one soldier to guard Crutchfield, because he had just been alerted to the whereabouts of a wagon train. Double checking with the chief of artillery, the Union officer asked, "Is

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<sup>56</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 727; Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 85, 87.

<sup>57</sup>Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 149.

<sup>58</sup>Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 85.

that so, Colonel?"<sup>59</sup>

When hearing this, widespread panic spread through Crutchfield's body. The Army of the Valley's ordnance train was just south of Kemper's house. Crutchfield glumly replied: "You must find out for yourself."<sup>60</sup>

Union cavalry charged down the street toward the Kemper house when a sudden and heavy volley struck the horsemen. A company from the 2nd Virginia, which guarded the wagons, fired on the troopers. The cavalry retreated, then reformed, and charged. Once again the cavalry met rifle fire. However, to the great surprise of the Federals, the air this time was filled with artillery fire. Two guns from Carrington's Battery raked the street.<sup>61</sup>

Jackson's chief of artillery was also greatly surprised when he heard cannon fire coming from behind the Kemper house. The perplexed Crutchfield could not fathom how one or two of his cannons found their way to the ordnance train. He had deployed all his batteries on the ridge north of town. At times overwhelmed by his continually expanding position, Crutchfield had forgotten that Carrington's Battery had recently joined the Army of the Valley. The guns had been

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<sup>59</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenant, I, 439-40.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 86.

placed near the train because the battery had yet to be assigned to a division.<sup>62</sup>

While the Confederates near the Kemper house checked the Union cavalry, Jackson assembled a force to regain the town and bridge. Arriving at the North bridge, the 37th Virginia and Poague's Battery fired a salvo at the Union cavalry. Outnumbered and outgunned, Col. Carroll called for retreat. Yet, it still looked as if Crutchfield would have a short tenure as chief of artillery. Once out of the range of Confederate guns, escape would be highly improbable. If Crutchfield was going to make his move, it needed to happen before he left Port Republic.

As the Union cavalry, with Crutchfield as prisoner, fled the town, the heavy fire continued to wreck havoc among the troopers. It seemed as if the whole Confederate artillery was now targeting them. Shells from Poague's, Wooding's, and Carpenter's batteries littered the air with shrapnel. Confusion abounded as the troopers neared and then entered the ford. The Union soldiers were now more concerned with their own personal safety than keeping track of their two prisoners, Crutchfield and Willis. The opportunity for escape was now. Capitalizing on the moment, Crutchfield turned and dashed back into town and to the safety of the

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<sup>62</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, I, 441.

Confederate lines.<sup>63</sup>

The chief of artillery did have time to contemplate his near imprisonment. A column of infantry from Shields's division was advancing toward Port Republic. Upon seeing that his chief of artillery had escaped, Jackson ordered Crutchfield to direct the fire of the batteries placed on the ridge on the western bank of the Shenandoah River. Shells once reserved for Union cavalry now ripped into the ranks of the infantry. Federal lines wavered and broke. The Union forces quickly retreated back up the road they had come. Crutchfield ordered his batteries to limber up and pursue Shields's forces. His guns followed the Federals on the opposite bank of the river until the enemy entered into the safety of some woods. The batteries returned to their previous positions.<sup>64</sup>

While the raid on Port Republic tapered off, a bigger battle brewed to the northwest. Fremont had attacked Ewell at Cross Keys. Confident that Port Republic was safe, Jackson rode off to the battlefield. Crutchfield, however, remained at Port Republic to see if Shields renewed his attack.

Finally satisfied that Shields had had enough for one

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<sup>63</sup>Allan and Hotchkiss, Campaign of Jackson, 151; Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall, 87.

<sup>64</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 1, 728.



day, Crutchfield galloped to Cross Keyes. Arriving around 2:30 p.m., he immediately discovered that several batteries were low on ammunition. The guns of Courtney and Brockenbrough had already exhausted their supply. Crutchfield immediately ordered all gunners to reduce their rate of fire until ordnance wagons arrived to resupply the batteries. Fortunately for the Confederate army, the problem never became critical. Fremont soon afterward halted his attack.<sup>65</sup>

Hostilities continued the next day. In the early morning of June 9, Jackson attacked Shields's division. With General Charles Winder's brigade and Carpenter's Battery as the spearhead, the Confederates easily brushed back the pickets. About a mile and a half northeast of town, however, the Confederates ran into strong opposition. The Federal army, planted on rising ground, commanded the road from Port Republic with five rifled guns and a smoothbore. Located at a coaling station shrouded by woods and thickets, the Union guns tore into the onrushing Confederates. Arriving on the scene, Crutchfield deployed two of Poague's rifled guns to the left of the road in order to respond to the Federal battery.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 728.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 714, 728.

Just when Crutchfield had finished positioning Poague's guns, Jackson ordered Crutchfield back to Port Republic to find the whereabouts of Taylor's brigade. Upon finding Taylor and informing him to "hurry up", Crutchfield ordered all the rifled guns in the army to the front. He realized that things were not going well for the Confederates. Even with the edge in manpower, they continued to be held in check. Until the Federal battery at the coaling station was disabled, a successful Rebel offensive would not materialize. Poague's and Carpenter's batteries, the only guns presently on the battlefield, were failing to silence the deadly Union guns.<sup>67</sup>

As Crutchfield prepared to deploy the rifled guns, he learned to his utter dismay that several batteries had failed to replenish ammunition from the previous day's battle. The brigade commanders who were responsible to oversee the transfer of supplies had not done so. Because of "their ignorance on the exact locality of our ordnance train" the furious cannoneer in the midst of battle had to supervise the transfer. Those guns already equipped were immediately sent to the front, while the remainder waited at Port Republic.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 728.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

In the meantime, Winder's infantry began to falter in the face of accurate Union fire. The general of the Stonewall Brigade pleaded to Jackson for reinforcements. His men could not hold out much longer. The situation looked bleak. Federal forces advanced on Winder's thinned infantry and Crutchfield's small detachment of artillery. Without proper support, the guns withdrew. One of Poague's guns was captured when it had turned back to slow down the onrushing Federals.

Suddenly Union pursuit vanished. Support from Taylor's brigade arrived. The Louisianans crashed through the woods and flanked the battery at the coaling station. After a violent struggle, Taylor's men captured the guns. As the brigade struggled to keep their newfound prizes, the miffed Crutchfield arrived with first detachment of rifled guns. Immediately the artillery opened up on the Federals. The Union troops began to give away. Confederate reinforcements from Ewell's division along with the artillery's increased firepower overwhelmed Shields's troops. The Union army retreated from the battlefield. The Shenandoah Valley campaign came to its end. So had Crutchfield's first test on the battlefield.

### Chapter III

#### THE PINNACLE OF SUCCESS

Jackson's military successes in the Valley led to his meteoric rise in the Confederate army's hierarchy. Over the next several months, as the general assumed additional commands and responsibilities, so did Crutchfield. With an increase in batteries and personnel, the chief of artillery could no longer operate his guns efficiently without additional staff officers. Gradually, as these staff officers took command of the division batteries, the chief of artillery assumed his proper role: one of supervisor.

While Jackson's victories had secured valuable supplies and boosted the morale of the Southern people, the Army of the Valley's success only served as a temporary elixir. With Union Gen. George McClellan on the doorsteps of Richmond, the Confederacy was still in tremendous peril. If McClellan's grand army had enough time to set up its siege guns, Richmond would fall. The new commander of the Richmond defenses, Gen. Robert E. Lee, understood that only a successful offensive against McClellan's army could alleviate the pressure on the Confederate capital. With that in mind, he called Jackson's forces to Richmond in hopes of smashing the Union army's right flank.

On June 17, Jackson's troops began the long arduous march to the east. For the next eight days, the artillery

and infantry advanced down the Virginia Central Railroad and adjoining roads. Finally, on the June 25, Jackson's corps reached the village of Ashland, a town only twelve miles north of Richmond. As the troops bivouacked for the night, Jackson, with Crutchfield and the remainder of the staff, made final preparations for the next day's battle.<sup>1</sup>

In the early morning of June 26, the troops began their first leg on the march toward Cold Harbor. If Jackson's troops reached their objective as planned, the far right flank of Gen. Fitz John Porter's V Corps, they would force the Federal commander to retreat from his fortified position at Beaver Dam Creek. Once out in the open, the divisions of Jackson, A. P. Hill, James Longstreet, and D. H. Hill could pounce on the vulnerable Federal corps.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, Jackson's march was uncharacteristically slow. It was not until 5:00 p.m. that he reached Hundley's Corner. The general, still several miles from Porter's flank and uncertain of the other divisions' current situation, decided to bivouac for the night. Porter would keep the fortified position for one more night.<sup>3</sup>

The hot summer's night activities led to an unrestful night for Crutchfield, and it compounded the fact that he

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<sup>1</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 552.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen Sears, To the Gates of Richmond (New York, 1992), 194.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 199.

been up since 2:30 the previous morning. Heavy skirmishing between Union and Confederate regiments had required that Brockenbrough's battery enter the fray. With battle imminent the next day, Crutchfield was close to physical exhaustion.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, Porter's corps had retreated from the Beaver Dam fortifications to the Gaines plantation and a creek that fed into a marshy ground called Boatswain's Swamp. The Federal commander stationed his men and artillery on a long plateau that overlooked the swamp. From the height, Union forces commanded all the roads that converged on the area. With his artillery in position, Porter could sweep the roads on which the Confederates would have to advance. Moreover, once the Confederate arrived at the battlefield, many Rebel units would have to cut through thick woods and abatis surrounding the plateau to reach the Union lines. While the Confederates outmanned their opponent nearly two to one at Gaines' Mill, the Union stronghold on the ridge would make it very difficult and costly for the Rebels to dislodge their foe.<sup>5</sup>

On June 27, the Confederate army once again took the initiative and moved on Porter's corps. With Ewell's troops as the vanguard, Jackson's divisions advanced toward Old Cold Harbor. Several miles into the march, to Ewell's

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<sup>4</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 553.

<sup>5</sup>Battles and Leaders, II, 331-33

dismay, he discovered that his guide had mistakenly led them down the wrong road. The division had to retrace its footsteps back to the starting point. While it only took the infantry a comparatively short period of time to reach the correct route, artilleryists faced a difficult and time-consuming task of turning the guns around on a narrow lane surrounded by thick woods. Eventually, with Crutchfield's assistance, the batteries reversed direction. Yet the length of time to achieve the objective resulted in Ewell's batteries becoming separated from the infantry. More importantly, the guide's mistake had "checked the advance of troops and batteries behind." For the second time in two days, Jackson's divisions were slow in reaching their objective.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, in midafternoon, Ewell's division reached the battlefield. The general quickly formed his troops for battle on the edge of the woods. As the Confederates waited for the order to advance, Union shells smashed into the roads and woods. Unfortunately, Crutchfield's artillery could not reply. The bottleneck caused by the earlier mishap on the road had left the chief of artillery with only Courtney's, Brockenbrough's, and Carrington's batteries. These batteries, according to Crutchfield, did not contain "enough guns of a suitable character" to allow for a reply. He would have to wait until the rest of Jackson's guns

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<sup>6</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 560.

arrived.<sup>7</sup>

At 4 p.m., Ewell's troops attacked. However, Crutchfield's batteries could not follow the infantry. The wooded terrain through which the foot soldiers advanced formed an impregnable barrier for artillery. Until a clear route existed, the batteries could only support from a road that ran parallel to the battlefield.<sup>8</sup>

As Ewell's attack progressed, a major problem arose. The road became jammed with fieldpieces, wagons, and ambulances. The narrow lane restricted the wagons and ambulances from maneuvering around the guns. This blocked artillery units still advancing toward the battlefield. Exacerbating the problem even more, dust raised by the various vehicles attracted the attention of Union cannon. The Federal guns promptly enfiladed the road.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, after much delay, Crutchfield's guns responded to the Union batteries. While reconnoitering the terrain, he had discovered a clearing on the far left of Ewell's battle line and had immediately ordered his guns to drive through the thickets that shrouded the opening. Yet only three batteries were able to challenge the enemy's twenty-four cannon.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.; Campbell Brown Memoirs.

<sup>10</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 212.



After the first salvo from the Confederate guns, the Union batteries turned to meet the new threat. Federal gunners concentrated their fire on the three Rebel batteries. Even though the Federal fire was extremely hot, the Confederate artillery maintained its position. Moreover, as Porter's lines began to crack, Crutchfield advanced his guns a section at a time, thus allowing part of the battery to continue firing while the other half moved to a new position.<sup>11</sup>

With his troops outnumbered and exhausted from the last two days of fighting, Porter's lines broke. The V Corps began a full retreat. Crutchfield's artillery, however, could not pursue the fleeing Yankees. The majority of Jackson's guns still could not enter the battlefield because of obstructions blocking the road. In addition, the "jaded condition of the horses" for the batteries already on the field limited any possible pursuit from them. The opportunity to inflict "extreme losses" on the Federals passed. Porter's men quickly crossed over Chickahominy River to the safety of McClellan's army.<sup>12</sup>

Even though Gaines' Mill was a logistical nightmare for the chief of artillery, Crutchfield was extremely satisfied with the efficiency and conduct of Ewell's batteries. More importantly, he learned a valuable lesson at Gaines's Mill.

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<sup>11</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 560.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

For the first time he experienced the difficulties of using artillery in central Virginia. The woods and thickets that characterized much of the terrain placed severe limitations on artillery. In future battles, the Crutchfield would have to prepare his units for the geographical characteristics of the region.

The defeat of Porter corps frightened the commanding general of the Union army. McClellan, under the delusion that Confederate forces greatly outnumbered his own, began retreating toward the James River and to the safety of the Union gunboats. For Lee the opportunity to strike the final blow was now because the Union army was out in the open. On June 29, Lee ordered Jackson to harass and hinder the Union rearguard while he massed the remainder of his forces in preparation for an all out attack on McClellan's army at Glendale.<sup>13</sup>

Receiving his orders, Jackson began his pursuit. Shortly after 9:30 a.m., on June 30, the Army of the Valley entered a quagmire known as White Oak Swamp. As the Confederates advanced, members of the lead element noticed on the horizon wisps of smoke coming from a burning corduroy bridge. Serving as a signal that Federals were nearby, Jackson's men cautiously crept forward. When they neared the creek which the bridge had previously spanned, the spatter of Union sharpshooter rifles and the thunder of

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<sup>13</sup>Sears, Gates of Richmond, 277-78.

artillery filled the air. For the time being, the Confederate advance was checked; Federals commanded the crossing.<sup>14</sup>

The problem that Jackson faced in forcing a crossing was that the Federals commanded such a strong position. Sharpshooters hid behind trees that lined the creek, and Union artillery, stationed on top of a hill, had an excellent line of fire. Moreover, on his side of the stream, Jackson could not find a suitable area to deploy his infantry. Therefore, the onus was on Crutchfield and his batteries to disperse the enemy.<sup>15</sup>

After reconnoitering the area, Crutchfield found the ideal spot to deploy his guns. It was a clearing on top of a tree-covered hill to the right of the road. From this vantage point, Crutchfield could bring in his guns without informing the enemy of his actions. One minor setback existed to this position: it would take considerable time to cut a path to the clearing.<sup>16</sup>

As the main body of the army waited by the side of the road, a detachment of Confederates chiseled a road up the side of the hill. In the early afternoon, the hard work came to an end. Twenty-three guns of Gen. D. H. Hill's batteries went into position. Except for the occasional

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<sup>14</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 561.

<sup>15</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 217,

<sup>16</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 561

report of the Union snipers, the area had been quiet since the initial confrontation. At 1:45 p.m., this situation dramatically changed. Crutchfield ordered his guns to fire.<sup>17</sup>

A magnificent barrage broke the silence of the hot summer day. Union soldiers lulled by inactivity were startled and terrified by the bombardment. Confusion and destruction abounded. Horses and mules not killed bolted off in all different directions. The infantry scurried for cover. A shell decapitated one unlucky soldier in the 2nd Delaware, the force of the blast throwing the head nearly twenty yards. More importantly, a deluge of shells struck the Union artillery. A shell disabled a Parrott gun, and the other cannons unwilling to endure the hot fire retreated after firing a few haphazard rounds. Crutchfield's guns had opened up a window of opportunity for the cavalry to cross the stream.<sup>18</sup>

With the retreat of the Union artillery, Crutchfield ordered Wooding's Battery down the road to the creek. Once unlimbered, the artillery chief hoped that a barrage from Wooding's guns would remove the sharpshooters hidden behind trees covering the opposite bank, and thus allow the Confederate cavalry to cross unimpeded. As the battery fired into the forest at close range, Col. Thomas Munford's

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Sears, Gates of Richmond, 286; O.R., XI, pt. 2, 561.

cavalry forded the stream. Shortly after reaching the opposite bank, however, Union shells exploded into the expeditionary force. Federal reinforcements had arrived in the form of eighteen cannons.<sup>19</sup>

Sitting like ducks in a pond, the exposed contingent of cavalry and the battery immediately recognized their vicarious position and withdrew. The window of opportunity had for the moment closed. In the meantime, Crutchfield and his gunners scanned the opposing area for the whereabouts of the new threat. For a few moments, the Confederates could not find the Federal guns. Union fieldpieces were concealed from sight "by a thick intervening wood." Eventually, the bark of Union cannons guided the Confederates to the exact location of the batteries. Crutchfield's guns responded, and an artillery duel began between the two opposing forces that continued until 9 p.m..<sup>20</sup>

The physical results of the cannonade for both sides was negligible. Neither side inflicted many casualties or disabled any guns. Yet tactically the duel was successful for the Yankees because it halted Jackson's advance. On the other hand, the Confederates gained nothing by the cannonade; it actually adversely effected Jackson's batteries.

In all prudence, Crutchfield should have halted the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 561, 557.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 561; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 219.

Confederate response shortly after it began. With the Federals covered from view by the woods, the Southern guns could only fire in the general direction of the enemy. Realistically, little chance existed of inflicting damage. Moreover, the majority of the guns were smoothbore. It was questionable whether or not these guns could accurately reach the enemy's line. Instead of saving ammunition for the next battle, Crutchfield's batteries ended up expending large quantities of a valuable commodity which at the moment they could not replace. In the end, the only benefit from the cannonade was the practice given to the batteries.<sup>21</sup>

Early the next morning Jackson's army pressed forward. Federals who had blocked the path the day before had retreated in the direction of Malvern Hill. As the army advanced, however, it was without Hill's six batteries and the chief of artillery. Out of ammunition from the duel at White Oak Swamp, the batteries headed in the opposite direction to Seven Pines to replenish supplies. Crutchfield, on the other hand, was sick. The activities of the campaign had taken a toll on his health. Unfit for active duty, he would miss the Confederate defeat at Malvern Hill.<sup>22</sup>

Many things accounted for the loss at Malvern Hill.

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<sup>21</sup>E. P. Alexander, Military Memoirs of a Confederate (Bloomington, IN, 1962), 148; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 218.

<sup>22</sup>O.R., XI, pt. 2, 562, 653.

Artillery and perhaps Crutchfield personally could share part of the blame. The chief of artillery for the Union army, Gen. Henry Hunt, had magnificently deployed his guns on the battlefield. Every Rebel charge met with heavy blasts from Union cannon. The Confederate artillery, whose job was to silence these guns, could not do so. Jackson's own artillery was shorthanded. According to Col. Campbell Brown, a member of Ewell's staff, Crutchfield "had frittered away a great quantity of ammunition" the day before. While in a sense this was true, the superior quality and quantity of the Union guns, and their strong position on the battlefield, made it nearly impossible for the Confederate army to carry the day.<sup>23</sup>

After a week of continuous battles, the two sides ceased hostilities and regrouped. During this break in the action, Crutchfield reorganized his artillery. The recent campaign had brought to his attention some "grave defects" in the artillery structure. In addition, he also had received several new batteries. Therefore, the chief of artillery's first line of business was to assign the new units to either Jackson's or Ewell's division. More importantly, however, Crutchfield promoted Maj. R. Snowden Andrews and Maj. A. R. Courtney to divisional command. Andrews would command the artillery in Winder's division and Courtney would do the same with Ewell's batteries.

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<sup>23</sup>Campbell Brown Memoirs.

These battalion commanders would help Crutchfield manage his growing artillery corps. He was confident that Andrews and Courtney could help alleviate the rising amount of work and responsibilities that came with his enlarged command. With his new officers, Crutchfield would no longer have to wait to see if his orders were carried out in battle. His lieutenants could concentrate or deploy the artillery for him. It now enabled Crutchfield to supervise Jackson's artillery during a fight.<sup>24</sup>

After a brief respite in Richmond, Jackson's divisions headed northwest to Gordonsville to check the advance of General John Pope's Army of Virginia. Arriving on July 19, Jackson planned to strike his enemy as soon as possible. Yet after a reconnaissance of Pope's army, he realized that more men would be required to even attempt such an idea. Jackson at once requested reinforcements. The commander of the Army of Northern Virginia promptly sent A. P. Hill's division to Gordonsville. With Hill reaching Jackson's camp on July 27, Crutchfield's command once again expanded. Hill's artillery battalion contained four additional batteries.<sup>25</sup>

After almost two weeks of inactivity, Jackson's troops received orders to march toward Culpeper Courthouse.

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<sup>24</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 241, 244.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 245. The battalion consisted of Pegram's, Hardy's, Braxton's, and Latham's batteries. Lieutenant Col. Reuben Lindsay Walker was the battalion commander.



Through various intelligence sources the general had discovered that Pope's army was divided in two parts. Jackson hoped to defeat one section, Banks's corps located near Culpeper, before the other half of Pope's army could supply support.<sup>26</sup>

On June 9, Jackson's corps rose early. The lead elements of the column shuffled toward Culpeper. By 7 a.m. the temperature had reached eighty degrees. For Jackson's corps this particularly hot morning was just a taste of things to come. Seven hours later the temperature would soar up to nearly a hundred degrees.<sup>27</sup>

When the Confederates approached Cedar Mountain, Jackson's vanguard engaged the pickets of Banks's corps. Immediately, the general sent orders to his commanders to prepare for battle. As the Confederate infantry deployed, Maj. Andrews, whose division formed Jackson's left, ordered all of the rifled guns under his command to the front. Twelve Union guns, posted on a ridge opposite the Culpeper Road, were offering stiff resistance. If an infantry assault was going to work, these guns needed to be silenced or at least occupied.<sup>28</sup>

Positioning his guns near the mouth of the road and in

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<sup>26</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 2, 182.

<sup>27</sup>Robert Krick, Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain (Chapel Hill, 1990), 34.

<sup>28</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 2, 186.

a clump of woods, Winder's batteries responded to the Union guns. After firing several errant rounds, the Confederate gunners found their range. A violent artillery duel ensued that would last for over two hours. The position that Andrews had chosen to deploy his weapons, however, was not the best for the task. Upon arriving on the scene, Crutchfield had spied a better position for the artillery. It was a rise of ground situated 250 yards in front and to the right of the previous spot. The chief of artillery deployed the guns to the new position.<sup>29</sup>

As the duel continued, Crutchfield gave his attention to the center of Jackson's line and the rifled guns of Dement, D'Aquin, and Brown. The gunners who were only 500 yards from Union lines at the moment occupied the attention of several Union batteries with their accurate fire. More importantly, these batteries were serving as a stopgap against a possible Federal incursion on the Confederate center. A wide gap existed between Gen. Jubal Early's division and that of Ewell's forces.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile on the far right, the long range salvos of Maj. Courtney's guns were inflicting considerable damage to the Yankee batteries. On an elevated ridge on Cedar Mountain, Confederate guns had the best vantage point on the

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 76; Moore, Cannoneer Under Stonewall Jackson, 98; O.R., XII, pt. 2, 186.

<sup>30</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 248.

battlefield. Moreover, with the fire from the guns in the center and the left, the addition of Courtney's guns produced a converging and damaging fire against the Union batteries.

After nearly two hours of continuous fire, the artillery on both sides dramatically reduced the rate of fire. Ammunition was running low. It was now the infantry's turn to take center stage and attack. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, it was not their foot soldiers who did so. Pope's army took the initiative.

At 5:45 p.m., Gen. Christopher Augur's division smashed into Jackson's center and left flank. The fighting was fierce, and the Confederate left flank began to crack. When the Federals advanced on the Confederate center, Crutchfield found himself deploying and directing the fire of nearby guns. Wave after wave of Union soldiers charged. The gunners, now under a withering fire, pounded the onrushing bluecoats with canister. Huge gaps opened up in the Union lines, but the enemy kept coming.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, a minor problem emerged that endangered the Confederate defense. Several gun crews had suffered tremendous casualties not only from the repeated assaults but also from the sweltering heat. As a result, shortage of manpower made some guns barely operational. If additional

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<sup>31</sup>Freemen, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 36; O.R., XII, pt. 2, 187.

gunners went down, the defenders might possibly lose operation of a gun or two. Fortunately, the problem never intensified. The combination of artillery fire and infantry musketry repelled the Union forces one last time.<sup>32</sup>

On the rest of the Jackson's line the news was just as good. Troops on the left flank finally beat back the Federals after a particularly bloody fight. Yet in doing so, Crutchfield lost his most capable lieutenant. While directing the fire against the onrushing enemy, Maj. Andrews was struck by a shell burst and severely wounded. Nevertheless, those who died or received wounds had not done so in vain. Confederate forces who were now the attackers carried the field and the day.<sup>33</sup>

Under the supervision of Crutchfield, the batteries of Pegram, Fleet, Braxton, and Latimer began a pursuit. Rattling down the road, they abruptly halted when the force came upon a large body of woods. Worried that Union soldiers might be lying in wait, Crutchfield ordered his guns to unlimber and fire several rounds into the forest.<sup>34</sup>

Shells ripped into the woods. Trees splintered and collapsed. Slivers of wood became deadly missiles. After an extensive and continuous fire, Jackson and Crutchfield were satisfied that the barrage had cleared the woods.

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<sup>32</sup>Krick, Cedar Mountain, 134-35.

<sup>33</sup>Moore, Cannoneer Under Stonewall, 98.

<sup>34</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 2, 187.

Pegram's Battery and an infantry brigade cautiously inched forward. After advancing nearly a quarter of a mile, the Confederates made contact. Pegram's Battery, in vain, began shelling the Union encampment. Federal guns immediately replied and a heavy cannonade ensued. The Confederate battery suffered severe casualties and withdrew the next morning.<sup>35</sup>

Crutchfield was pleased at how his artillery had performed at Cedar Mountain. His divisional commanders had capably handled their guns and thereby allowed Crutchfield to assume role of supervisor. He could now cover the whole battlefield and make the necessary adjustments needed during the ebb and flow of combat. Crutchfield's presence was no longer required to deploy and direct the fire of a single battery. Of course, at times, he would have to correct mistakes or assume command of a section of artillery, but overall for the first time at Cedar Mountain he had the freedom to act as supervisor.

While Pope's army had been beaten, it still remained a dangerous threat to Lee. McClellan's delusions had for the moment taken his army away as a viable threat. Therefore, Lee moved the majority of Longstreet's troops to the Rapidan River in order to link with Jackson's forces. The commander of the Army of Northern Virginia hoped to crush Pope's army before any reinforcements could arrive.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

Following Cedar Mountain, the next week and a half was extremely busy for Crutchfield. The eleven batteries he had commanded increased into twenty-one. On top of the new arrivals, the chief of artillery needed to ensure that his ammunition stores were full because a new offensive was in the making. Last but not least, Crutchfield had to find a competent replacement to fill Maj. Andrews' position. After a quick search, he selected Maj. L. M. Shumaker.<sup>36</sup>

Near the end of August, Jackson's troops once again were on the march. Crossing the Rapidan, the forces arrived near the battlefield where Jackson had first gained fame. Pope's army soon followed. On August 28, the Second Manassas campaign began with Jackson's attack on Groveton. For the next two days, Pope's troops assaulted the Confederate lines. Each time the Rebels repelled the attacker and inflicted heavy losses. Late on August 30, the Army of Northern Virginia took the initiative and attacked. Pope's army fled the field and in shambles retreated back toward Washington.

In the victory at Second Manassas, the artillery could accept a large part of the credit. Time after time, the guns ripped into advancing ranks of the Union soldiers. Crutchfield, riding the lines, deployed and positioned his battalions to meet each threat. When Federals tried a new direction of attack, the chief of artillery and his

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<sup>36</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 259.

lieutenants shifted the guns to greet the foe. At Second Manassas, the organizational problems that had recently plagued the artillery did not exist. Crutchfield and his division commanders worked and communicated well with one another. Because of that, the artillery during ensuing battles produced a more concentrated fire.<sup>37</sup>

For the Army of Northern Virginia, there was no time to rest or regroup after the victory at Second Manassas. The army was headed north toward Maryland. As Longstreet's corps entered Maryland, Jackson and his men embarked on a mission to capture the garrison of 11,000 Union soldiers at Harpers Ferry. If Jackson's troops could gain control of the heights that surrounded the garrison, it would be only a matter of time before the Federals would have to surrender.

On September 13, Jackson's column came into view of Harpers Ferry. Scouting ahead, Jackson's staff discovered that the majority of the Federals were entrenched on Bolivar Heights. The Union line ran from the Potomac River to the Shenandoah River. While Jackson's men prepared to assault the Union breastworks, across the rivers the divisions of Gens. Lafayette McLaws and John Walker had occupied Maryland Heights and Loudoun Heights. The fist was closing on the Federals, but the fortifications on Bolivar Heights still blocked the Confederates from closing the circle.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>O.R., XII, pt. 2, 652-53.

<sup>38</sup>O.R., XIX, pt. 1, 953.

During that night, Crutchfield with ten guns from the batteries of Dement, Brown, Garber, and Latimer forded the Shenandoah River and landed on the eastern bank. Their purpose was to station the guns at the base of Loudoun Heights "so as to attack the formidable fortifications from reverse." First, however, the Confederates had to make a road through the dense scrub and trees. After hours of back-breaking work, Crutchfield got his guns in position. Ten fieldpieces were now behind the enemy's line.<sup>39</sup>

At dawn the next morning, with Rebel artillery aimed at Bolivar Heights from a variety of different directions, the Confederate guns commenced firing. Noise and shells struck the Yankees. Crutchfield, whose guns were at the moment still being deployed, joined the bombardment shortly thereafter. His cannon enfiladed several Union fieldpieces; and before an hour had past, the Yankee guns were silenced. Changing targets, Crutchfield's pieces peppered the Union entrenchments. Federals under a withering fire retreated from their breastworks. Upon losing their only tenable ground, the Federals quickly raised a white flag.<sup>40</sup>

With the fall of Harpers Ferry, the Army of Northern Virginia confiscated invaluable supplies and equipment. The artillery alone were the recipients of seventy-three

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 961; William Allan, "First Maryland Campaign," Southern Historical Society Papers, XIV (1886), 109.

<sup>40</sup>O.R., XIX, pt. 1, 962.



cannons; to which a good percentage of the pieces were rifled guns. In addition to the cannon, the artillery also acquired desperately needed caissons, harnesses, and ammunition.<sup>41</sup>

For Jackson's men, however, there was no time to enjoy the fruits of success. McClellan's army was threatening Longstreet's corps at a village called Sharpsburg. If Lee did not rejoin his army immediately, a good possibility existed that Longstreet's corps might be overwhelmed. Therefore, he ordered Jackson's forces to Sharpsburg with all possible haste. In the early morning of September 16, and to the relief of Lee, Jackson arrived at Sharpsburg.<sup>42</sup>

Crutchfield was not with the corps. After spending September 15 and part of the next day at Harpers Ferry seeing to the needs of several broken down batteries, Crutchfield reached Shepardstown late in the evening. It was here that he ran into Gen. William N. Pendelton. The chief artillerist for the Army of Northern Virginia ordered Crutchfield to return to Harpers Ferry. The army at Sharpsburg desperately needed the captured ammunition and guns. Almost all of the batteries at the battlefield were "in an inefficient condition from hard marching and previous

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 955.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

fighting."<sup>43</sup>

Late that night or early the next morning, Crutchfield returned to Harpers Ferry. With some difficulty, Crutchfield located the quartermaster in charge of the guns. The artillerist hoped that he and his guns would be on the road soon. Yet to his dismay, in the quartermaster's haste to move his cargo, he had mismatched caissons with guns. After several futile hours of trying to correct the situation, Crutchfield gave up. Instead of using the new guns to form several batteries, the artillery chief issued new horses and replenished the ammunition of the disabled batteries that had been previously left behind. In midafternoon, the batteries finally left Harpers Ferry. Crutchfield rode ahead but arrived too late to participate in the battle. He had missed the bloodiest day in American history and an opportunity to showcase his abilities as an artillerist.<sup>44</sup>

As the Confederate army slowly limped back to Virginia, a serious crisis was in the making. The rigors of the summer's campaign had killed or broken down most of the horses. Replacements were unavailable. In late September, Crutchfield had to declare every battery in D. H. Hill's division unfit for active service until they were refitted.

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 962-63. The batteries of Brown, Dement, and Latimer had been left at Harpers Ferry because of the weak condition of their horses.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 963.

Moreover, a portion of the batteries that remained active did not do so at full strength. The Staunton Artillery had to turn in two of four guns because of lack of horses and other materials. Without replacements or an adequate time to rest the animals, Crutchfield's units were becoming drained of their effectiveness.<sup>45</sup>

Fortunately the Army of the Potomac had failed to follow up its success. When the Confederates crossed the Potomac River unscathed, Crutchfield finally had the opportunity to rest the artillery horses. In addition, the artillery chief had time to requisition new supplies for the batteries. Harnesses, caissons, and a variety of other items were desperately needed.

As the days grew shorter and colder, the tedium of camp life descended along the Rappahannock River. Winter was fast approaching and the likelihood of another major battle was unlikely. Time seemed to stand still for the common soldier. Even the members of Jackson's staff discovered that they had some free time on their hands.

During this lull, Crutchfield along with his tentmates, Dr. Hunter McGuire and Alexander "Sandie" Pendelton, formed a literary society. The witty and droll chief of artillery was a camp favorite when it came to Shakespeare. His ability to recite verbatim the English bard's passages

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<sup>45</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 327-28; Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Sept. 21, 1862, Pendelton Papers, UNC.

amazed his mates. According to Pendelton, Crutchfield was "more conversant with it than anyone I ever saw, reconveying by heart every passage, that can be called for."<sup>46</sup>

When the group was not reading classical literature, they read northern newspapers. However, this they did out of the sight of Jackson, because the general believed that newspapers offered a valuable source of intelligence about the enemy. When Jackson found Yankee newspapers floating among his staff officers, he immediately sent them to Lee.<sup>47</sup>

Late in November, 1862, the Army of the Potomac went into action under a new commander, Gen. Ambrose Burnside. Unlike his predecessor, Burnside was willing to take to the offensive. On November 21, Sumner's grand division reached the outskirts of Fredericksburg with the remainder of the Federal army close behind.

When the Confederate army learned of the Union army's advance, Lee deployed his troops on the heights above and to the east of the town. Jackson's corps, the right half of Lee's army, was about a mile and a half south of town on a "gentle elevation" above Hamilton Crossing. On December 11, Gen. William Franklin's grand Union division crossed unimpeded over the Rappahannock. The Federals were now

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<sup>46</sup>Sandie Pendelton to mother, Nov. 19, 1862, ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

within easy striking distance of Jackson. Battle was imminent.<sup>48</sup>

At 10:00 a.m, on the morning of the December 13, Burnside's troops commenced the battle of Fredericksburg. Crutchfield's gunners were ready. The chief of artillery had stationed fourteen guns on the right of Jackson's line under the command of Col. Walker. On the left, twenty-one guns commanded the area known as Deep Run. If the Yankees attacked the center, the guns from both sides could turn and produce a withering crossfire. Crutchfield also held several batteries back in reserve in case of emergency.<sup>49</sup>

The Federals opened with a large cannonade. Walker's guns which were extremely vulnerable to the fire, took punishment. Crutchfield's guns, however, did not respond to the Union barrage. The chief of artillery wanted to save his ammunition for the infantry. Meanwhile, Franklin uncertain of what he faced on Jackson's left side of the line deployed skirmishers to reconnoiter the area.<sup>50</sup>

When the Federals advanced, they came under a withering fire from Crutchfield's guns. Canister tore huge gaps in the line. However when the Confederate artillery responded to the probe, Union guns discovered their position. Federal

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<sup>48</sup>Battle and Leaders, II, 72.

<sup>49</sup>O.R., XXI, 637.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 636-37.

batteries responded with a deadly and accurate fire on Crutchfield's guns. Yankee sharpshooters added to the mix. Horses and artillerists fell at an alarming rate. The detachment of infantry that was suppose to support and protect the gunners did a poor job in ferreting out the sharpshooters. After receiving considerable damage, the batteries of Brockenbrough and Raine withdrew.<sup>51</sup>

Crutchfield ordered several guns to the front to replace the batteries. These fresh units, alongside Gen. Evander Law's infantry brigade, repulsed the advancing infantry and sharpshooters. The attack on the left had all but fizzled out.

On the other end of Jackson's line, Maj. John Pelham had bravely thrown two guns on a plain to the right of the Confederate defenses. For a short time, Pelham's guns halted the advance of a Federal division. The artillerist's shells decimated the blue lines. However, the fire from several Union batteries were too much for the valiant gun crew to handle. Unwillingly, Pelham withdrew his guns from the position.

With Pelham's guns withdrawn from the plain, and believing that Walker's batteries had been destroyed by the opening cannonade, Franklin ordered his troops to advance on Jackson's right. The truth was that while batteries had suffered some damage, the guns were still capable of

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 637.

offering a deadly reception to the advancing Yankees.<sup>52</sup>

When the Federals came into range, Walker's artillery and the redeployed guns of Pelham produced a hot crossfire. Confederate shells pounded into the blue waves. Yet, the Yankees continued forward. As the Federals came closer to the Rebel line, A. P. Hill's infantry entered the fray. After intense fighting, the Federal lines faltered and broke. Confederate shells peppered the retreating Yankees. The day had been won, and the artillery could accept a large part of the credit.

After the bloody repulse at Fredericksburg, both sides settled into winter quarters. Inclimate weather made any major movements unfeasible. Still greatly concerned about the weak condition of his horses, Crutchfield supervised the building of stables. Although these would protect the animals from harsh weather, the lack of forage was a greater endangerment to the welfare of the horses. On several occasions, Crutchfield had to send Lt. John Hampden Chamberlayne to Richmond to expedite his requisitions because of the "pressing importance" for the valuable commodity.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to problems with horses, Crutchfield had to arrest Maj. Courtney for being absent without leave.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 638.

<sup>53</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Jan. 3, 1863, Pendelton Papers, UNC.

Unwilling to let his discipline become lax, the artillery chief preferred court-martial charges against his battalion commander. At the same time as the trial, the Army of Northern Virginia's artillery corps underwent reorganization. The rapid expansion of the artillery in the last year had not included a sufficient number of officers to command its ranks. For the Second Corps, Pendelton asked Crutchfield to recommend officers whom he felt worthy of promotion. When nominating candidates, a few feathers became ruffled. Crutchfield had overlooked several well-known officers. In formulating his recommendations, the artillery chief based his decision not only on the individual's ability as an artillerist but also as an administrator.<sup>54</sup>

While Crutchfield was forming his promotion list for Pendelton's review, Jackson campaigned to get his chief of artillery promoted to brigadier general. Jackson believed that Crutchfield's ability and handling of a large number of guns required the government to bestow the honor on the cannoneer. The government, however, ignored Jackson's request.<sup>55</sup>

After several months of inactivity, the Union army (now under the command of Joseph Hooker) made a sweeping move

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<sup>54</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Jan. 30, 1863, Pendelton Papers, UNC; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 423.

<sup>55</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 451-52.



against Lee's left flank. On April 29, the first elements of Hooker's army crossed the Rapidan. The Army of the Potomac was congregating in the Wilderness at a crossroad known as Chancellorsville.

Lee left only a sufficient number of troops he deemed necessary to guard the heights over Fredericksburg and moved with the remainder of his army toward Chancellorsville to meet Hooker's threat. The commander of the Army of Northern Virginia wanted to block Hooker from exiting the wooded terrain. If the Union army was able to confront Lee out in the open, they could assail the numerically inferior Confederates who no longer had the benefit of entrenchments.<sup>56</sup>

On May 1, Jackson's corps advanced toward Chancellorsville on the Plank Road. Up ahead, the divisions of McLaws and Anderson were already engaged with the enemy. The fighting wavered back and forth. With the arrival of Jackson's forces, however, the Federal advance was halted. Hooker broke under pressure and fell back in indecision to Chancellorsville.

That night, Lee and Jackson conferred on the possibilities for attacking Hooker the next day. They both believed that a frontal assault was foolhardy because of the strength of Union center. However, Confederate cavalry reports had suggested that the Union right flank was

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<sup>56</sup>O.R., XXV, pt. 1, 797.

vulnerable to attack. If Jackson's corps could march around the Union forces at Chancellorsville without notice, he could hit the tail end of the right flank. Seeing it as their best option, Jackson and Lee agreed to implement the plan.<sup>57</sup>

In the early morning of May 2, Jackson began the twelve mile march around the Union army's right flank. At 2:30 p.m., the lead elements of Jackson's corps reached the Orange Turnpike. The Confederate forces were closing in on the Army of the Potomac's right flank. In a couple hours, the Rebels would be prepared to pounce on the unsuspecting foe.<sup>58</sup>

As Jackson began forming the battle lines on and adjacent to the Turnpike, Crutchfield ordered his guns to line the Brock Road. Unfortunately for the artillerists, the wooded terrain would not permit them to participate in the opening strike. However, the chief of artillery still wanted his crews prepared and organized so if called upon to enter battle, they could do so without confusion.<sup>59</sup>

At 5:15 p.m., Rodes's division crashed through the Wilderness toward the end of Gen. Oliver Howard's XI Corps. Union troops fired several quick volleys and fled. As the

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<sup>57</sup>Ernest Furguson, Chancellorsville 1863 (New York, 1992), 139.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 166.

<sup>59</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 472.

Rebels pushed forward, Gen. Jeb Stuart's horse artillery clattered down the Turnpike and offered support to the infantry.

As the battle progressed, Crutchfield began advancing his guns. Leaving Col. Thomas Carter in charge of moving the main body of artillery, Crutchfield scurried forward with two Napoleons and a Parrott. When the small unit reached the front line, Crutchfield unlimbered the three guns on the Turnpike. General Rodes had just informed the artillery chief that no Union troops were between the Confederate lines and the road junction at Chancellorsville. With information in hand, Crutchfield ordered his guns to fire at a height known as Fairview. He wanted to discover what the Federals had posted on the ridge.<sup>60</sup>

When Confederate shells smashed into Fairview, it awoke a giant. The Union army had posted forty-three cannons at that position. After the first barrage, a Union battery promptly replied to Crutchfield's guns. Yankee shells raked the road with accurate fire. General James Lane's brigade, trying to reorganize on the road, scurried into the woods. The shelling was wreaking havoc inside the Confederate lines. Finally, the overwhelmed Confederate guns fell silent. With that, the Union bombardment halted.<sup>61</sup>

As darkness enveloped the battlefield, both

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<sup>60</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 491; O.R., XXV, pt. 1, 941.

<sup>61</sup>Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 489.

Confederate and Union forces were in disarray. For the moment, the Rebels were attempting to reform their battle lines. Jackson ordered Gen. A. P. Hill's division to the front to replace Rodes's division. With the arrival of Hill's men, the Confederate forces could once again assume the offensive.

Before Jackson would allow his commanders to renew the attack, however, he wanted to ascertain the enemy position. A night attack was a risky venture; yet the Federals were demoralized, and the opportunity to continue the advance was favorable. Jackson, brimming with excitement, decided that he would personally lead the scouting party. With a bright moon offering light, he and several members of the staff embarked on a reconnaissance mission. Crutchfield was not with them.<sup>62</sup>

Already in front of the Confederate lines, the chief of artillery had just ordered Capt. Marcellus Moorman's horse artillery to withdraw and rejoin its unit. Crutchfield was going to replace it with a battery from the Second Corps. As Crutchfield was trying to organize his artillery on the Turnpike, Jackson's scouting party rode past. Jackson headed east down the road until he came to an old schoolhouse located on a crossroads. One road ran northeast towards Bullock's Farm, while the other--Mountain Road--

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<sup>62</sup>Edward Stackpole, Chancellorsville: Lee's Greatest Battle (Harrisburg, PA, 1958), 258.

paralleled the Orange Turnpike. Even though having found a familiar landmark, Jackson was still uncertain of the precise location of the Yankees. He therefore decided to continue on with the expedition, and turned onto the Mountain Road.<sup>63</sup>

As the nervous party inched down the road, the thud of axes filled the night air. Trees were coming down for Federal breastworks. Excited by this new information, Jackson and his staff turned and trotted back toward their line. If Hill's attack was going to succeed, he would have to attack before the Federal defenses were made any stronger.<sup>64</sup>

Retracing the route, the scouting party neared the Confederate line. Suddenly a large crackle of rifle fire erupted over Crutchfield's head. A North Carolina regiment stationed adjacent to the Turnpike had mistaken Jackson and his staff for Union cavalry. Several in the party were hit. Jackson survived the initial volley. Moments later, however, Jackson reeled in the saddle from three bullet.<sup>65</sup>

Several staff members who had survived volleys huddled around the wounded general. After Capt. James P. Smith gave

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<sup>63</sup>Marcellus Moorman, "The Fatal Wounding of General Stonewall Jackson," Southern Historical Society Papers, XXX (1902), 113; Stackpole, Chancellorsville, 258.

<sup>64</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 506.

<sup>65</sup>J. G. Morrison, "Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville," Confederate Veteran, XIII (1905), 230.

some basic medical treatment, the party carried Jackson back toward Confederate lines. However, the commotion on the Turnpike had drawn the attention of the Federals. Uncertain in what was happening, a Union battery sprayed the road with grapeshot.<sup>66</sup>

With shells bursting up and down the road, and deadly shrapnel filling the air, Crutchfield fell wounded. Canister shot had shattered a thigh bone. In agonizing pain, Crutchfield rode to the safety of the Confederate lines. When about 150 yards or so behind the pickets, the suffering chief of artillery encountered Capt. Moorman. Crutchfield cried: "Captain, please assist me to dismount!"<sup>67</sup>

Gingerly, Moorman lifted his wounded comrade off the horse and carried him to an ambulance. Dr. Hunter McGuire arrived on the scene and stated that stated Crutchfield "had been wounded very seriously in the leg, and was suffering intensely." Yet before the ambulance left the front lines, another injured officer was placed inside the vehicle. He was Jackson.<sup>68</sup>

As the ambulance rolled down the road, every jolt intensified the pain of the wound. Jackson, who had

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<sup>66</sup>Battles and Leaders, III, 211.

<sup>67</sup>M. N. Moorman, "The Fatal Wounding of General Stonewall Jackson," 114.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.; Hunter McGuire, "Death of Stonewall Jackson," Southern Historical Society Papers, XIV (1886), 156.

discovered the identity of his traveling companion, worried about his friend. Crutchfield's groaning intensified the as the party traveled. Finally after a particularly loud and painful cry, Jackson "directed the ambulance to stop ... to see if something could not be done for his relief."<sup>69</sup>

The ambulance at long last rolled into the hospital. Two shining stars who were at the pinnacle of success had fallen in one night.

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

Chapter IV  
THE FINAL ACT

It was a long and agonizing night in the field hospital. Yet Crutchfield was fortunate: he would not lose his leg. The Union shrapnel that had shattered the thigh bone had missed vital arteries. However, bone splinters pressed against the raw nerves and caused immense pain. For the first couple of days, the wounded artillerist lapsed in and out of consciousness. The rudimentary skills of the doctors and the lack of medical supplies in the field hospital could not alleviate the excruciating pain. In order to recuperate properly, the wounded artillerist would need several months of bed rest.<sup>1</sup>

On May 4, Crutchfield and Jackson were transported to Guiney Station. General Lee wanted the wounded Jackson moved to a position farther away from the dangers of the front. With Crutchfield's old friend, Jedediah Hotchkiss,

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<sup>1</sup>The writer found no evidence of Crutchfield losing his leg. William Nelson Pendelton claimed that Crutchfield went to Lexington to have his shattered bones treated by Dr. Hunter McGuire's father. Moreover, Sandie Pendelton who visited Crutchfield shortly after the wounding, did not mention anything about the cannoneer missing a leg. Pendelton believed that in a year or so, the artillerist would again be fit for active service. Finally, Crutchfield's own correspondence never mentions any loss of a limb.



leading the way, the party traversed twenty-seven miles of rough road. The trip was extremely hard on both patients. Crutchfield's shattered leg and nerves could feel every bump on the road. Fortunately for the artillerist, Dr. Hunter McGuire had placed a mattress on the flooring of the ambulance. The cushion helped absorb some of the shock during the course of the trip.<sup>2</sup>

With Federals retreating back across the Rappahannock after the defeat at Chancellorsville, Spotsylvania County was free of Union control. Crutchfield could now return to his old home, "Green Branch," to recuperate. Once again the young colonel spent an agonizing day traveling the country roads of Spotsylvania County. Finally, after what seemed an eternity, the wounded cannoneer reached his destination.

Day after day, Crutchfield lay prostrate while his body began the slow process of healing. Near the end of May, his old friend from Lexington, John Barclay, came to the house. Sandie Pendelton had informed him of Crutchfield's wounding. Barclay was going to take his disabled friend back to Lexington, where Crutchfield could receive better medical care. Dr. Hunter McGuire's father

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<sup>2</sup>Mcdonald, Make Me a Map, 140; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, II, 636-37, 640.

could tend to the young man's wound and needs.<sup>3</sup>

Before Crutchfield left "Green Branch," his closest friend in the army, Sandie Pendelton, paid a visit. During the past three weeks, Pendelton had missed the company of the artillerist. The two spent most of a day conversing on various subjects. "Crutch," Pendelton later recalled, was "in elegant spirits." The artillery chief was certain that he would don the Confederate uniform once again. As sunset fell, the two friends parted company. A few days later, Barclay and Crutchfield embarked on a long and circuitous trip to Lexington.<sup>4</sup>

Bedridden for at least another month, Crutchfield spent his time reading, chatting with friends and completing some unfinished business concerning his command. He was still chief of artillery for the Second Corps. With pen in hand, Crutchfield wrote a sterling recommendation for the promotion of Capt. Wilfred Cutshaw. The wounded commander's loyalty to his lieutenants would not diminish because of the physical distance placed between him and the Army on Northern Virginia. Those who served capably and competently on and off the battlefield would continue to receive his

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<sup>3</sup>Sandie Pendelton to mother, May 26, 1863, Pendelton Papers, UNC; Sandie Pendelton to Mary Pendelton, May 29, 1863, ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

support.<sup>5</sup>

As the summer passed, Crutchfield's leg slowly healed. He was no longer bedridden; and with the assistance of a crutch, the artillerist had limited mobility. His doctor, however, expressed great doubt that his patient would ever return to active service. Crutchfield's recuperation was not progressing as well as the physician had anticipated.<sup>6</sup>

While Dr. McGuire doubted the possibility of Crutchfield's return to active service, the young colonel was unwilling to give up hope. On July 30, the Board of Visitors at the Institute offered Crutchfield the position previously held by Gen. Jackson. It was the professorship of Natural and Experimental Philosophy. Honored by the offer, Crutchfield, however, refused the post. He believed that his allegiance and job were still with the Army of Northern Virginia.<sup>7</sup>

After receiving Crutchfield's rejection, Col. Francis Smith went to talk to his former colleague. The commandant wanted the former mathematician to reconsider his decision, because a competent teacher was difficult to find during the

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<sup>5</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, June 12, 1863, ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 154.

<sup>7</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis Smith, Aug. 3, 1863, Crutchfield Papers, VMI.

war. Smith believed the two could work around the barriers that had forced the artillerist to refuse the post. Crutchfield finally acquiesced by allowing the school to record his name as "professor elect of the post." However, he would not forgo his commission in the army nor guarantee rendering any services to the Institute. The desire of returning to active service still burned deep inside the artillerist.<sup>8</sup>

During the winter of 1863, things took a turn for the better. The rest and medical care had paid dividends. Crutchfield's leg had healed well enough so that he could finally report for limited duty. In mid March, he was appointed Assistant Inspector General of Seacoast Batteries. For the next several months, the former artillery chief inspected heavy batteries and ordnance stores in various forts all along the Confederate coast.<sup>9</sup>

While he was happy about returning to the army, the new position and its responsibilities did not satisfy or excite the young colonel. He desired active duty. By May, Crutchfield began to pressure Gen. William Nelson Pendelton for a position. Crutchfield stated in a letter: "I write to

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<sup>8</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to Francis Smith, date unknown, ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, May 7, 1864, Pendelton Papers, UNC.

remind you how anxious I am to give up such tame pursuits and resume a more active life with the army." He continued: "I am now entirely recovered--my leg has healed up entirely--all bandages are long ago abandoned." The pleas, however, went for naught. For the moment, Pendelton refused Crutchfield's request. The general did not believe that the artillerist could handle the physical exertion of active duty.<sup>10</sup>

A month later, Pendelton had a change of heart. After meeting with Crutchfield, the general was satisfied that the artillerist was in good enough condition to return to the Army of the Northern Virginia. Pendelton was willing to grant Crutchfield's request, but first a position had to open that would be commiserate with his rank. Crutchfield waited daily for his new orders but they did not arrive. The exasperated colonel wrote Pendelton several frantic letters. However, he received no response. Until a position was found, Crutchfield's status was still in the air.<sup>11</sup>

Early in August, Pendelton notified Crutchfield that he was being considered as a possible replacement for Gen. John

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, June 15, 1864, ibid.; Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, June 20, 1864, ibid.

Pegram. That general, who was in charge of a brigade of infantry in Jubal Early's division, had recently been wounded. It was uncertain if he was healthy enough to resume command. Crutchfield was ecstatic. Even though it was an infantry position, he would finally return to the Army of Northern Virginia. Yet once again the command never materialized. Pegram recuperated from his injuries. Frustrated, Crutchfield could only anxiously wait for another opening.<sup>12</sup>

As days dragged into months, the bored and impatient artillerist continued his work for the Ordnance Department. Keeping in constant contact with Pendelton, Crutchfield waited. His leg had fully healed. The strength had returned. However, he would have a severe limp for the remainder of his life.

The dawn of 1865, brought Crutchfield good news. Colonel John Pemberton, who was in command of the artillery defenses around Richmond, had been relieved of his post. Upon discovering the vacancy, Crutchfield promptly applied to Pendelton for the position. Yet, as before, Crutchfield did not receive the commission. His friend, Gen. Porter Alexander, was appointed to the command. Alexander would supervise all the artillery defenses surrounding Richmond.

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<sup>12</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Aug. 10, 1864, ibid.

However, the magnitude of the position and the area it covered necessitated an assistant. With Alexander overwhelmed in Richmond, the Confederate high command believed that the new commander would need a capable lieutenant to supervise the heavy artillery south of town. With that in mind, Crutchfield received the appointment. In mid January, he assumed the command of a heavy artillery brigade at Chaffin's Bluff. The brigade was part of Gen. Custis Lee's Richmond defense division.<sup>13</sup>

Arriving at his new post, Crutchfield immediately discovered that his command consisted of six battalions. Five of which were heavy artillery units. The last battalion was comprised two light artillery companies and a company of cavalry. Overall, the 1,400 men in the brigade had little battle experience. Their clean and well-kept uniforms attested to that fact.<sup>14</sup>

By March, the fall of Petersburg was imminent. Starvation and cries from home had rapidly depleted the army's ranks. The commander of the Army of Northern Virginia no longer had enough troops available to fill the fortifications. Therefore, contingency plans were made.

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<sup>13</sup>Stapleton Crutchfield to William Nelson Pendelton, Jan. 7, 1865, ibid.; Wise, Long Arm of Lee, 919.

<sup>14</sup>McHenry Howard, Recollections of a Maryland Confederate Soldier and Staff Officer under Johnston, Jackson and Lee (Dayton, OH, 1975), 354-55, 367-68.

When Richmond fell, Lee would need every able-bodied man he could find. The retreat would force his army out into the open. Crutchfield's artillery brigade would become an infantry unit. The heavy mortars and cannons were firmly entrenched into the bluffs and therefore immobile. Once out in the open, the rifles that had been issued to the brigade would be the soldiers' only true means of defense.<sup>15</sup>

At 11 p.m., April 2, Gen. Custis Lee ordered Crutchfield to evacuate his men from Chaffin's Bluff. The lines in and around Petersburg had broken. Two hours later, Crutchfield's brigade and another local defense unit crossed the James River. Custis Lee's division, part of Ewell's corps, had joined the retreating Confederate army.<sup>16</sup>

As the ill-fed and physically exhausted troops of Crutchfield's brigade retreated west in the early morning of April 3, they learned that their beloved capital of Richmond was burning. The heart of the Confederacy had been destroyed. During the next two days, the Confederate army marched day and night on empty stomachs. Everyday the army lost more men to straggling. The effective strength of the Crutchfield's brigade alone was cut in half because of the sheer exhaustion caused by the march. For several days Lee

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 355.

<sup>16</sup>O.R., XLVI, pt. 1, 1296.



tried to acquire rations for his men, but was unable to do so. Grant's army frustrated every attempt. The end for the Army of Northern Virginia was near.<sup>17</sup>

On the fourth day of the retreat, April 6, the Confederate army began to disintegrate. Since the evacuation of Richmond, Federal cavalry had constantly harassed the Rebels on all flanks. On this day in particular, Gen. John B. Gordon's corps, the rearguard of the column, came under tremendous pressure. Yankees were attempting to maneuver around the rearguard to capture the wagon train sandwiched between Ewell's and Gordon's corps.<sup>18</sup>

The problem Gordon's rearguard faced in protecting the train was that the mobile Federals moved too quickly for them to parry each thrust. To exacerbate the problem, Ewell's corps could not come to their assistance because wagons blocked the infantry's path. Therefore, to alleviate Gordon's men from the overwhelming burden of guarding the wagons, and to eliminate the gap between the two forces, Ewell ordered the train to the head of the column. With the two corps concentrated, the Confederates would be better

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<sup>17</sup>Thomas Blake, "Retreat from Richmond," Southern Historical Society Papers, XXV (1897), 140.

<sup>18</sup>Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, 700.

able to fend off any Union attacks.<sup>19</sup>

Before the two corps could junction, Ewell faced the difficult task of moving the train to the head of the column. First, the road had to be cleared of all obstacles. Therefore, Ewell ordered his troops and Gen. Richard Anderson's men to halt and move to the side of the road. With the Jamestown Road opened, wagons began to rumble past the infantry. Eventually, the train cleared the column and turned onto the northwest fork of the road.<sup>20</sup>

As the wagons rumbled to safety, Anderson's men discovered that two divisions of Federal cavalry blocked their route, the southwest fork of the Jamestown Road. For the moment, the infantry's line of retreat was unavailable. The Rebels had been placed in this predicament because Anderson had failed to notify Gen. William Mahone that his infantry had been ordered to halt. Unaware of this change in orders, Mahone's troops, stationed ahead of Anderson's forces, had continued to march southwest toward Rice Station. Consequently, a gap formed between these troops and the remainder of the army. This left an opening for the Union troopers to exploit.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 701.

<sup>21</sup>O.R., LXVI, pt. 1, 1294; Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, 701.

While Anderson was mulling over what to do about this new threat, Gordon mistakenly turned onto the northwest fork with his corps to follow the wagon train. The general was unaware that he was suppose to stay on the southwest road. With Gordon's movements, the army divided again. Custis Lee's division, which had halted near the fork, now formed the rearguard. Moreover, Crutchfield's brigade, positioned in the back of the division, was now the extreme rear of the army.<sup>22</sup>

With Confederate forces unable to move, Federal infantry and artillery reached the field. Boldly, the Yankees began advancing toward Ewell's corps. Once aware of the threat, the division commanders, Kershaw and Lee, formed a battle line with their troops on a ridge above Sayler's Creek. Lee's division assumed the left flank of the thinly manned line.

Hurrying to get his lines formed, Crutchfield placed his 600 men "below the crest of a steep ridge." In front of the artillery brigade was a steep ravine carved by Sayler's Creek which ran for nearly 200 yards before another ridge emerged. The union attack would come from the opposing height. A few minutes after Crutchfield had stationed his

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<sup>22</sup>Richmond Dispatch, "Battle of Sailor's Creek: Part Taken in it by the Savannah Guard," Southern Historical Society Papers, XXIV (1896), 252.

men, Federal cannon were deployed for the softening of the Confederate lines.<sup>23</sup>

At 2 p.m, from the ridge on the Hillsman farm, Federal artillery opened with a magnificent barrage. Shells and canister exploded over and into the Rebel line. One battalion from Crutchfield's brigade was hit particularly hard. Casualties quickly mounted among this group. Unfortunately, its position had offered the least amount of protection on the Confederate line. Crutchfield's inexperience with infantry tactics was apparent. He had failed to use the ridge as a shield. These men had been deployed too far down the height.<sup>24</sup>

After a half-hour cannonade, Federal infantry appeared on the opposing ridge in a "solid blue line." Union troops deployed into three battle lines as they began the attack. Down the ridge and across the creek the Federals charged. In the meantime, a mounted Crutchfield, rode up and down the lines and extolled his men to hold their fire until the enemy came within range.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>R. T. W. Duke, "The Burning of Richmond, April 3, 1865," Southern Historical Society Papers, XXV (1897), 137.

<sup>24</sup>William Basinger, "Crutchfield's Artillery Brigade," Southern Historical Society Papers, XXV (1897), 39; Robert Stiles, Four Years under Marse Robert (Washington, 1903), 330.

<sup>25</sup>Blake, "Retreat from Richmond," 141.

As the Yankees charged up the ridge held by the heavy artillery brigade, the cannoneers took aim and fired. Several destructive volleys from the Rebel guns exploded into the ranks of the blue line. Decimated by the Confederates' accuracy, the first and second wave of Federal infantry broke and ran. The third line, however, continued to press forward.<sup>26</sup>

With the Yankees dangerously near his position, Crutchfield ordered his men to fix bayonets. A Rebel charge, Crutchfield foolishly hoped, would break the will of the Federals. As the brigade commander prepared to give the order to advance, his horse was shot from underneath him. Drawing his sword, Crutchfield led the charge on foot.<sup>27</sup>

Though outnumbered, the Confederate assault broke the last Union line. The Yankees tumbled back into the ravine with Confederates following closely on their heels. When the artillery brigade reached the creek, however, they smacked into stout resistance. The Union infantry had made a stand. Hand-to-hand combat ensued. Greatly outnumbered, the charge fizzled. The whole brigade was in danger of

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<sup>26</sup>Basinger, "Crutchfield's Artillery Brigade," 40.

<sup>27</sup>R. S. Rock, "War Reminiscence," Confederate Veteran, IX (1901), 506. Rock, a former VMI cadet, served on Crutchfield's staff as an orderly.

being captured.<sup>28</sup>

All along the battlefield, the Confederates were overwhelmed by the numerically superior Federal forces. Most of Kershaw's division was captured, and the encirclement of Lee's troops was nearly complete. Without a viable avenue of retreat, Custis Lee knew he had to surrender his division.<sup>29</sup>

As Custis Lee prepared to capitulate, Crutchfield was attempting to extricate his men from their vulnerable position in the ravine, when suddenly, a bullet struck the artillerist in the head. He was killed instantly. Tragically, Crutchfield was shot only minutes "before the white flag was hoisted" over Rebel lines. The Confederacy had lost one of its most dedicated officers.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>O.R., LXVI, pt. 1, 1297.

<sup>30</sup>Walker, VMI Memorial, 159; Rock, "War Reminiscence," 506.

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Phillip Andrew Egelston, the son of Martin and Kathleen Egelston, was born on May 16, 1969, in Evanston, Illinois. After attending Evanston Township High School, he enrolled at Cornell College. In 1991, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

After taking a year off to work, Mr. Egelston entered the Master of Arts program in history at Virginia Polytechnic and State University. During his enrollment at the school, he received the Frank Roop Scholarship and was president of Phi Alpha Theta. In 1994, he successfully completed his degree. Mr. Egelston will attend Syracuse University in the Fall of 1994.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phillip Egelston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.