



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume L, Battlefield Tour Number

Chicago, Illinois

May 3-6, 1990

40th Annual Battlefield Tour The Maryland Campaign of 1862

Our 40th Annual Battlefield Tour will take us to the Harpers Ferry, W. Va.-Sharpsburg, Md. area for an in-depth study of the 1862 Maryland Campaign—a campaign that culminated in the bloodiest single day of American military history along the banks of Antietam Creek. Additionally, we will have the opportunity to examine sites in Harpers Ferry and nearby Charles Town that are associated with John Brown's raid, trial and execution in late 1859. The dates of the tour are Thursday, May 3, 1990 through Sunday, May 6, 1990. Our headquarters will be at the Cliffside Inn, U.S. 340, Harpers Ferry, W. Va.; the Cliffside's toll-free number is 1-800-782-9437. Accommodations will be waiting for you there on Wednesday night, May 2. Tour kits and badges will be distributed at the Cliffside.

Transportation to Harpers Ferry will be on your own. Those who are flying can make arrangements for arrival at either Dulles or Washington National Airport, although Dulles is closer to our Harpers Ferry headquarters (about 45 miles/one hour drive-time DURING NON-RUSH HOUR PERIODS). In addition, Amtrak offers round-trip coach service (overnight) between Chicago's Union Station and Harpers Ferry for \$103. The Cliffside Inn does provide van transportation (for a fee) from Dulles and free van transportation to and from the Harpers Ferry train station; for further information or to make arrangements for either of these services, call tour co-chairman Mary Abroe at (708) 251-4745. On Sunday we will have a bus available to take those who are flying out of Dulles to the airport. For those who chose to fly into Washington National, there is shuttle service available to and from Dulles, where they can connect with transportation to and from the Cliffside.

Once again, our main guide will be Ed Bearss, chief research historian of the National Park Service. Also leading the tour will be Dennis Frye, acting chief historian at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and a life-long resident of the area we are visiting.

On Thursday we will tour the historic town of Harpers Ferry and the key battle sites associated with Stonewall Jackson's siege of the Federal garrison there during the 1862 Maryland Campaign. We also will travel to neighboring Charles Town, scene of John Brown's trial and execution.

On Friday morning we will follow the route used by "Grimes" Davis' Federal cavalry to escape from Harpers Ferry during the Maryland Campaign, with stops at the Kennedy Farm, Antietam Furnace, and the C & O Canal.



Cost of Tour

\$299 per person, double occupancy, or \$399, single occupancy. Please note that non-members must add \$25 to the prices listed. Please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room. Transportation to and from Harpers Ferry, West Virginia is not included.

Includes: Motel room, all lunches and dinners (breakfasts are on your own), bus transportation in the field, tour kits and badges, group service tips, admission fees where required, refreshments on buses, and a non-refundable \$25 registration fee per person.

For variations: Portions of the tour, joining enroute, individual meetings, meals, or rooms, write or phone Registrar Dale Weitman, 747 Alice Place, Elgin, Illinois 60123, (708) 742-2442.

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



The afternoon will be spent at Turner's, Fox's, and Crampton's Gaps in South Mountain. The afternoon tour includes a stop in Gathland State Park, where we will view the Townsend War Correspondents' Memorial.

On Saturday we will tour Antietam battlefield. This is a full day with plenty of walking; the buses will be available to transport those who do not care to do all of the walking we have planned. Dinner and Fun Night will be at the Inn at Blackford's Crossing, which is located on Lee's retreat route to the Potomac. Due to time constraints and the fact that we will end the day's touring at Blackford's Ford near the Inn, PLEASE NOTE that we will NOT be returning to the Cliffside before dinner and plan accordingly.

On Sunday morning we will view Blackford's Ford from the West Virginia side as we study the Battle of Shepherdstown. We will complete our touring on Sunday with a visit to the state-owned Rumsey Monument in Shepherdstown; the Monument commemorates James Rumsey, area inventor of the first successful steamboat (1787). The Monument affords a panoramic view of the region from its location above the Potomac and will be a fitting ending to our tour. You can make plans to return home after 1:30 p.m.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
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NOTE: Special thanks to John Divine, Joyce Warshaw, Frank Meacham, Marvin Sanderman, Adrienne Hanrahan and Susan Phillips for their contributions.



General Lee's Maryland Campaign— September, 1862

By Terry Carr

The Confederates crossed the Potomac River near Leesburg, Virginia on September 5th and moved to the town of Frederick, Maryland. Before Lee could seek out the Army of the Potomac, he had to first capture Harpers Ferry, garrisoned by 10,000 Federals, to avoid any possible interruption of his line of communications. Lee proposed to send Jackson to capture Harpers Ferry while the remainder of the army moved behind the sheltering screen of South Mountain, which runs northwest from Harpers Ferry. Conditions changed when a lost copy of Lee's orders was found by a Union soldier and sent to General McClellan on the evening of September 13th. McClellan now knew that Lee's army was divided and where it was located. Lee at that

time was near Hagerstown, Maryland with Longstreet and nine brigades, while five more brigades under D.H. Hill were twelve miles south, at Boonsboro, a few miles west of Turners' Gap where the National Road crossed South Mountain.

McClellan made a grave mistake by not moving toward South Mountain on the evening of the 13th. Instead the Union forces did not begin their march until the next morning, thus allowing Lee time to prepare for delaying actions at the gaps of South Mountain. The main Federal effort was directed toward Turner's and Fox's Gaps, while the Sixth Corps, under Franklin, was to attack Crampton's Gap about five miles farther south. Desperate fighting took place during the entire day and into the evening as D.H. Hill's division delayed Hooker's First Corps at Turner's Gap and a mile south Hood's division held off Reno's Ninth Corps at Fox's Gap. Crampton's Gap was defended by only a small portion of McLaw's division against Franklin's Sixth Corps. McLaw's troops gave stubborn resistance until sunset when they were overwhelmed by the Union assaults and forced back through the Gap. The battles on South Mountain helped Lee to buy time for the completion of Jackson's operations against Harpers Ferry.

On September 15th Lee concentrated his troops under Longstreet and D.H. Hill behind Antietam Creek at Sharpsburg, Maryland. McClellan again helped Lee by not attacking on the 15th or the 16th, thereby allowing Jackson enough time to reach Sharpsburg. Jackson joined Lee on the 16th after capturing Harpers Ferry the day before. Only A.P. Hill's division had been left behind to finish the surrender details. Lee held a curved line position around Sharpsburg, with the left under Jackson near the Potomac, the center held by D.H. Hill's troops, and the extreme right under Longstreet on Antietam Creek at the lower bridge.

The battle of Antietam began at dawn on September 17th as Federal skirmishers of Hooker's First Corps moved down the Hagerstown Pike toward Sharpsburg. On their left was a big cornfield owned by D.R. Miller, on the right were open pastures, and about a mile straight ahead was the Dunkard Church. Jackson had placed his infantry in the cornfield and also west of the turnpike. His artillery was positioned around the church. When the Union skirmishers found the strong Confederate position in the cornfield, Hoke had the field blasted by his artillery, which was positioned at the southern edge of the North Woods. After the guns stopped firing, Hooker's troops attacked, pushing the Confederates out of the cornfield and overpowering the troops west of the turnpike. The First Corps succeeded in driving the rebels back toward Dunkard Church. At this point Jackson called for help from John B. Hood, whose men attacked from the West Woods, behind the church. Their fierce attack, aided by the brigades of D.H. Hill, broke the Union line, forcing them back to their original starting point until Hooker's artillery stopped the Confederate drive.

McClellan then sent into action the Twelfth Corps under Joseph Mansfield. This Federal attack again forced the Confederates from the Miller cornfield and cleared the woods to the east, with a portion of the Federals reaching Dunkard Church before coming to a halt. After a brief lull a third Union force came on the field, three divisions of Edwin Sumner's Second Corps. At approximately 10:30 a.m. the First Division under John Sedgwick attacked, but was flanked and driven back by McLaw's Confederate division, which had just arrived from Harpers Ferry, and by Walker's Division, just up from Sharpsburg. The Second

Tour Schedule

Note—all joining at Harpers Ferry: Check in at the Cliffside Inn, identifying yourself as a CWRT tour member; you will be pre-registered.

Schedule subject to changes to be announced—all times are local.

Thursday, May 3, 1990

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

- 8:00 a.m.—Board buses for trip to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.
- 8:30 a.m.—Tour of historic Harpers Ferry, with stops at Master Armorer's, the Engine House, and "the Point."
- 10:30 a.m.—Free time (OPTION: Walk to remains of pontoon boat ramp on Potomac, jumping-off spot for Federal cavalry escape.)
- 12:00 p.m.—Lunch at Hilltop House Hotel
- 1:00 p.m.—Board buses for Camp Hill.
- 1:00-3:00 p.m.—Camp Hill, School House Ridge, Bolivar Heights.
- 3:00 p.m.—Board buses for Charles Town.
- 3:20 p.m.—Jefferson County Museum.
- 4:00 p.m.—Jefferson County Courthouse.
- 4:10 p.m.—Walk John Brown's execution route to scaffold site.
- 4:50 p.m.—Board buses at scaffold site for return to Cliffside.
- 6:30 p.m.—Command Post (Cash Bar).
- 7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker: Dennis Frye.

Friday, May 4, 1990

- 8:00 a.m.—Board buses.
- 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.—Follow escape route of Federal cavalry from Harpers Ferry; stops at Kennedy Farm, Antietam Furnace, and C&O Canal.
- 12:30 p.m.—Lunch at Brownsville Church of the Brethren.

1:15-5:15 p.m.—Battles for South Mountain (Turner's, Fox's, and Crampton's Gaps); Townsend War Correspondents' Memorial.

5:15 p.m.—Return to Cliffside.

6:30 p.m.—Command Post (Cash Bar).

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

Saturday, May 5, 1990

- 8:00 a.m.—Board buses for Antietam National Battlefield.
- 8:40 a.m.—Orientation outside Antietam Visitor Center.
- 9:20 a.m.—Pry House.
- 10:20 a.m.—North Woods.
- 10:40 a.m.-12:00 p.m.—Mansfield Monument, Cornfield, West Woods.
- 12:15 p.m.—Picnic lunch at Piper Farm on Antietam battlefield.
- 1:15 p.m.—Bloody Lane.
- 2:00 p.m.—Board buses for Burnside Bridge.
- 2:15 p.m.—Burnside Bridge, McKinley Monument, Site of IX Corps deployment for assault on Sharpsburg.
- 4:00 p.m.—Assault of A.P. Hill's Light Division on IX Corps' flank/Branch Ave.-Miller's Sawmill Road intersection.
- 4:40 p.m.—Antietam Visitor Center (OPEN LATE FOR OUR BENEFIT).
- 5:30 p.m.—Blackford's Ford.
- 6:15 p.m.—Board buses for Inn at Blackford's Crossing.
- 6:30 p.m.—Command Post (Cash Bar).
- 7:30 p.m.—Dinner and Fun Night. Arrive back at Cliffside at about 10:15 p.m.

Sunday, May 6, 1990

- 8:30 a.m.—Board buses for Blackford's Ford (W. Va. side) and Shepherdstown battle sites.
- 12:30 p.m.—Return to Cliffside for buffet lunch.
- 1:30 p.m.—End of tour.

Division tried to storm the sunken lane which ran along the Confederate center, held by the troops of D.H. Hill. The attack failed, but the Third Division came up, flanked, and then carried the sunken lane, forcing the Rebels back to their last line of defense. It was at this point that Lee's army could have been broken, but the Union troops were exhausted, so this attack also came to a halt.

The last Federal assault of the day came at approximately 3:00 p.m. when four divisions of Burnside's Ninth Corps were directed at the extreme right of Lee's line along Antietam Creek. Burnside was to have crossed the lower bridge much earlier in the day, but delayed and, as a result, this attack was committed after all the other actions had ceased. As was the case in all the earlier attacks, Burnside's Corps was sent into the fight one division at a time. Thus they were not able to completely crush the thin Confederate line, defended only by about six hundred men from Toomb's brigade. Even so the Union drive might have succeeded, but for the timely arrival of A.P. Hill's troops from Harpers Ferry. Hill arrived on the field at about 4:00 p.m. and immediately attacked, driving Burnside's Corps back almost to Antietam Creek. Hill's arrival saved Lee's army from certain defeat and ended the fighting.

Combined casualties on September 17, 1862 came to 23,000. Lee remained on the field on the 18th but no battle was initiated by either side. The Confederates crossed the Potomac that night.

Battle of Shepherdstown

by Mary Munsell Abroe

During the night of September 18-19, 1862, the Army of Northern Virginia quit the battlefield at Antietam and recrossed the Potomac at Blackford's Ford near Shepherdstown. Under cover of darkness, the Confederates moved back into Virginia safely. Anticipating Federal pursuit, Robert E. Lee left two battle-weary brigades and forty-five cannon under chief of artillery William Pendleton to guard the rear. Lee ordered Pendleton, who had no prior experience commanding infantry, to hold the ford throughout the 19th and for the night of the 19th-20th unless Federal pressure proved overwhelming.

At about 8:00 a.m. on the 19th, Alfred Pleasanton's Union cavalry came into view on the Maryland banks of the Potomac. The Federals brought up eighteen cannon from their horse artillery and a two-hour duel between the enemy batteries followed. Around noon, troops of Fitz John Porter's V Corps replaced the Union cavalymen, who retired from the field with their guns. Porter's cannoners renewed the artillery battle and it continued throughout the afternoon. Upon his arrival, Porter also deployed the 1st U.S. Sharpshooters in the dry bed of the C & O Canal, which paralleled the Potomac's northern bank. The Federal marksmen sniped at Confederate gunners on the opposite

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Armchair Generalship

by Marshall D. Krolick



The literature of this campaign is so vast that any bibliography must, of necessity, be very selective. Emphasis has been placed on more recent books and those more readily available, as well as on the "classics" of the subject.

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BULLETIN BOARD



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

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bluffs all afternoon long; in the meantime, Southern infantry entered the battle.

Toward dusk, five hundred Union volunteers commanded by Charles Griffin forded the river under heavy fire and assaulted the Confederate position. Thinned to about six hundred men because Pendleton had not kept track of his numbers, the Southern brigades broke under the attack and left their steep eighty-foot bluffs above the Potomac. Alone in darkness at his command post, Pendleton panicked and rode to the rear in search of reinforcements. Sometime after midnight he found Lee and informed that startled general that all forty-five guns had been lost. (Actually the Federal assault party had captured only four guns.) Lee remained calm while Stonewall Jackson, angered by Pendleton's mishandling of the affair, seized the initiative and ordered his three divisions forward to meet the oncoming Federals. Jackson's timing was impeccable; although the Federal attackers who had taken Pendleton's four cannon had withdrawn to Maryland during the night, McClellan had decided to send a much larger reconnaissance force, three brigades strong.

By 9:00 a.m. on the 20th, A.P. Hill's Light Division was advancing over a cornfield on a three-brigade-wide front toward the remaining Federals on the cliffs. (In the face of Hill's counterattack, which had started at dawn, two of the three Union brigades had been withdrawn by nine o'clock.) As Hill's lines rolled forward, the Union line bent and then broke. Outflanked on both sides, the inexperienced 118th Pennsylvania (the "Corn Exchange Regiment" from Philadelphia) tried to return the Confederate fire, but many of the regiment's Enfields were defective. When the order for them to retreat finally came, the soldiers of the 118th "broke in wild confusion for the river." Hill's troops lined the heights overlooking the Potomac, and wounded or killed many of the Pennsylvanians as they swam desperately for the Maryland shore; as a result of this lopsided "battle," the 118th lost nearly forty per cent of its men.

Jackson's speedy response and Hill's dramatic counter-offensive secured Lee's retreat. Lee fell back slowly to Winchester in the Valley; for his part in the affair, William Pendleton was assigned to chiefly administrative duties by Lee for the rest of the war. McClellan dispatched a force to reoccupy Harpers Ferry, but most of the Army of the Potomac stayed in Maryland; McClellan's inherent caution was exacerbated by the fiasco at Blackford's Ford and held him back from pursuing the Army of Northern Virginia. The Maryland Campaign of 1862 was over; its profound implications, however, were only starting to unfold.