

mond if he would stand. Should he, however, fall back into Richmond, I would follow up and make a junction with his (General Butler's) army on the James river; that, could I be certain he would be able to invest Richmond on the south side so as to have his left resting on the James, above the city, I would form the junction there; that circumstances might make this course advisable anyhow; that he should use every exertion to secure footing as far up the south side of the river as he could, and as soon as possible after the receipt of orders to move; that if he could not carry the city, he should at least detain as large a force as possible.

In co-operation with the main movements against Lee and Johnston, I was desirous of using all other troops necessarily kept in departments remote from the fields of immediate operations, and also those kept in the background for the protection of our extended lines between the loyal States and the armies operating against them.

A very considerable force under command of Major General Sigel was so held for the protection of West Virginia, and the frontiers of Maryland and Pennsylvania. Whilst these troops could not be withdrawn to distant fields without exposing the north to invasion by comparatively small bodies of the enemy, they could act directly to their front and give better protection than if lying idle in garrison. By such movement they would either compel the enemy to detach largely for the protection of his supplies and lines of communication, or he would lose them.

General Sigel was therefore directed to organize all his available force into two expeditions, to move from Beverly and Charleston, under command of Generals Ord and Crook, against the East Tennessee and Virginia railroad. Subsequently, General Ord having been relieved at his own request, General Sigel was instructed, at his own suggestion, to give up the expedition by Beverly and to form two columns, one under General Crook, on the Kanawha, numbering about ten thousand men, and one on the Shenandoah, numbering about seven thousand men. The one on the Shenandoah to assemble between Cumberland and the Shenandoah, and the infantry and artillery advanced to Cedar creek with such cavalry as could be made available at the moment, to threaten the enemy in the Shenandoah valley, and advance as far as possible; while General Crook would take possession of Lewisburg with part of his force and move down the Tennessee railroad, doing as much damage as he could, destroying the New river bridge and the salt-works at Saltville, Va.

Owing to the weather and bad condition of the roads, operations were delayed until the 1st of May, when, everything being in readiness and the roads favorable, orders were given for a general movement of all the armies not later than the 4th of May.

My first object being to break the military power of the rebellion and capture the enemy's important strongholds, made me desirous that General Butler should succeed in his movement against Richmond, as that would tend more than anything else, unless it were the capture of Lee's army, to accomplish this desired result in the east. If he failed, it was my determination, by hard fighting, either to compel Lee to retreat or to so cripple him that he could not detach a large force to go north and still retain enough for the defence of Richmond. It was well understood, by both Generals Butler and Meade, before starting on the campaign, that it was my intention to put both their armies south of the James river, in case of failure to destroy Lee without it.

Before giving General Butler his instructions, I visited him at Fort Monroe, and in conversation pointed out the apparent importance of getting possession of Petersburg and destroying railroad communication as far south as possible. Believing, however, in the practicability of capturing Richmond unless it was re-enforced, I made that the objective point of his operations. As the army of

the Potomac was to move simultaneously with him, Lee could not detach from his army with safety, and the enemy did not have troops elsewhere to bring to the defence of the city in time to meet a rapid movement from the north of James river.

I may here state that, commanding all the armies as I did, I tried, as far as possible, to leave General Meade in independent command of the army of the Potomac. My instructions for that army were all through him, and were general in their nature, leaving all the details and the execution to him. The campaigns that followed proved him to be the right man in the right place. His commanding always in the presence of an officer superior to him in rank, has drawn from him much of that public attention that his zeal and ability entitle him to, and which he would otherwise have received.

The movement of the army of the Potomac commenced early on the morning of the 4th of May, under the immediate direction and orders of Major General Meade, pursuant to instructions. Before night the whole army was across the Rapidan, (the 5th and 6th corps crossing at Germania ford, and the 2d corps at United States ford, the cavalry, under Major General Sheridan, moving in advance,) with the greater part of its trains, numbering about 4,000 wagons, meeting with but slight opposition. The average distance travelled by the troops that day was about twelve miles. This I regarded as a great success, and it removed from my mind the most serious apprehensions I had entertained, that of crossing the river in the face of an active, large, well-appointed and ably-commanded army, and how so large a train was to be carried through a hostile country and protected. Early on the 5th, the advance corps (the 5th, Major General G. K. Warren commanding) met and engaged the enemy outside his intrenchments near Mine Run. The battle raged furiously all day, the whole army being brought into the fight as fast as the corps could be got upon the field, which, considering the density of the forest and narrowness of the roads, was done with commendable promptness.

General Burnside, with the 9th corps, was, at the time the army of the Potomac moved, left with the bulk of his corps at the crossing of the Rappahannock river and Alexandria railroad, holding the road back to Bull Run, with instructions not to move until he received notice that a crossing of the Rapidan was secured, but to move promptly as soon as such notice was received. This crossing he was apprised of on the afternoon of the 4th. By six o'clock of the morning of the 6th he was leading his corps into action near the Wilderness tavern, some of his troops having marched a distance of over thirty miles, crossing both the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers. Considering that a large proportion, probably two-thirds of his command, was composed of new troops, unaccustomed to marches and carrying the accoutrements of a soldier, this was a remarkable march.

The battle of the Wilderness was renewed by us at five o'clock on the morning of the 6th, and continued with unabated fury until darkness set in, each army holding substantially the same position that they had on the evening of the 5th. After dark the enemy made a feeble attempt to turn our right flank, capturing several hundred prisoners and creating considerable confusion. But the promptness of General Sedgwick, who was personally present and commanded that part of our line, soon reformed it and restored order. On the morning of the 7th reconnoissances showed that the enemy had fallen behind his intrenched lines, with pickets to the front, covering a part of the battle-field. From this it was evident to my mind that the two days' fighting had satisfied him of his inability to further maintain the contest in the open field, notwithstanding his advantage of position, and that he would wait an attack behind his works. I therefore determined to push on and put my whole force between him and Richmond; and orders were at once issued for a movement by his right

flank. On the night of the 7th the march was commenced towards Spottsylvania Court-House; the 5th corps moving on the most direct road. But the enemy having become apprised of our movement, and having the shorter line, was enabled to reach there first. On the 8th General Warren met a force of the enemy which had been sent out to oppose and delay his advance, to gain time to fortify the line taken up at Spottsylvania. This force was steadily driven back on the main force, within the recently constructed works, after considerable fighting, resulting in severe loss to both sides. On the morning of the 9th General Sheridan started on a raid against the enemy's lines of communication with Richmond. The 9th, 10th, and 11th were spent in manoeuvring and fighting, without decisive results. Among the killed on the 9th was that able and distinguished soldier Major General John Sedgwick, commanding the 6th army corps. Major General H. G. Wright succeeded him in command. Early on the morning of the 12th a general attack was made on the enemy in position. The 2d corps, Major General Hancock commanding, carried a salient of his line, capturing most of Johnston's division of Ewell's corps and twenty pieces of artillery. But the resistance was so obstinate that the advantage gained did not prove decisive. The 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th, were consumed in manoeuvring and awaiting the arrival of re-enforcements from Washington. Deeming it impracticable to make any further attack upon the enemy at Spottsylvania Court-House, orders were issued on the 18th with a view to a movement to the North Anna, to commence at 12 o'clock on the night of the 19th. Late in the afternoon of the 19th Ewell's corps came out of its works on our extreme right flank; but the attack was promptly repulsed, with heavy loss. This delayed the movement to the North Anna until the night of the 21st, when it was commenced. But the enemy again having the shorter line, and being in possession of the main roads, was enabled to reach the North Anna in advance of us, and took position behind it. The 5th corps reached the North Anna on the afternoon of the 23d, closely followed by the 6th corps. The 2d and 9th corps got up about the same time, the 2d holding the railroad bridge and the 9th lying between that and Jericho ford. General Warren effected a crossing the same afternoon, and got a position without much opposition. Soon after getting into position he was violently attacked, but repulsed the enemy with great slaughter. On the 25th General Sheridan rejoined the army of the Potomac from the raid on which he started from Spottsylvania, having destroyed the depots at Beaver Dam and Ashland stations, four trains of cars, large supplies of rations, and many miles of railroad track; recaptured about four hundred of our men, on their way to Richmond as prisoners of war; met and defeated the enemy's cavalry at Yellow Tavern; carried the first line of works around Richmond, (but finding the second line too strong to be carried by assault) re-crossed to the north bank of the Chickahominy at Meadow's Bridge, under heavy fire, and moved by a detour to Haxall's landing, on the James river, where he communicated with General Butler. This raid had the effect of drawing off the whole of the enemy's cavalry force, and making it comparatively easy to guard our trains.

General Butler moved his main force up the James river, in pursuance of instructions, on the 4th of May, General Gillmore having joined him with the 10th corps. At the same time he sent a force of 1,800 cavalry, by way of West Point, to form a junction with him wherever he might get a foothold, and a force of 3,000 cavalry, under General Kautz, from Suffolk, to operate against the roads south of Petersburg and Richmond. On the 5th he occupied, without opposition, both City Point and Bermuda Hundred, his movement being a complete surprise. On the 6th he was in position with his main army, and commenced intrenching. On the 7th he made a reconnoissance against the Petersburg and Richmond railroad, destroying a portion of it after some fighting. On the 9th he telegraphed as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS NEAR BERMUDA LANDING, May 9, 1864.  
 "Our operations may be summed up in a few words. With 1,700 cavalry we have advanced up the Peninsula, forced the Chickahominy, and have safely brought them to our present position. These were colored cavalry, and are now holding our advance pickets towards Richmond.

"General Kautz with three thousand cavalry from Suffolk, on the same day with our movement up James river, forced the Blackwater, burned the railroad bridge at Stony creek, below Petersburg, cutting in two Beauregard's force at that point.

"We have landed here, intrenched ourselves, destroyed many miles of railroad, and got a position which with proper supplies we can hold out against the whole of Lee's army. I have ordered up the supplies.

"Beauregard with a large portion of his force was left south by the cutting of the railroads by Kautz. That portion which reached Petersburg under Hill I have whipped to-day, killing and wounding many and taking many prisoners, after a severe and well-contested fight.

"General Grant will not be troubled with any further re-enforcements to Lee from Beauregard's force.

"BENJAMIN F. BUTLER,  
 "Major General.

"Hon. E. M. STANTON, Secretary of War."

On the evening of the 13th and morning of the 14th he carried a portion of the enemy's first line of defences at Drury's Bluff, or Fort Darling, with small loss. The time thus consumed from the 6th lost to us the benefit of the surprise and capture of Richmond and Petersburg, enabling, as it did, Beauregard to collect his loose forces in North and South Carolina and bring them to the defence of those places. On the 16th the enemy attacked General Butler in his position in front of Drury's Bluff. He was forced back, or drew back, into his intrenchments between the forks of the James and Appomattox rivers, the enemy intrenching strongly in his front, thus covering his railroads, the city, and all that was valuable to him. His army, therefore, though in a position of great security, was as completely shut off from further operations directly against Richmond as if it had been in a bottle strongly corked. It required but a comparatively small force of the enemy to hold it there.

On the 12th General Kautz with his cavalry was started on a raid against the Danville railroad, which he struck at Coalfield, Powhatan, and Chola stations, destroying them, the railroad track, two freight trains, and one locomotive, together with large quantities of commissary and other stores; thence crossing to the South Side road, struck it at Wilson's, Wellsville, and Black and White stations, destroying the road and station-houses; thence he proceeded to City Point, which he reached on the 18th.

On the 19th of April, and prior to the movement of General Butler, the enemy, with a land force under General Hoke and an iron-clad ram, attacked Plymouth, N. C., commanded by General H. W. Wessels, and our gunboats there, and after severe fighting the place was carried by assault and the entire garrison and armament captured. The gunboat *Smithfield* was sunk and the *Miami* disabled.

The army sent to operate against Richmond having hermetically sealed itself up at Bermuda Hundred, the enemy was enabled to bring the most if not all the re-enforcements brought from the south by Beauregard against the army of the Potomac. In addition to this re-enforcement, a very considerable one, probably not less than 15,000 men, was obtained by calling in the scattered troops under Breckinridge from the western part of Virginia.

The position at Bermuda Hundred was as easy to defend as it was difficult to operate from against the enemy. I determined, therefore, to bring from it all available forces, leaving enough only to secure what had been gained, and accordingly, on the 22d, I directed that they be sent forward, under command of Major General W. F. Smith, to join the army of the Potomac.

On the 24th of May the 9th army corps, commanded by Major General A. E. Burnside, was assigned to the army of the Potomac, and from this time forward constituted a portion of Major General Meade's command.

Finding the enemy's position on the North Anna stronger than either of his previous ones, I withdrew on the night of the 26th to the north bank of the North Anna, and moved via Hanover town to turn the enemy's position by his right.

Generals Torbert's and Merritt's divisions of cavalry, under Sheridan, and the 6th corps led the advance; crossed the Pamunkey river at Hanover town after considerable fighting, and on the 28th the two divisions of cavalry had a severe but successful engagement with the enemy at Haw's shop. On the 29th and 30th we advanced, with heavy skirmishing, to the Hanover Court House and Cold Harbor road, and developed the enemy's position north of the Chickahominy. Late on the evening of the last day the enemy came out and attacked our left, but was repulsed with very considerable loss. An attack was immediately ordered by General Meade along his whole line, which resulted in driving the enemy from a part of his intrenched skirtnish line.

On the 31st General Wilson's division of cavalry destroyed the railroad bridges over the South Anna river, after defeating the enemy's cavalry. General Sheridan, on the same day, reached Cold Harbor, and held it until relieved by the 6th corps and General Smith's command, which had just arrived, via White House, from General Butler's army.

On the 1st day of June an attack was made at 5 p. m. by the 6th corps and the troops under General Smith, the other corps being held in readiness to advance on the receipt of orders. This resulted in our carrying and holding the enemy's first line of works in front of the right of the 6th corps and in front of General Smith. During the attack the enemy made repeated assaults on each of the corps not engaged in the main attack, but were repulsed with heavy loss in every instance. That night he made several assaults to regain what he had lost in the day, but failed. The 2d was spent in getting troops into position for an attack on the 3d. On the 3d of June we again assaulted the enemy's works, in the hope of driving him from his position. In this attempt our loss was heavy, while that of the enemy, I have reason to believe, was comparatively light. It was the only general attack made from the Rapidan to the James which did not inflict upon the enemy losses to compensate for our own losses. I would not be understood as saying that all previous attacks resulted in victories to our arms, or accomplished as much as I had hoped from them; but they inflicted upon the enemy severe losses, which tended, in the end, to the complete overthrow of the rebellion.

From the proximity of the enemy to his defences around Richmond, it was impossible by any flank movement to interpose between him and the city. I was still in a condition to either move by his left flank and invest Richmond from the north side, or continue my move by his right flank to the south side of the James. While the former might have been better as a covering for Washington, yet a full survey of all the ground satisfied me that it would be impracticable to hold a line north and east of Richmond that would protect the Fredericksburg railroad—a long, vulnerable line, which would exhaust much of our strength to guard, and that would have to be protected to supply the army, and would leave open to the enemy all his lines of communication on the south side of the James. My idea, from the start, had been to beat Lee's army north of Richmond if possible. Then, after destroying his lines of communication north of the James river, to transfer the army to the south side and besiege Lee in Richmond, or follow him south if he should retreat. After the battle of the Wilderness it was evident that the enemy deemed it of the first importance to run no risks with the army he then had. He acted purely on the defensive behind breastworks, or feebly on the offensive immediately in front of them, and where, in case of repulse, he could easily retire behind them. Without a greater sacrifice of life than I was willing to make, all could not be accomplished that I

had designed north of Richmond. I therefore determined to continue to hold substantially the ground we then occupied, taking advantage of any favorable circumstances that might present themselves, until the cavalry could be sent to Charlottesville and Gordonsville, to effectually break up the railroad connexion between Richmond and the Shenandoah valley and Lynchburg; and, when the cavalry got well off, to move the army to the south side of the James river, by the enemy's right flank, where I felt I could cut off all his sources of supply except by the canal.

On the 7th two divisions of cavalry, under General Sheridan, got off on the expedition against the Virginia Central railroad, with instructions to Hunter, whom I hoped he would meet near Charlottesville, to join his forces to Sheridan's, and after the work laid out for them was thoroughly done, to join the army of the Potomac by the route laid down in Sheridan's instructions.

On the 10th of June General Butler sent a force of infantry under General Gillmore, and cavalry under General Kautz, to capture Petersburg if possible, and destroy the railroad and common bridges across the Appomattox. The cavalry carried the works on the south side, and penetrated well in towards the town, but were forced to retire. General Gillmore finding the works which he approached very strong, and deeming an assault impracticable, returned to Bermuda Hundred without attempting one.

Attaching great importance to the possession of Petersburg, I sent back to Bermuda Hundred and City Point General Smith's command by water, via the White House, to reach there in advance of the army of the Potomac. This was for the express purpose of securing Petersburg before the enemy, becoming aware of our intention, could re-enforce the place.

The movement from Cold Harbor commenced after dark on the evening of the 12th; one division of cavalry, under General Wilson, and the 5th corps crossed the Chickahominy at Long Bridge, and moved out to White Oak swamp, to cover the crossings of the other corps. The advance corps reached James river, at Wilcox's landing and Charles City Court House, on the night of the 13th.

During three long years the armies of the Potomac and northern Virginia had been confronting each other. In that time they had fought more desperate battles than it probably ever before fell to the lot of two armies to fight, without materially changing the vantage-ground of either. The southern press and people, with more shrewdness than was displayed in the north, finding that they had failed to capture Washington and march on to New York, as they had boasted they would do, assumed that they only defended their capital and southern territory. Hence, Antietam, Gettysburg, and all the other battles that had been fought, were by them set down as failures on our part, and victories for them. Their army believed this. It produced a morale which could only be overcome by desperate and continuous hard fighting. The battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor, bloody and terrible as they were on our side, were even more damaging to the enemy, and so crippled him as to make him wary ever after of taking the offensive. His losses in men were probably not so great, owing to the fact that we were, save in the Wilderness, almost invariably the attacking party; and when he did attack it was in the open field. The details of these battles, which for endurance and bravery on the part of the soldiery have rarely been surpassed, are given in the report of Major General Meade, and the subordinate reports accompanying it.

During the campaign of forty-three days, from the Rapidan to James river, the army had to be supplied from an ever-shifting base, by wagons, over narrow roads, through a densely wooded country, with a lack of wharves at each new base from which to conveniently discharge vessels. Too much credit cannot, therefore, be awarded to the quartermaster and commissary departments for the zeal and efficiency displayed by them. Under the general supervision of the chief quartermaster, Brigadier General R. Ingalls, the trains were made to

occupy all the available roads between the army and our water base, and but little difficulty was experienced in protecting them.

The movement of the Kanawha and Shenandoah valleys, under General Sigel, commenced on the first of May. General Crook, who had the immediate command of the Kanawha expedition, divided his forces into two columns, giving one, composed of cavalry, to General Averill. They crossed the mountains by separate routes. Averill struck the Tennessee and Virginia railroad, near Wytheville, on the 10th, and proceeding to New river and Christiansburg, destroyed the road, several important bridges and depots, including New river bridge, forming a junction with Crook at Union on the 15th. General Sigel moved up the Shenandoah valley, met the enemy at New Market on the 15th, and, after a severe engagement, was defeated with heavy loss, and retired behind Cedar creek. Not regarding the operations of General Sigel as satisfactory, I asked his removal from command, and Major General Hunter was appointed to supersede him. His instructions were embraced in the following despatches to Major General H. W. Halleck, chief of staff of the army:

“NEAR SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, VA., May 20, 1864.

“The enemy are evidently relying for supplies greatly on such as are brought over the branch road running through Staunton. On the whole, therefore, I think it would be better for General Hunter to move in that direction; reach Staunton and Gordonsville or Charlottesville, if he does not meet too much opposition. If he can hold at bay a force equal to his own, he will be doing good service.

“Major General H. W. HALLECK.”

“U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant General.*

“JERICHO FORD, VA., May 25, 1864.

“If Hunter can possibly get to Charlottesville and Lynchburg, he should do so, living on the country. The railroads and canal should be destroyed beyond possibility of repairs for weeks. Completing this, he could find his way back to his original base, or from about Gordonsville join this army.

“Major General H. W. HALLECK.”

“U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant General.*

General Hunter immediately took up the offensive, and moving up the Shenandoah valley, met the enemy on the 5th of June at Piedmont, and after a battle of ten hours routed and defeated him, capturing on the field of battle 1,500 men, 3 pieces of artillery, and 300 stand of small-arms. On the 8th of the same month he formed a junction with Crook and Averill at Staunton, from which place he moved direct on Lynchburg, via Lexington, which place he reached and invested on the 16th day of June. Up to this time he was very successful, and but for the difficulty of taking with him sufficient ordnance stores over so long a march, through a hostile country, he would no doubt have captured that (to the enemy,) important point. The destruction of the enemy's supplies and manufactories was very great. To meet this movement under General Hunter, General Lee sent a force, perhaps equal to a corps, a part of which reached Lynchburg a short time before Hunter. After some skirmishing on the 17th and 18th, General Hunter, owing to a want of ammunition to give battle, retired from before the place. Unfortunately, this want of ammunition left him no choice of route for his return but by way of Kanawha. This lost to us the use of his troops for several weeks from the defence of the north.

Had General Hunter moved by way of Charlottesville, instead of Lexington, as his instructions contemplated, he would have been in a position to have covered the Shenandoah valley against the enemy, should the force he met have seemed to endanger it. If it did not, he would have been within easy distance of the James river canal, on the main line of communication between Lynchburg and the force sent for its defence. I have never taken exception to the operations of General Hunter, and I am not now disposed to find fault with him, for I have no doubt he acted within what he conceived to be the spirit of

his instructions and the interests of the service. The promptitude of his movements and his gallantry should entitle him to the commendation of his country.

To return to the army of the Potomac: The 2d corps commenced crossing the James river on the morning of the 14th by ferry-boats at Wilcox's landing. The laying of the pontoon bridge was completed about midnight of the 14th, and the crossing of the remainder of the army was rapidly pushed forward by both bridge and ferry.

After the crossing had commenced, I proceeded by a steamer to Bermuda Hundred to give the necessary orders for the immediate capture of Petersburg.

The instructions to General Butler were verbal, and were for him to send General Smith immediately, that night, with all the troops he could give him without sacrificing the position he then held. I told him that I would return at once to the army of the Potomac, hasten its crossing, and throw it forward to Petersburg by divisions as rapidly as it could be done; that we could re-enforce our armies more rapidly there than the enemy could bring troops against us. General Smith got off as directed, and confronted the enemy's pickets near Petersburg before daylight next morning, but for some reason, that I have never been able to satisfactorily understand, did not get ready to assault his main lines until near sundown. Then, with a part of his command only, he made the assault, and carried the lines northeast of Petersburg from the Appomattox river, for a distance of over two and a half miles, capturing fifteen pieces of artillery and three hundred prisoners. This was about 7 p. m. Between the line thus captured and Petersburg there were no other works, and there was no evidence that the enemy had re-enforced Petersburg with a single brigade from any source. The night was clear—the moon shining brightly—and favorable to further operations. General Hancock, with two divisions of the 2d corps, reached General Smith just after dark, and offered the service of these troops as he (Smith) might wish, waiving rank to the named commander, who he naturally supposed knew best the position of affairs, and what to do with the troops. But instead of taking these troops, and pushing at once into Petersburg, he requested General Hancock to relieve a part of his line in the captured works, which was done before midnight.

By the time I arrived the next morning the enemy was in force. An attack was ordered to be made at 6 o'clock that evening by the troops under Smith and the 2d and 9th corps. It required until that time for the 9th corps to get up and into position. The attack was made as ordered, and the fighting continued with but little intermission until 6 o'clock the next morning, and resulted in our carrying the advance and some of the main works of the enemy to the right (our left) of those previously captured by General Smith, several pieces of artillery, and over four hundred prisoners.

The 5th corps having got up, the attacks were renewed and persisted in with great vigor on the 17th and 18th, but only resulted in forcing the enemy to an interior line from which he could not be dislodged. The advantages in position gained by us were very great. The army then proceeded to envelop Petersburg toward the Southside railroad, as far as possible, without attacking fortifications.

On the 6th the enemy, to re-enforce Petersburg, withdrew from a part of his intrenchment in front of Bermuda Hundred, expecting no doubt to get troops from north of the James to take the place of those withdrawn before we could discover it. General Butler, taking advantage of this, at once moved a force on the railroad between Petersburg and Richmond. As soon as I was apprised of the advantage thus gained, to retain it I ordered two divisions of the 6th corps, General Wright commanding, that were embarking at Wilcox's landing, under orders for City Point, to report to General Butler, at Bermuda Hundred, of which General Butler was notified, and the importance of holding a position in advance of his present line urged upon him.

About 2 o'clock in the afternoon General Butler was forced back to the line the enemy had withdrawn from in the morning. General Wright, with his two divisions, joined General Butler on the forenoon of the 17th, the latter still holding with a strong picket line the enemy's works. But instead of putting these divisions into the enemy's works to hold them, he permitted them to halt and rest some distance in the rear of his own line. Between 4 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon the enemy attacked and drove in his pickets and reoccupied his old line.

On the night of the 20th and morning of the 21st a lodgment was effected by General Butler, with one brigade of infantry, on the north bank of the James, at Deep Bottom, and connected the pontoon bridge with Bermuda Hundred.

On the 19th General Sheridan, on his return from his expedition against the Virginia Central railroad, arrived at the White House just as the enemy's cavalry was about to attack it, and compelled it to retire. The result of this expedition was, that General Sheridan met the enemy's cavalry near Trevillian Station on the morning of the 11th of June, whom he attacked, and after an obstinate contest drove from the field in complete rout. He left his dead and nearly all his wounded in our hands, and about four hundred prisoners and several hundred horses. On the 12th he destroyed the railroad from Trevillian Station to Louisa Court House. This occupied until 3 o'clock p. m., when he advanced in the direction of Gordonsville. He found the enemy re-enforced by infantry, behind well-constructed rifle-pits, about five miles from the latter place, and too strong to successfully assault. On the extreme right, however, his reserve brigade carried the enemy's works twice, and was twice driven therefrom by infantry. Night closed the contest. Not having sufficient ammunition to continue the engagement, and his animals being without forage, (the country furnishing but inferior grazing,) and hearing nothing from General Hunter, he withdrew his command to the north side of the North Anna, and commenced his return march, reaching White House at the time before stated. After breaking up the depot at that place he moved to the James river, which he reached safely after heavy fighting. He commenced crossing on the 25th, near Fort Powhatan, without further molestation, and rejoined the army of the Potomac.

On the 22d General Wilson, with his own division of cavalry of the army of the Potomac, and General Kautz's division of cavalry of the army of the James, moved against the enemy's railroads south of Richmond. Striking the Weldon railroad at Ream's Station, destroying the depot and several miles of the road and the Southside road about fifteen miles from Petersburg, to near Nottoway Station, where he met and defeated a force of the enemy's cavalry, he reached Burksville Station on the afternoon of the 23d, and from there destroyed the Danville railroad to Roanoke bridge, a distance of twenty-five miles, where he found the enemy in force, and in a position from which he could not dislodge him. He then commenced his return march, and on the 28th met the enemy's cavalry in force at the Weldon railroad crossing of Stony creek, where he had a severe but not decisive engagement. Thence he made a detour from his left, with a view of reaching Ream's Station, (supposing it to be in our possession.) At this place he was met by the enemy's cavalry, supported by infantry, and forced to retire, with the loss of his artillery and trains. In this last encounter General Kautz, with a part of his command, became separated, and made his way into our lines. General Wilson, with the remainder of his force, succeeded in crossing the Nottoway river and coming in safely on our left and rear. The damage to the enemy in this expedition more than compensated for the losses we sustained. It severed all connexion by railroad with Richmond for several weeks.

With a view of cutting the enemy's railroad from near Richmond to the Anna rivers and making him wary of the situation of his army in the Shenan-

doah, and, in the event of failure in this, to take advantage of his necessary withdrawal of troops from Petersburg, to explode a mine that had been prepared in front of the 9th corps and assault the enemy's lines at that place, on the night of the 26th of July the 2d corps and two divisions of the cavalry corps and Kautz's cavalry were crossed to the north bank of the James river and joined the force General Butler had there. On the 27th the enemy was driven from his intrenched position, with the loss of four pieces of artillery. On the 28th our lines were extended from Deep Bottom to New Market road, but in getting this position were attacked by the enemy in heavy force. The fighting lasted for several hours, resulting in considerable loss to both sides. The first object of this move having failed, by reason of the very large force thrown there by the enemy, I determined to take advantage of the diversion made, by assaulting Petersburg before he could get his force back there. One division of the 2d corps was withdrawn on the night of the 28th, and moved during the night to the rear of the 18th corps, to relieve that corps in the line, that it might be foot-loose in the assault to be made. The other two divisions of the 2d corps and Sheridan's cavalry were crossed over on the night of the 29th and moved in front of Petersburg. On the morning of the 30th, between four and five o'clock, the mine was sprung, blowing up a battery and most of a regiment, and the advance of the assaulting column, formed of the 9th corps, immediately took possession of the crater made by the explosion, and the line for some distance to the right and left of it, and a detached line in front of it, but for some cause failed to advance promptly to the ridge beyond. Had they done this, I have every reason to believe that Petersburg would have fallen. Other troops were immediately pushed forward, but the time consumed in getting them up enabled the enemy to rally from his surprise (which had been complete) and get forces to this point for its defence. The captured line thus held being untenable, and of no advantage to us, the troops were withdrawn, but not without heavy loss. Thus terminated in disaster what promised to be the most successful assault of the campaign.

Immediately upon the enemy's ascertaining that General Hunter was retreating from Lynchburg by way of the Kanawha river, thus laying the Shenandoah valley open for raids into Maryland and Pennsylvania, he returned northward, and moved down that valley. As soon as this movement of the enemy was ascertained, General Hunter, who had reached the Kanawha river, was directed to move his troops without delay, by river and railroad, to Harper's Ferry; but owing to the difficulty of navigation by reason of low water and breaks in the railroad, great delay was experienced in getting there. It became necessary, therefore, to find other troops to check this movement of the enemy. For this purpose the 6th corps was taken from the armies operating against Richmond, to which was added the 19th corps, then fortunately beginning to arrive in Hampton roads from the Gulf department, under orders issued immediately after the ascertainment of the result of the Red River expedition. The garrisons of Baltimore and Washington were at this time made up of heavy artillery regiments, hundred-days men, and detachments from the invalid corps. One division under command of General Ricketts, of the 6th corps, was sent to Baltimore, and the remaining two divisions of the 6th corps, under General Wright, were subsequently sent to Washington. On the 3d of July the enemy approached Martinsburg; General Sigel, who was in command of our forces there, retreated across the Potomac at Shepardstown; and General Weber, commanding at Harper's Ferry, crossed the river and occupied Maryland heights. On the 6th the enemy occupied Hagerstown, moving a strong column towards Frederick city. General Wallace with Ricketts's division and his own command, the latter mostly new and undisciplined troops, pushed out from Baltimore with great promptness, and met the enemy in force on the Monocacy, near the crossing of the railroad bridge. His force was not sufficient to insure success, but he fought

the enemy nevertheless, and although it resulted in a defeat to our arms, yet it detained the enemy and thereby served to enable General Wright to reach Washington with two divisions of the 6th corps, and the advance of the 19th corps, before him. From Monocacy the enemy moved on Washington, his cavalry advance reaching Rockville on the evening of the 10th. On the 12th a reconnoissance was thrown out in front of Fort Stevens, to ascertain the enemy's position and force. A severe skirmish ensued, in which we lost about 280 in killed and wounded. The enemy's loss was probably greater. He commenced retreating during the night. Learning the exact condition of affairs at Washington, I requested by telegraph, at 11.45 p. m. on the 12th, the assignment of Major General H. G. Wright to the command of all the troops that could be made available to operate in the field against the enemy, and directed that he should get outside of the trenches with all the force he could, and push Early to the last moment. General Wright commenced the pursuit on the 13th; on the 18th the enemy was overtaken at Snicker's ferry, on the Shenandoah, when a sharp skirmish occurred; and on the 20th General Averill encountered and defeated a portion of the rebel army at Winchester, capturing four pieces of artillery and several hundred prisoners.

Learning that Early was retreating south towards Lynchburg or Richmond, I directed that the 6th and 19th corps be got back to the armies operating against Richmond, so that they might be used in a movement against Lee before the return of the troops sent by him into the valley; and that Hunter should remain in the Shenandoah valley, keeping between any force of the enemy and Washington, acting on the defensive as much as possible. I felt that if the enemy had any notion of returning, the fact would be developed before the 6th and 19th corps could leave Washington. Subsequently the 19th corps was excepted from the order to return to the James.

About the 25th it became evident that the enemy was again advancing upon Maryland and Pennsylvania, and the 6th corps, then at Washington, was ordered back to the vicinity of Harper's Ferry. The rebel force moved down the valley, and sent a raiding party into Pennsylvania, which on the 30th burned Chambersburg and then retreated, pursued by our cavalry, towards Cumberland. They were met and defeated by General Kelly, and with diminished numbers escaped into the mountains of West Virginia. From the time of the first raid the telegraph wires were frequently down between Washington and City Point, making it necessary to transmit messages a part of the way by boat. It took from twenty-four to thirty-six hours to get despatches through and return answers back; so that often orders would be given, and then information would be received showing a different state of facts from those on which they were based, causing a confusion and apparent contradiction of orders that must have considerably embarrassed those who had to execute them, and rendered operations against the enemy less effective than they otherwise would have been. To remedy this evil, it was evident to my mind that some person should have the supreme command of all the forces in the departments of West Virginia, Washington, Susquehanna and the middle department, and I so recommended.

On the 2d of August I ordered General Sheridan to report in person to Major General Halleck, chief of staff, at Washington, with a view to his assignment to the command of all the forces against Early. At this time the enemy was concentrated in the neighborhood of Winchester, whilst our forces, under General Hunter, were concentrated on the Monocacy, at the crossing of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, leaving open to the enemy western Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. From where I was, I hesitated to give positive orders for the movement of our forces at Monocacy, lest by so doing I should expose Washington. Therefore, on the 4th I left City Point to visit Hunter's command, and determine for myself what was best to be done. On arrival there, and after consultation with General Hunter, I issued to him the following instructions:

MONOCACY BRIDGE, MD.,

August 5, 1864—8 p. m.

"GENERAL: Concentrate all your available force without delay in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry, leaving only such railroad guards and garrisons for public property as may be necessary. Use, in this concentrating, the railroads, if by so doing time can be saved. From Harper's Ferry, if it is found that the enemy has moved north of the Potomac in large force, push north, following him and attacking him wherever found; follow him if driven south of the Potomac, as long as it is safe to do so. If it is ascertained that the enemy has but a small force north of the Potomac, then push south with the main force, detaching under a competent commander a sufficient force to look after the raiders, and drive them to their homes. In detaching such a force, the brigade of cavalry now en route from Washington via Rockville may be taken into account.

"There are now on their way to join you three other brigades of the best cavalry, numbering, at least, 5,000 men and horses. These will be instructed, in the absence of further orders, to join you by the south side of the Potomac. One brigade will probably start tomorrow. In pushing up the Shenandoah valley, where it is expected you will have to go first or last, it is desirable that nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage, and stock wanted for the use of your command; such as cannot be consumed, destroy. It is not desirable that the buildings should be destroyed—they should rather be protected—but the people should be informed that so long as an army can subsist among them, recurrences of these raids must be expected, and we are determined to stop them at all hazards.

"Bear in mind the object is to drive the enemy south, and to do this you want to keep him always in sight. Be guided in your course by the course he takes.

"Make your own arrangements for supplies of all kinds, giving regular vouchers for such as may be taken from loyal citizens in the country through which you march.

"U. S. GRANT, Lieutenant General.

"Major General D. HUNTER."

The troops were immediately put in motion, and the advance reached Halltown that night.

General Hunter having, in our conversation, expressed a willingness to be relieved from command, I telegraphed to have General Sheridan, then at Washington, sent to Harper's Ferry by the morning train, with orders to take general command of all the troops in the field, and to call on General Hunter at Monocacy, who would turn over to him my letter of instructions. I remained at Monocacy, until General Sheridan arrived, on the morning of the 6th, and, after a conference with him in relation to military affairs in that vicinity, I returned to City Point by way of Washington.

On the 7th of August the middle department and the departments of West Virginia, Washington, and Susquehanna were constituted into the "Middle military division," and Major General Sheridan was assigned to temporary command of the same.

Two divisions of cavalry, commanded by Generals Torbert and Wilson, were sent to Sheridan from the army of the Potomac. The first reached him at Harper's Ferry about the 11th of August.

His operations during the month of August and the fore part of September were both of an offensive and defensive character, resulting in many severe skirmishes, principally by the cavalry, in which we were generally successful, but no general engagement took place. The two armies lay in such a position—the enemy on the west bank of the Opequan creek covering Winchester, and our forces in front of Berryville—that either could bring on a battle at any time. Defeat to us would lay open to the enemy the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania for long distances before another army could be interposed to check him. Under these circumstances, I hesitated about allowing the initiative to be taken. Finally, the use of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, which were both obstructed by the enemy, became so indispensably necessary to us, and the importance of relieving Pennsylvania and Maryland from continuously threatened invasion so great, that I determined the risk should be taken. But fearing to telegraph the order for an attack without knowing more than I did of General Sheridan's feelings as to what

would be the probable result, I left City Point on the 15th of September to visit him at his headquarters, to decide, after conference with him, what should be done. I met him at Charleston, and he pointed out so distinctly how each army lay; what he could do the moment he was authorized, and expressed such confidence of success, that I saw there were but two words of instructions necessary—Go in! For the convenience of forage, the teams for supplying the army were kept at Harper's Ferry. I asked him if he could get out his teams and supplies in time to make an attack on the ensuing Tuesday morning. His reply was, that he could before daylight on Monday. He was off promptly to time, and I may here add that the result was such that I have never since deemed it necessary to visit General Sheridan before giving him orders.

Early on the morning of the 19th General Sheridan attacked General Early at the crossing on the Opequan creek, and after a most sanguinary and bloody battle, lasting until 5 o'clock in the evening, defeated him with heavy loss, carrying his entire position from Opequan creek to Winchester, capturing several thousand prisoners and five pieces of artillery. The enemy rallied and made a stand in a strong position at Fisher's Hill, where he was attacked and again defeated with heavy loss on the 20th. Sheridan pursued him with great energy through Harrisonburg, Staunton, and the gaps of the Blue Ridge. After stripping the upper valley of most of the supplies and provisions for the rebel army, he returned to Strasburg, and took position on the north side of Cedar creek.

Having received considerable re-enforcements, General Early again returned to the valley, and on the 9th of October his cavalry encountered ours near Strasburg, where the rebels were defeated with the loss of eleven pieces of artillery and 350 prisoners. On the night of the 18th the enemy crossed the mountains which separated the branches of the Shenandoah, forded the north fork, and early on the morning of the 19th, under cover of the darkness and the fog, surprised and turned our left flank, and captured the batteries which enfiladed our whole line. Our troops fell back with heavy loss and in much confusion, but were finally rallied between Middletown and Newtown. At this juncture General Sheridan, who was at Winchester when the battle commenced, arrived on the field, arranged his lines just in time to repulse a heavy attack of the enemy, and immediately assuming the offensive, he attacked in turn with great vigor. The enemy was defeated with great slaughter and the loss of most of his artillery and trains and the trophies he had captured in the morning. The wreck of his army escaped during the night, and fled in the direction of Staunton and Lynchburg. Pursuit was made to Mount Jackson. Thus ended this, the enemy's last attempt to invade the north via the Shenandoah valley. I was now enabled to return the 6th corps to the army of the Potomac, and to send one division from Sheridan's army to the army of the James, and another to Savannah, Georgia, to hold Sherman's new acquisitions on the sea-coast, and thus enable him to move without detaching from his force for that purpose.

Reports from various sources led me to believe that the enemy had detached three divisions from Petersburg to re-enforce Early in the Shenandoah valley. I therefore sent the 2d corps and Gregg's division of cavalry, of the army of the Potomac, and a force of General Butler's army, on the night of the 13th of August, to threaten Richmond from the north side of the James, to prevent him from sending troops away, and, if possible, to draw back those sent. In this move we captured six pieces of artillery and several hundred prisoners, detained troops that were under marching orders, and ascertained that but one division, (Kershaw's) of the three reputed detached, had gone.

The enemy having withdrawn heavily from Petersburg to resist this movement, the 5th corps, General Warren commanding, was moved out on the 18th and took possession of the Weldon railroad. During the day he had considerable fighting. To regain possession of the road, the enemy made repeated and desperate assaults, but was each time repulsed with great loss. On the

night of the 20th the troops on the north side of the James were withdrawn, and Hancock and Gregg returned to the front of Petersburg. On the 25th the 2d corps and Gregg's division of cavalry, while at Ream's Station destroying the railroad, were attacked, and after desperate fighting, a part of our line gave way, and five pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the enemy.

By the 12th of September a branch railroad was completed from the City Point and Petersburg railroad to the Weldon railroad, enabling us to supply, without difficulty, in all weather, the army in front of Petersburg.

The extension of our lines across the Weldon railroad compelled the enemy to so extend his that it seemed he could have but few troops north of the James for the defence of Richmond. On the night of the 28th the 10th corps, Major General Birney, and the 18th corps, Major General Ord commanding, of General Bulter's army, were crossed to the north side of the James, and advanced on the morning of the 29th, carrying the very strong fortifications and intrenchments below Chapin's farm, known as Fort Harrison, capturing fifteen pieces of artillery and the New Market road and intrenchments. This success was followed up by a gallant assault upon Fort Gillmore, immediately in front of the Chapin farm fortifications, in which we were repulsed with heavy loss. Kautz's cavalry was pushed forward on the road to the right of this, supported by infantry, and reached the enemy's inner line, but was unable to get further. The position captured from the enemy was so threatening to Richmond that I determined to hold it. The enemy made several desperate attempts to dislodge us, all of which were unsuccessful, and for which he paid dearly. On the morning of the 30th General Meade sent out a reconnoissance, with a view to attacking the enemy's line if it was found sufficiently weakened by withdrawal of troops to the north side. In this reconnoissance we captured and held the enemy's works near Poplar Spring church. In the afternoon troops moving to get to the left of the point gained were attacked by the enemy in heavy force, and compelled to fall back until supported by the forces holding the captured works. Our cavalry under Gregg was also attacked, but repulsed the enemy with great loss.

On the 7th of October the enemy attacked Kautz's cavalry north of the James, and drove it back with heavy loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, and the loss of all the artillery—eight or nine pieces. This he followed up by an attack on our intrenched infantry line, but was repulsed with severe slaughter. On the 13th a reconnoissance was sent out by General Butler, with a view to drive the enemy from some new works he was constructing, which resulted in very heavy loss to us.

On the 27th the army of the Potomac, leaving only sufficient men to hold its fortified line, moved by the enemy's right flank. The 2d corps, followed by two divisions of the 5th corps, with the cavalry in advance and covering our left flank, forced a passage of Hatcher's run, and moved up the south side of it towards the South Side railroad, until the 2d corps and part of the cavalry reached the Boydton plank road, where it crosses Hatcher's run. At this point we were six miles distant from the South Side railroad, which I had hoped by this movement to reach and hold. But finding that we had not reached the end of the enemy's fortifications, and no place presenting itself for a successful assault by which he might be doubled up and shortened, I determined to withdraw to within our fortified line. Orders were given accordingly. Immediately upon receiving a report that General Warren had connected with General Hancock, I returned to my headquarters. Soon after I left, the enemy moved out across Hatcher's run, in the gap between Generals Hancock and Warren, which was not closed as reported, and made a desperate attack on General Hancock's right and rear. General Hancock immediately faced his corps to meet it, and after a bloody combat drove the enemy within his works, and withdrew that night to his old position.