



McLEAN'S HOUSE.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE RETREAT AND SURRENDER OF LEE.

The Line of Retreat.—Number of Lee's Army.—The Pursuit.—Lee reaches Amelia Court-house.—Finds no Supplies.—Sheridan reaches Jetersville.—Position of Lee.—He resumes his Retreat.—Sheridan's Plan of Assault.—Engagement at Sailor's Creek.—Capture of Ewell's Corps.—Straggling from the Confederate Army.—Ord's Column reaches Farmville.—Reade attacks and is repulsed.—The Confederates recross the Appomattox, make a stand, and repulse Humphreys.—They continue their Retreat.—Sheridan's Movements.—A Scout reports Supplies at Appomattox Station.—Custer sent forward.—He captures the Trains and heads off Lee's Retreat.—Ord and Griffin urged forward.—The Confederate Retreat on the 8th of April.—Reach Appomattox Station.—Are assailed by Custer and driven back.—Situation on the 9th.—Gordon attempts to break through.—He fails.—Asks a Suspension of Hostilities.—Lee and Grant.—Their Correspondence.—Conference of Confederate Generals.—Lee seeks Grant.—Their Meeting.—Terms of Surrender.—The Correspondence between Grant and Lee.—The Paroles.—Lee's Farewell Address to his Army.—His Return to Richmond.—The formal Surrender.

WHEN Lee abandoned Richmond and Petersburg, his purpose was to retreat to Danville, where he hoped to unite with Johnston. The first necessity was to concentrate his widely-spread forces. The point of junction fixed upon was Chesterfield Court-house, midway between Petersburg and Richmond, but to the west of both cities. The forces at Petersburg thus at first headed northwestward, those at Richmond southwestward. Leaving the burning warehouses of Petersburg and the fast-spreading conflagration of Richmond behind them, the troops plunged into the thick darkness of a moonless night. When all were brought together there were about 40,000 men.¹ The men, unencumbered by rations, moved rapidly, and at dawn had put nearly a score of miles between them and Petersburg. All the next day they pressed on with no signs of an enemy on their track. To Lee it seemed that the great peril was overpast. His troubled brow lightened. He had accomplished the almost hopeless task of getting his army safely on its way, and had gained a start of many miles. One more day unmolested, and he would have passed the junction of the Southside and Danville Railroads, and then, by destroying roads and bridges behind him, he could easily keep ahead of any possible pursuit. But he had now to deal with a different opponent from the one who had suffered him after Antietam to slip quietly across the Potomac, or that other who failed to follow up the retreat from Gettysburg.

Early on Monday morning Grant put his pursuing columns in motion, not following the line of Lee's retreat, but moving so as to intercept him before he should reach the junction of the Southside and Danville roads. This is at Burkesville, fifty-two miles almost due west from Petersburg. If the Confederates passed that point, they were safely on their way to Danville, and could laugh at present pursuit. If the Federals reached that place, or any other on the railroad nearer Richmond ahead of the Confederates, Lee's purpose of joining Johnston would be frustrated.

The Appomattox River, rising in the county of the same name, runs east-

ward for fifty miles toward Richmond. At a distance of thirty miles from the capital it bends sharply southward for twenty miles, and then, resuming its eastward course, reaches Petersburg. The Danville Railroad, along which lay Lee's proposed line of retreat, runs southwestward, crossing the Appomattox just at its southward bend. For a rapid day's march Lee's line of retreat lay on the north side of the river, which he had then to cross in order to head toward Danville. Grant's pursuing, or rather intercepting columns, moved upon the south side of the river, which ran between, and thus it happened that for the first two days the two armies, though heading for the same point, never came in sight of each other. The Union army moved in two parallel lines. Ord, with his two half corps of the Army of the James, marched along the Southside Railroad straight for the junction at Burkesville. The other and larger column, to the north, kept close to the Appomattox. This column consisted of the cavalry and the Fifth Corps under Sheridan, followed closely by the corps of Wright and Humphreys. In the rear of this was the Ninth Corps, which was left behind to occupy Petersburg, form the rear-guard of the whole army, and cover the communications with City Point.

As the morning of Monday, April 3, broke, it was doubtful whether pursuers or pursued would first reach the Danville Road. The chances were rather in favor of Lee, for he had about the same distance, with the advantage of better roads, and was at the outset unencumbered with provision trains. So all day he marched cheerily on. Making a brief halt during the night, he crossed the Appomattox at Goode's Bridge, and early on the morning of the 4th reached Amelia Court-house, on the Danville Road. Here, according to his carefully-planned arrangements, he was to have found supplies for his troops, who had started out with only food for a single day. He had ordered that trains from the South, loaded with a quarter of a million of rations, should await him here. The trains arrived duly on the evening of Sunday. They were met by orders from Richmond to press on to the capital in order to carry off the persons and archives belonging to the government. In the hurry and confusion of the moment, no order was given for the unloading of the trains, and so, with all their stores of food, they moved on to Richmond, and when Lee reached the Court-house he found not a morsel of food for his famishing troops. Thus, at a moment when every hour was precious, Lee had no alternative but to halt, break up his force into foraging squads, and sweep the region round for such scanty supplies of food as might be picked up. This enforced delay proved fatal.

Sheridan, on the other side of the Appomattox, had kept up a neck-and-neck race with Lee. His cavalry, striking that of the enemy at Deep Creek, routed them, capturing many prisoners, and leaving Griffin, who was close behind, to pick up whatever spoils were left behind. Lee's enforced delay at Amelia Court-house enabled Sheridan's cavalry to push ahead of him, and strike the Danville Road. Up this they moved, and late in the afternoon the Fifth Corps also gained the railroad at Jetersville, seven miles south of the Court-house. Here they intrenched themselves, resolved to contest the passage until the main body could come up. Had Lee been able to move his army that afternoon, he might possibly have broken through,¹ and kept up his retreat. Such, indeed, was apparently Lee's design; for he sent on a dispatch, here intercepted, to the commissaries at Danville and Lynchburg, directing 200,000 rations to meet him at Burkesville. But the Confederate troops were in no condition to fight, much less to make a rapid march that day. They had been pushed to the utmost limits of human en-

¹ I am aware that this number is far in excess of that usually assigned. Thus Pollard (*Lost Cause*, 703) says: "With the additions made to the Petersburg section of troops from the Richmond lines and from Lee's extreme right which had crossed the Appomattox above Petersburg" [that is, those who, having been cut off by Wright, retreated before Miles], that resourceful commander had now well in hand more than 20,000 troops." There is some ambiguity in this statement, as it is not clearly said whether in this number are to be included those from the north of the James and from Richmond, 15,000 at least. Elsewhere (*Southern History of the War*, ii., 507) he says, "Lee had on the lines he had abandoned between 27,000 and 28,000." This would seem not to include that portion cut off by Wright. Swinton (*Army of the Potomac*, 605) puts the entire number at 25,000; and (*Twelve Decisive Battles*, 499) says "the army was reduced to almost 20,000 effective men." But the official returns show that Lee finally surrendered 27,805 men (*Report of the Secretary of War*, 1865, p. 45); and Pollard (*Lost Cause*, 711) says, "About 7500 men laid down their arms; but the capitulation included in addition some 18,000 stragglers, who were unarmed, and who came up to claim the benefit of surrender and accept paroles."—Besides these there were, as will be seen, not far from 10,000 prisoners captured during the retreat; and there were, moreover, considerable losses in killed and wounded. Perfect accuracy where official reports are wanting is impossible; but I think, in placing Lee's entire force when the retreat was begun at 40,000, I am rather below than above the true number.

¹ "It seems to me that this was the only chance the army of Northern Virginia had of saving itself, which might have been done had General Lee promptly attacked and driven back the comparatively small force opposed to him, and pursued his march to Burkesville Junction."—*Sheridan's Report*.

duration. Half of them were broken up into foraging parties, and all were in a state of starvation. Moreover, their long trains of ammunition, stretching for thirty miles, must at all hazards be protected, for these, if lost, could not be replaced. So Lee, sending forward a portion of his trains under a cavalry escort, was compelled to lie at Amelia Court-house all that day and until the afternoon of the next. Humphreys's corps now came up, Meade accompanying it, but, being unwell, he placed it under the charge of Sheridan. Sheridan pushed out Davies with a brigade of cavalry to strike the moving trains. Davies routed the escort, destroyed 180 wagons, and captured five guns, with many prisoners. Meade now requested that the Fifth Corps should be returned to his immediate command. Sheridan complied with reluctance. He had learned the worth of that corps, with which not a week before he had been loth to undertake an offensive operation.

Wright's corps now came up, and three fourths of the army of the Potomac were concentrated at Jetersville. On the morning of the 6th it was put in motion toward Amelia Court-house; but Lee, anticipating such a movement, had the evening before moved off. Bending a little to the north, he turned the head of the advancing force, and Sheridan, upon nearing Amelia, found that Lee had given him the slip, and had gained a full half day's march to the westward.

The faces of the pursuing force were now turned from the north to the west. To secure greater rapidity, it was divided into three columns, Humphreys in the rear of the retreating enemy, Griffin on the south, and Wright on the north of it. Lee's retreat was now painfully slow. Worn out, half famished, and encumbered by the wagons, which the half-starved animals could hardly drag over the rough roads, they could barely move half a mile an hour. The advantage of the start was soon lost. Sheridan, whose command was now reduced to the cavalry, soon came upon the left flank of the long column. The trains were the tempting objects of attack, and against these Sheridan directed his fiery energy. Crook, who was in the advance, was to attack; if he found the enemy too strong, he was to hold them in check, while another division passing was to strike farther on, and so on alternating until a weak point was at last found. Crook found the enemy too strong to be driven; he held his own, while Custer passed him and found a weak point at Sailor's Creek, a small tributary of the Appomattox. Crook and Devin coming up, the whole force charged the train, dispersed the guards, capturing hundreds of prisoners and sixteen guns, destroying four hundred wagons, and cutting off a large body of the enemy from their line of retreat.

The troops thus cut off were Ewell's corps and the remnants of Pickett's division who had escaped from the disaster of Five Forks—in all, some six or eight thousand strong. This force thus isolated was a prize so tempting that Sheridan, not for the first time, deviated from the principle that he had laid down that cavalry should not be employed to attack infantry in position, and gave Merritt permission to make a mounted charge against their lines. The charge was gallantly made by Stagg's brigade, which dashed up to, but were unable to break the hostile lines. But the charge accomplished its main purpose. It detained the enemy for a space. Sheridan, who had waited behind, sent back a message urging Wright's corps to come up with the utmost speed. He was still unaware of Custer's complete success in cutting the Confederate line two miles beyond. But information came to him in an unexpected way. A single horseman dashed up. He was one of Custer's men, who had rode right into the enemy's works, had been a prisoner for a brief space, and then, getting clear of his captors, had fairly passed through the hostile troops and brought tidings of what had been accomplished, and that Custer and Crook were pressing hard upon the opposite side. Sheridan, in the hurry of the moment, forgot the name of the trooper, but he must have kept the exploit in mind, for in a note added long after to his report he mentions that he had ascertained that it was private William Richardson, of the Ohio Veteran Cavalry. The head of Wright's division now came up, and Ewell and Pickett faced about and met them with such a hot fire that Seymour's division was checked until Wheaton's came up to its support. Pickett's remnant was overpowered and broke into rout. Ewell made a brief stand, and from a commanding position poured in a fire which broke a portion of the assailants who were advancing over a patch of open ground. But now a general charge was made. Stagg struck one flank, Custer the rear, while Wright assailed in front. Humphreys, a little to the right, also struck a body of the enemy, destroyed two hundred wagons, and made many prisoners. Ewell was outnumbered and completely surrounded. His whole corps threw down their arms. Ewell, Custis Lee, and Ker-shaw, with six or eight thousand men, surrendered themselves as prisoners.¹

The straggling from Lee's army had become enormous. Quite a quarter of its remaining effective force was now lopped off at a blow. The remainder had, however, won a brief respite, and moved on. Their sufferings from hunger during the last days had been fearful. Save the single ration which they had brought with them, and the scanty scraps gathered by some foraging parties, they had been without food since they had left Petersburg. Company after company was sent out into the woods to browse upon the tender shoots of the trees just bursting into bud.² More pitiable even than the condition of the troops was that of the animals. At every step the jaded horses and mules sank down. At every difficult place the way was blocked up with wagons which could not be moved, and which were set on fire to save them from falling into the hands of the enemy. The exploding ammunition sounded like the continuous noise of a great battle. The spirits of the men gave way at every step. They threw away their arms by regi-

ments, too weak to carry them. Thousands of these unarmed men wandered away, the officers finally ceasing to make any effort to restrain the straggling. Other thousands dragged themselves along mechanically by the side or at the rear of the few who yet kept their ranks, and held on to their arms; for there was yet, after the disaster at Sailor's Creek, a solid core of some ten thousand in whom was now concentrated all the vitality of the great Army of Northern Virginia. So the army struggled on, heading for Farmville, where they hoped to recross the Appomattox, and, by burning the bridges behind them, place the river once more between them and their eager pursuers.

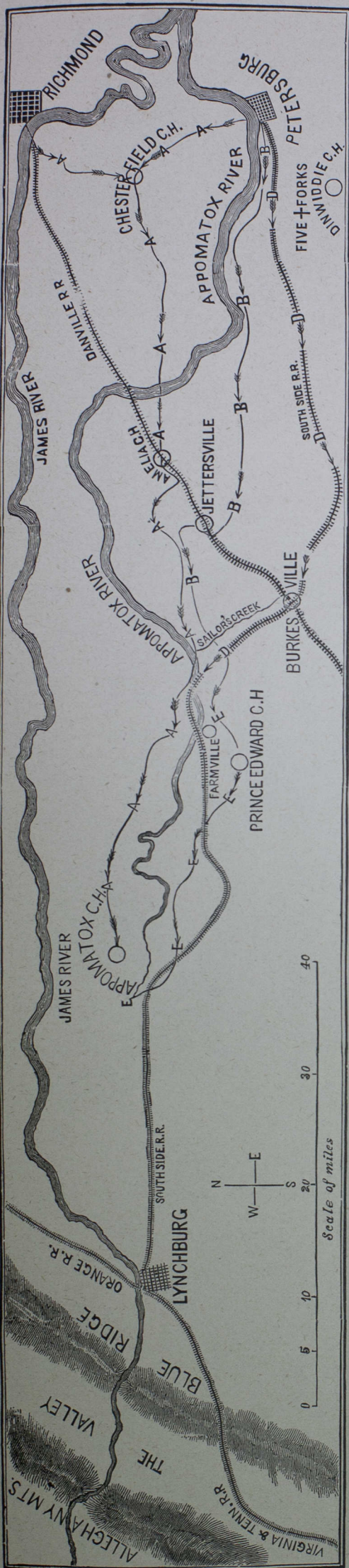
While the Army of the Potomac thus pressed hard upon the Confederates, Ord, with his command from the Army of the James, had, on the evening of the 5th, reached Burkesville. Next morning he moved northward toward Farmville, hoping to head off the enemy there. Approaching this place, he sent Reade forward with a couple of regiments and a squadron of cavalry. He encountered the head of Lee's column and charged it vigorously. His small force was repulsed with heavy loss, he himself being among the slain. But this attack delayed the crossing until the remainder of Ord's force came up, whereupon the Confederates intrenched themselves too strongly to be assailed. During the night they began to cross the river at various points, proposing to destroy the bridges behind them. This was delayed an hour too long. The last of the stragglers had just got over, and the fuel which was to consume the bridges was just lighted, when Barlow's division of the Sixth Corps came up, drove off the Confederate rear-guard, saved the highway bridge close by the high railroad bridge, and secured the means of crossing the river. The Confederates fell back step by step to positions which had been previously selected until toward night, when their whole remaining force was seen drawn up in line of battle in a position covering the roads, their batteries sweeping a gentle slope of half a mile in their front. Humphreys, keeping Barlow in their front, sent Miles around to attack them upon their left. The assault was repelled with heavy loss; and then, under cover of night, the Confederates resumed their retreat eastward toward Appomattox Station, where supplies were awaiting them. They hoped that the start thus gained would enable them to reach Lynchburg, a score of miles beyond, where they would pass the mountains, and emerge into the great Valley of Virginia. Here they might hope for at least a temporary respite from pursuit.

Sheridan, having learned that Ord had failed to cut off the enemy at Farmville, apprehended that it might be Lee's purpose to sweep southwestwardly by rapid marches, heading the pursuing columns, and, regaining the Danville Road, follow up his original plan of joining Johnston in North Carolina. He therefore sent his cavalry in that direction. Reaching Prince Edward Court-house and discovering no traces of the enemy, he sent his divisions to reconnoitre in various directions to find the whereabouts of Lee's army. Crook, crossing the Appomattox, struck the main body near Farmville, assailed their trains, was repulsed, and recrossed the river. On the morning of the 8th the cavalry was concentrated at Prospect Station. Here Sheridan was informed by one of his scouts that at Appomattox Station, twenty-eight miles distant, were four trains of cars laden with provisions for Lee's army. The report of this scout, as the event proved, gave shape to the events of the two closing days of the campaign. It showed just whither Lee was now heading. Instead of aiming at Danville, he was moving straight for Lynchburg. The cavalry were forthwith pushed forward to seize these trains. Custer, who was in the advance, reached Appomattox Station at midnight. The Confederate van had reached the point just before, and had gone into camp. Dashing upon the rear of the trains, Custer cut them off from returning to Lynchburg, captured them, sent them to the rear, and then, without even waiting to reform, burst upon the Confederate force, and drove it pell-mell northward toward Appomattox Court-house, capturing, besides the trains, twenty-five guns and a park of wagons. Sheridan was little behind. He sent back word to Ord and Griffin, who, with their infantry corps, were behind, that if they only pressed on there was no escape for the enemy. Meanwhile he disposed of his cavalry in such a manner as to cover the roads toward Lynchburg, resolving to contest them step by step until the infantry could come up.

The Confederates having, on the evening of the 7th as it seemed, fairly shaken off the attack of Humphreys on their rear, pressed forward all that night and the next day with renewed hopes. If one from a balloon could have overlooked the region lying directly under his eye, he would have seen at a glance that the whole issue turned upon the relative speed of the pursuers and pursued for a few hours. Lee's line of retreat lay along a narrow neck of land between the Appomattox and the James, which here ran parallel at a distance of seven or eight miles. The only avenue of escape was to the west, for on the north was the James, the bridges over which had all been destroyed two months before to prevent the march of Sheridan; on the south was the Appomattox, difficult of passage, and covered on its opposite side by Ord, Griffin, and Sheridan; eastward, and pressing after in the rear, were Humphreys and Wright. For the first few hours of the day the retreating army moved slowly along by-paths running through thickets of oak and pine. At noon they struck the main road, and then moved rapidly. Every hour they appeared to be gaining upon the pursuers, for the noise of a single gun could not be heard in their rear. When, as night was falling, the head of the column came to Appomattox Station, the rear being but four miles behind, they went into camp with a feeling of security to which they had long been strangers. The wearied soldiers lay down to rest, while the bands played merrily. Just then, like a thunderbolt, Custer's cavalry burst upon them. Orders were hastily given that all the extra artillery should be cut down and the commands disbanded.

¹ No actual count of the prisoners at Sailor's Creek seems to have been made. Sheridan roughly estimates them at 10,000. Grant, probably more accurately, states the number at 6000 or 7000. Pollard gives the number of Ewell's and Pickett's men at about 5000.

² Fletcher, iii., 516, upon authority of one of Longstreet's staff.



THE RETREAT AND PURSUIT OF LEE.
 This plan represents, in a general way, the routes pursued in the retreat and pursuit. A A indicates the line of Lee's retreat, the two columns from Richmond and Petersburg joining at Chesterfield Court-house. It indicates the march of Grant's right wing from Petersburg to Appomattox Court-house, and the march of the Union cavalry from Appomattox Court-house to Petersburg. B B indicates the route of the left column, Ord's command, along the Southside or Lynchburg Railroad to Burkesville, and thence to Farmville. — E E shows the march of Sheridan's cavalry, followed by Griffin and Ord, from Jetersville and Farmville to Appomattox Court-house. — From near Farmville the corps of Humphreys and Wright followed directly after Lee, in the line from that point indicated by A A. Lee's original design was to move from Amelia Court-house, through Burkesville, to Jetersville, and thence to Farmville. He was, however, intercepted to be joined by Johnston. Headed off at Jetersville, he next proposed to go to Lynchburg, and thence through the passes of the Blue Mountains into the Valley of Virginia.

But in the gathering darkness the extent of the peril could only be conjectured. There was certainly a Federal force right in their front; but it was apparently only cavalry, through which a way might most likely be forced. So, gathering together his army as best he might, Lee made preparations to attempt the passage at dawn. Gordon, who had brought up the rear, was sent to the front, passing the remnants of the wagon train, around which lingered thousands of men who, too weak to carry their arms, had flung them away along every mile of the road from Amelia Court-house. Early in the morning Gordon made reconnoissances in his front. He could see nothing but a line of dismounted cavalry to oppose his march. At ten o'clock his line was ordered to advance. Sheridan had directed his troops to fall back slowly, keeping a steady front, until Ord and Griffin, who had been marching all night, should come up and form in their rear. Gordon pressed on, flushed with what seemed an easy victory, when all at once Sheridan's dismounted cavalry moved to one side, like the withdrawing of a curtain, and disclosed a long line of infantry bearing straight down, while at the same moment the troopers sprang to saddle, ready to charge upon the flank of the unarmed men in the centre of the Confederate column. Had that charge been made, the whole Confederate force would have been ridden over like stubble. Gordon sent word to Lee in the rear that he was being driven back. What was to be done in such a case had already been decided. Lee mounted his horse and rode back toward the Union lines, while Gordon sent a flag of truce to the front, asking for a suspension of hostilities, for negotiations for surrender were then in progress.

Sheridan was in no mood for trifling. He had just been assailed; the smoke of the guns fired at him had hardly lifted. He had no wish to shed more blood; but, before he would order a suspension of an attack, the issue of which was patent to all, he must have positive assurance that a surrender was decided upon. Gordon came to the front and gave the required assurance. In a few moments officers of high rank upon both sides were mingling in friendly concourse, as though for four long years they had not confronted each other on a hundred battle-fields. There were men on each side who had been cadets together at West Point, and who had since fought side by side during the Mexican War, and later in the wearisome operations on the wide frontier. Now, bridging over the fatal four years, they could at last meet as friends. War has its amenities as well as its hostilities.

Lee, accompanied by two aids, was riding toward the Federal lines to meet Grant, prepared at this supreme moment to give an unconditional surrender of what remained of the remnant of the great army which had so long been under his command; for to this issue it had at last come. He hoped, indeed, to gain favorable terms, and in this hope he was encouraged by what had within a day or two occurred between himself and the commander of the Federal forces. The surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had for some days been a foregone conclusion on both sides. On the 6th, directly after the disaster at Sailor's Creek, such of the Confederate generals as could come together met at Anderson's tent, and concluded that the end was at hand, and the surrender must soon take place. They would take upon themselves the sole responsibility of advising the surrender. Pendleton was deputed to see that this opinion was presented to Lee; if possible, Longstreet was to be induced to act as intermediary. Events following closely after rendered superfluous any direct action upon this suggestion.

On the 7th Grant took the initiative. To Lee he wrote: "The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of farther resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia," and so, to shift from himself the responsibility of more bloodshed, he asked that Lee should surrender the army under his immediate command. Lee replied diplomatically, and in phrases which perhaps were meant to bear a double sense. He was not entirely of the opinion that farther resistance was hopeless; but yet, hoping to avoid useless bloodshed, he asked the terms which would be offered to him on condition of surrender. Grant, understanding this to be an offer of surrender, replied that peace being his only desire, the sole terms he would insist upon were that the men surrendered should not again take up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged; and he was ready to arrange with Lee, either personally or by representatives, for the definite terms of surrender. Lee's answer could not well be other than a surprise to Grant. He had not intended to propose to surrender, but only to ask the terms which Grant would propose. Indeed, "to be frank," he said, "I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for surrender." He could not, therefore, meet Grant with a view to surrender his army, but would be pleased to meet him to talk over the subject of the restoration of peace, "which should be the sole object of all." To understand Lee's motive in this reply, it is only necessary to look at the operations of the day. He had flung back the assault upon his rear, and was, to all appearance, safely on his way toward Lynchburg, and at least temporary safety. This was by no means the first time in which an attempt had been made to induce Grant to transcend his authority and undertake to make peace. He, indeed, knew clearly the limits of his functions. Moreover, if more had been needed, he had the express order of the President prohibiting him from dealing with the general question of peace. So to Lee's letter Grant responded sharply, but still with a kindly addition which left the way open for each military commander to do what he properly might. I have no authority, he said, to treat on the subject of peace, and so the meeting which you propose would do no good; but the terms upon which peace can be had are well understood: the South has only to lay down its arms.

So matters rested through the 8th of April and the night following. As day dawned on the 9th, raw and gusty, three Confederate generals sat around



POSITION OF THE CONFEDERATE ARMY WHEN THE SURRENDER WAS ANNOUNCED.

a camp-fire. They were Lee, dressed in a new uniform just donned, and contrasting with the rough garb by which he had long been best known in the army; Longstreet, his arm still in a sling, his old Wilderness wound yet unhealed; and Mahone, perhaps the best of Longstreet's surviving subordinates, who had come up from the rear to hold part in the informal council there assembled. These three were to decide upon what could be and must be done. Mahone, being junior officer, according to army rules was to speak first. His own division, he said, and one or two others, were able to fight; the rest of the army was so worn out as to be fit only for surrender. Longstreet corroborated this statement; yet both declared that the Army of Northern Virginia should surrender only upon honorable terms. Lee then, for the first time, imparted to his subordinates the substance of what had passed between himself and Grant. The terms proposed were honorable; but now, after two days' rejection, it was not certain that they would be conceded. Then—for some hours had passed in deliberation—came the message from Gordon that he was overmatched and falling back. The crisis had come and gone. Surrender on the best terms that could be obtained was all that was left. "General Longstreet," said Lee, "I leave you in charge here; I am going to hold a conference with General Grant." How that conference must result was no longer a matter of doubt. It must be surrender at all events, no matter upon what terms, for the remnant of the Confederate army, outnumbered, worn out, and surrounded, could neither fight nor fly. Its only alternative was to die or surrender. And so Gordon in front was warranted in assuring Sheridan that the surrender was now a foregone conclusion. The last shot fired by the Army of Northern Virginia was by the Richmond Howitzers, who had fired the first gun at Bethel just four years before, lacking a month and a day.

Lee rode to that part of the Union line where he expected to find Grant. Here he was met by Grant's note declining an interview to treat of the general question of peace. Grant had gone to meet Sheridan. Lee wrote a hasty note: "I received your note on the picket-line, whither I had come to meet you and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposition of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army. I now request an interview in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose." Two hours passed, and noon came before this request reached Grant. He returned a courteous reply, explaining the delay, and expressing his readiness to meet Lee at any point which he should select.

Appomattox Court-house, a hamlet of a half score houses, which had now become neutral ground, was the place chosen. The best house, that of Mr. McLean, was fixed upon for the interview. The owner was naturally astounded at the honor thus suddenly thrust upon him. The two great commanders, after due introduction, seated themselves at a little table in his quiet parlor to settle what each knew was in effect to end the war. The two men had certainly seen each other before, for both had served under Scott almost a score of years before at the capture of Mexico. Most likely Grant remembered Lee, but Lee could hardly be expected to remember Grant. The brilliant Virginian, the favorite of the commander, and already looked upon as the rising man of the army, could hardly be expected to have taken special note of a certain second lieutenant Grant, acting as regimental quartermaster, even though he was breveted first lieutenant for "meritorious services" at Molino del Rey; and a few days afterward, at Chapultepec, as was duly reported by General Worth and Colonel Garland, "acquitted himself most nobly" under the observation of his regimental, brigade, and division commanders.

The afternoon was wearing away when the interview began. There was really little to be said, and both men had the faculty of not spending words upon trifles. Grant's original proposition embraced all the terms that Lee could ask. The question was, were these still open to acceptance. Grant still offered them; Lee said they were lenient, and he would leave to Grant to express them in form. Lee asked a few explanations respecting certain phrases used in the formal agreement. Both commanders understood them alike. The purport of the whole was that this Confederate army surrendered, giving up all public property, the officers retaining their side-arms, baggage, and their own horses. Officers were to give their personal paroles not to take up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged, and also to give a like parole for the men under their command. This being done, every officer and man might return to his home, "not to be disturbed by the United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside." Terms so magnanimous were never before offered and accepted. So clearly were they defined, that never, amid all the complications that have ensued, has there been any question as to their import, or any serious dispute as to the exact fulfillment of the terms of surrender.¹

¹ The following—mere formal terms of courtesy being omitted—is the text of the correspondence between Grant and Lee:

I. GRANT TO LEE, April 7. "The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of farther resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any farther effusion of blood by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States army known as the Army of Northern Virginia."

II. LEE TO GRANT, April 7. "I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express on the hopelessness of farther resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender."

III. GRANT TO LEE, April 8. "Your note of last evening, in reply to mine of same date asking the conditions on which I will accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, is just received. In reply I would say, that peace being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon, namely, that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms again against the government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received."

IV. LEE TO GRANT, April 8. "I received at a late hour your note of to-day. In mine of yes-

The momentous interview which virtually closed the war lasted hardly an hour, for it wanted but ten minutes of noon when Grant, miles away, received the letter of Lee asking for a meeting, and at half past three the Confederate commander rode quietly back to his quarters. There was no need of inquiring what had been done. All saw at a glance that the surrender had been made. Officers and men rushed up to bid farewell to their leader. He received their greeting quietly. "We have fought through the war together," he said, "and I have done the best I could for you." The next day he issued a formal address to his army, and then rode off toward Richmond. On the afternoon of the 12th, attended by half a dozen of his staff, he rode into the smoking city which he had so long and stoutly defended. Entering his home, he disappeared from the history of the war, of which his surrender had, indeed, been the actual conclusion, though nominally it lasted a few weeks longer.

The surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia was virtually performed by the two men who sat quietly together in McLean's parlor at Appomattox Court-house. All that remained to be done was performed as quietly. There were to be none of the formal ceremonies heretofore practiced

terday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of the army; but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desire to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I can not, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia; but, as far as your proposal may affect the Confederate States forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 A.M. to-morrow, on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket-lines of the two armies."

V. GRANT TO LEE, April 9. "Your note of yesterday is received. I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace; the meeting proposed for 10 A.M. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, general, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, and save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, etc."

VI. LEE TO GRANT, April 9. "I received your note this morning on the picket-line, whither I had come to meet you, and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposal of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army. I now ask an interview in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose."

VII. GRANT TO LEE, April 9. "Your note of this date is but this moment, 11 50 A.M., received. In consequence of my having passed from the Richmond and Lynchburg Road to the Farmville and Lynchburg Road, I am at this writing about four miles west of Walter's Church, and will push forward to the front for the purpose of meeting you. Notice sent to me on this road where you wish the interview to take place will meet me."

VIII. GRANT TO LEE, April 9. "In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th instant, I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia upon the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be given to me, the other to be retained by such officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged, and each company or regimental officer to sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officers appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by the United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws where they may reside."

IX. LEE TO GRANT, April 9. "I received your letter of this date, containing the terms of the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th instant, they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulations into effect."

The last two documents, though put in the form of letters, the former dated at "Appomattox Court-house," the latter at the "Headquarters Army of Northern Virginia," were drawn up and signed by Grant and Lee at their meeting at McLean's residence, near the Court-house.

The paroles were in the following form:

"We, the undersigned, prisoners of war belonging to the Army of Northern Virginia, having been this day surrendered by General R. A. Lee, commanding the said army, to Lieutenant General Grant, commanding the armies of the United States [in the officers' parole for the men the reading was, I, the undersigned, commanding —, do, for the within-named prisoners of war this day surrendered, etc., give my solemn parole of honor that the within-named shall not], will not hereafter serve in the armies of the Confederate States, or in any military capacity whatever [in parole for privates, in military or any capacity whatever] against the United States of America, or render aid to the enemies of the latter, until properly exchanged in such manner as shall be mutually approved by the respective authorities."

This parole was countersigned by the provost-marshal: "The above officer or officers [in the parole for privates, the within-named] will not be disturbed by the United States authorities so long as they observe their parole and the laws in force where they may reside."

Lee's formal parting address to his army, issued on the 10th, the day following the surrender, was as follows:

"After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. I need not tell the survivors of so many hard-fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that would have attended the continuation of the contest, I have determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen. By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes, and remain there until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed; and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection. With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell."



THE LAST SHOT.



EDMUND RUFFIN.

when an army laid down its arms—the vanquished general courteously delivering his sword to the victor, to be as courteously returned to him. Neither Lee nor Grant even appeared on the scene. Gibbon's infantry and McKenzie's cavalry, of Ord's command, with the Fifth Corps—the victors of Five Forks, now under Griffin—remained at Appomattox Court-house to take charge of the surrendered property. The remainder of the army marched back to Burkesville, for it seemed that one more blow might have to be struck, whereby Johnston's army should share the fate of that of Lee. Sheridan with his cavalry, and an infantry corps, Wright's being chosen, was to march to aid Sherman. They had fairly started on the way when tidings came that Johnston had surrendered to Sherman.

Meanwhile the commissioners appointed by Grant and Lee had been busily at work making out the list of prisoners to be paroled. Their work was completed on the 11th, and on the next day the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had its last formal parade. It marched to the place appointed, stacked its arms, and piled up its accoutrements. The list of paroled prisoners contained 27,805 names, but of these scarcely 8000 had arms in their hands. Thirty cannon and three hundred and fifty wagons were turned over. These comprised all the material and munitions left to this Confederate army. A week before it had set out on its retreat with fully two hundred cannon and more than a thousand wagons, bearing ammunition and material, all save food, sufficient for an army of 100,000 men.

The military history of the Confederacy covers exactly four years. On the 9th of April, 1861, the Confederate commissioners, in view of the pro-

posed provisioning of Fort Sumter, formally announced to the government of the United States that this could not be accomplished without the effusion of blood; and that they, "in behalf of their government and their people, accept the gage of battle thus thrown down to them."¹ On the 9th of April, 1861, Lee signed the surrender to Grant. On the 12th of April, 1861, fire was opened upon Fort Sumter by Edmund Ruffin, a Virginian of threescore and ten, who asked permission thus to open the war. On the 12th of April, 1865—just four years to a day—the army of Northern Virginia laid down its arms and dispersed, thereby in effect formally closing the war. A few weeks later Ruffin committed suicide, leaving behind him a memorandum that he preferred to die rather than to live under the government of the United States.

There was to be one more formal review of Confederates in Virginia. For two years there had been a band of partisans under Mosby, operating in Northeastern Virginia. It consisted at the outset of only a few score men, but gradually accumulated to a considerable force. They received no pay, but were allowed to keep all the plunder which they could secure, and this formed an inducement for many reckless individuals to join the band. They were kept in subjection by their leader by the understanding that for any failure in obedience they would be sent to the regular army, which was "regarded in the light of a Botany Bay."² Even after the complete annihilation of Early's command, they managed to maintain themselves in the valley east of the Blue Ridge. Their depredations became so annoying that one of the last acts of Sheridan in the Department of Washington was to order³ the complete devastation of the region in which they operated. All forage and subsistence was to be destroyed, all barns and mills burnt, and all stock driven off; no buildings, however, were to be burnt, and no personal violence offered to citizens. "The ultimate result of the system of guerrilla warfare," said Sheridan, "is the total destruction of all private rights in the country occupied by such parties. This destruction may as well commence at once, and the responsibility of it must rest upon the authorities at Richmond, who have acknowledged the legitimacy of guerrilla bands."⁴ This band, at the time of Lee's surrender, numbered about 600 men, all well mounted. On the 15th of April, having been informed of the surrender of Lee, Mosby wrote to Hancock, then commanding this department, that, while he thought there had not arisen any emergency which would justify the surrender of his men, he was yet indisposed "to cause the useless effusion of blood, or to inflict on a war-worn population any unnecessary distress." He therefore proposed an armistice until he could communicate with his own authorities, and obtain sufficient information to determine his farther action. Hancock replied that he might have reasonable time, but that he could not communicate with Lee, who was no longer in command. Grant, having been communicated with, directed Hancock: "You may receive all rebel officers and soldiers who surrender to you on exactly the same terms that were given to General Lee, except have it distinctly understood that all who claim homes in states that never passed ordinances of secession have forfeited them, and can only return on compliance with the amnesty proclamation. Maryland, Kentucky, Delaware, and Missouri are such states. They may return to West Virginia on their parole." On the 21st of April Mosby assembled his band for their last review. "I have," he said, "summoned you together for the last time. The vision that we cherished of a free and independent country has vanished, and that country is now the spoil of the conqueror. I disband your organization in preference to surrendering to our enemies. I am no longer your commander."⁵

¹ *Ante*, p. 52.² Scott's *Partisan Life with Mosby*, 395.³ November 27, 1864.⁴ *Sheridan's Report*, 47.⁵ *Partisan Life with Mosby*, 476.

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