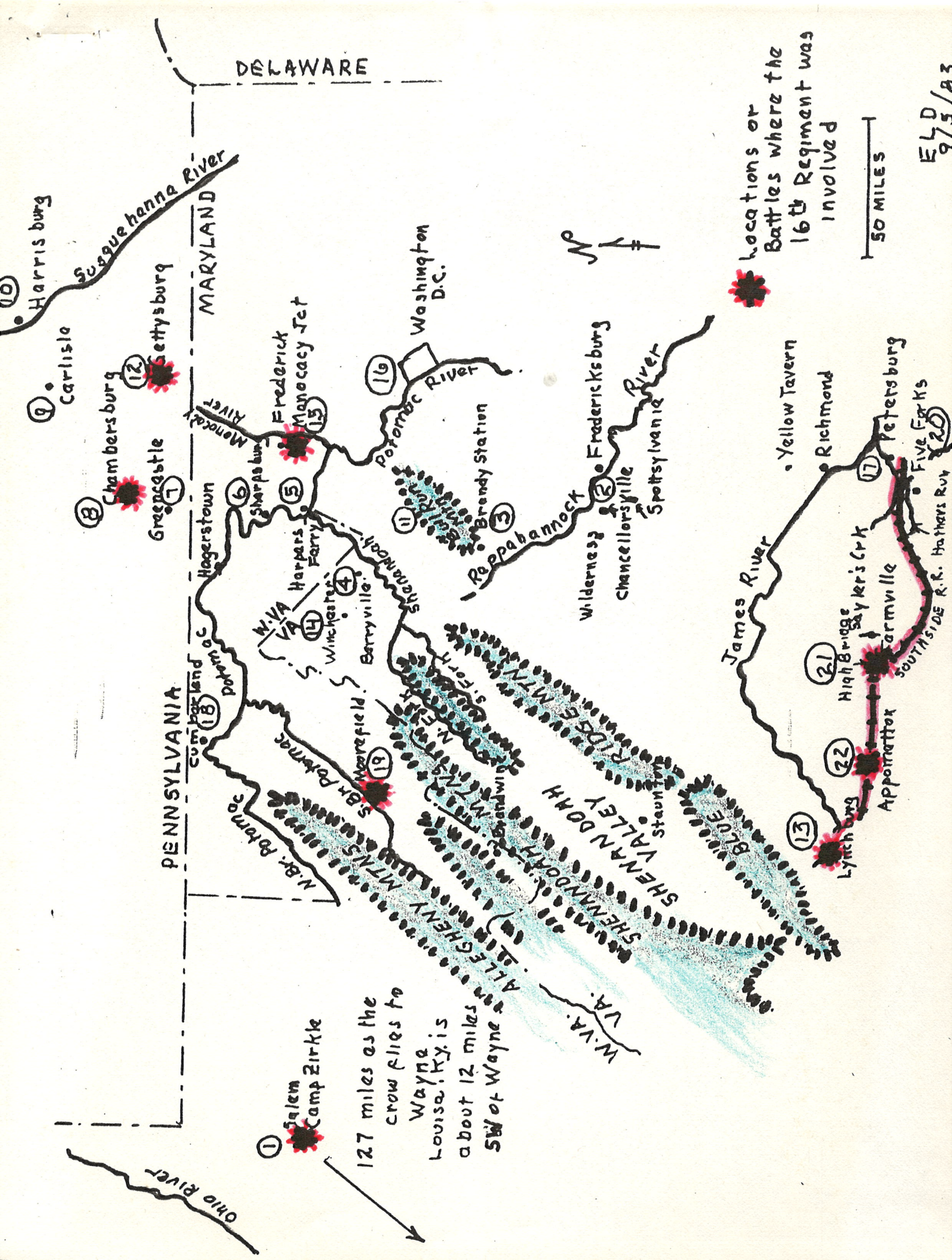


TWO CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS
IN THE
ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

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ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA ¹

Andrew Sansom: September 1, 1862 to at least December 31, 1864

Madison Maston Morrison: September 6, 1862 to November 18, 1863
and Prisoner of War to November 25, 1864

Early in the fall of 1862 Milton J. Ferguson of Wayne County, Virginia, mustered in to Captain Hurston Spurlock's Company to fight for the Confederate States of America. Ferguson was elected to be a Captain and soon was commanding an unorganized group of seven companies that came to be known as Ferguson's Battalion, or after a Western Virginia River of that name, the Guyandotte Battalion.

Andrew Sansom enlisted in Spurlock's Company on September 1, 1862. He was 35 years old and made a corporal in Company E.

M. M. Morrison was 26 years old when he enlisted in "Ferguson's Battalion" on September 6, 1862. He was a private in Company H.

On January 15, 1863, at Camp Zirkle (1)² (near Salem, west of Clarksburg (W) Virginia), six companies of Ferguson's Battalion were joined with four companies of a Major Caldwell's Battalion to form the 16th Regiment Virginia Cavalry.* Ferguson was elected to be Colonel of the Regiment. There are no more records for Andrew and M. M. until August, 1863.

The C.S.A. had a long, hard spring in 1863, suffering great losses even in their victories. At Chancellorsville (2) in May, Lt. Gen. Thomas Jackson died of his wounds and neither the Second Corps nor the Army of Northern Virginia would ever be quite the same again.

By June, General Robert E. Lee had nearly completed reorganization of his command. Lieutenant General Richard Ewell, "Old Bald Head" had lost a leg, but now commanded the Second Corps.³

¹Please refer to write-ups given at Sansom Family Reunion of 1980.

²All locations will be numbered and circled on the map. Camp Zierkle is (1).

³Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. I, Manassas to Malvern Hill, Douglas Southall Freeman, 1944.

* I am greatly indebted to my high school classmate, Col. T. A. Ware for providing me with a brief history of the 16th and its commanders. That record allowed me to trace the Regiment through the War.

"Reorganization of the cavalry was another part of the endless task of promoting the worthy, of replacing the incompetent, and of making good the losses due to attrition. Specifically, after Chancellorsville, the need was first to increase the mounted troops for offensive operations. In southwest Virginia under Brig. Gen. A. G. Jenkins was a force of three large regiments and five battalions of horse. These troops had not been well schooled in cavalry tactics or in hard fighting at close quarters. Some of Jenkins' men had the complex of home guards, and some preferred the life of a guerilla to that of a trooper, but many were good raw material. They were badly needed by Stuart."

After much correspondence Lee procured three regiments and one battalion. With that force Gen. Jenkins himself reported to cavalry headquarters, a man of proved daring, but of untested administrative ability. Lee debated whether it would not be wise to give Jenkins a quiet post, but the 16th Virginia with Sgt. Andrew Sansom and Pvt. M. M. Morrison were in the War.

By the end of June, '63, Lee was about ready to take his Army of Northern Virginia on the offensive, to cross the Potomac River, invade Pennsylvania and possibly threaten Washington D.C.⁴

On or about June 5 through June 9 J.E.B. Stuart was camped with his cavalry near Brandy Station, Virginia (3) on the Rappahannock River. Jeb liked a good time and his cavalry had many grand reviews for the local townspeople. On the morning of June 9, Stuart's troops were surprised by a Federal attack on their camp by David Gregg's Division, which had crossed the River at Kelly's Ford. The Federals were repulsed with heavy losses, but Stuart was publicly humiliated for being surprised while he played.

Stuart's humiliation did not delay the advance of the Army of Northern Virginia toward the Potomac. On the 10th of June most of Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell's Second Corps moved forward to attack a Federal force at Winchester, Virginia. However, Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes' Division was directed to Berryville (4) to capture an outpost of 1800 men. "With Rodes moved the 1500 cavalry of Brig. Gen. Albert G. Jenkins. These troopers of Western Virginia were newcomers to the Valley and were unfamiliar with the discipline and tactics of Stuart." Jenkins' Brigade contained the 16th Regiment! Andrew Sansom and M. M. Morrison were advancing toward Gettysburg! The cavalry of Jenkins' Brigade were attached to Rodes' infantry division sometime after they "passed Crooked Run."

⁴All subsequent discussion is based on Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. III, Gettysburg to Appomattox, Douglas Southall Freeman, 1944.

The two Divisions under Maj. Gen. "Allegheny" Johnson and Jubal Early had a great victory at Winchester.

In the meantime Rodes moved on Berryville (west of the Blue Ridge Mtns. and the Shenandoah River), but Jenkins' cavalry was unaccustomed to operating with infantry that moved as fast as did Rodes' men. Through poor cooperation with Jenkins, the Federals escaped Rodes' attack. On June 14th Jenkins "pushed boldly across the Potomac (at Harpers Ferry (5)) and headed for Pennsylvania." Andrew and M. M. were in Union country, north of the Potomac. Rodes followed on the Maryland (south) side of the River and did not cross until the rest of Ewell's Second Corps arrived. Johnson crossed at Sharpsburg (6) on the 18th. By June 22nd all Divisions were north of the River. Rodes' Division headed for Greencastle, Pennsylvania (7); the rest of Ewell's Corps moved to Chambersburg (8) and on to Carlisle (9). They were aimed at the capitol city, Harrisburg. When Ewell entered Carlisle he dispatched Jenkins to reconnoitre the defenses of Harrisburg (10). Jenkins reported back on the 29th with an encouraging report and Rodes was given orders to start for Harrisburg. Just then a courier arrived from General Lee: the Army of the Potomac had also crossed the Potomac and Union troops were in Frederick, Maryland. Ewell must move south and rejoin Lee, who was with the First and Third Corps. Ewell's three weeks "of high distinction and well high flawless performance . . . as head of the Second Corps was about to end. Ewell had started June 10 from the upper Rappahannock; he had been recalled June 29 when Jenkins was shelling Federal works on the Susquehanna. Twenty-eight guns and close to 4000 prisoners had been captured. . . . All of this had been achieved with losses that scarcely exceeded 300." It is probable that both Andrew and M. M. had been to Harrisburg with Jenkins. Andrew would return to Chambersburg under less fortunate conditions in 1864.

Back in Virginia Stuart received orders from Lee on June 24 or 25 to leave the Valley, cross east of the Blue Ridge and "do the Federals all the damage you can." Stuart hoped to rejoin the Army in Pennsylvania in time to participate in its actual conflicts, but he also hoped to regain some of his tarnished reputation. He planned to cross Bull Run Mtn. (11) and use the roads west of Centerville. He would take three brigades and leave two to guard the Valley. "A. G. Jenkins' troops need not be taken into account at the moment, because they were already in Pennsylvania." Apparently Jenkins' Brigade was, under normal circumstances, part of Jeb Stuart's cavalry. Stuart took with him Hampton's, Fitz Lee's and William "Rooney" Lee's Brigades. He left behind the Brigades of "Grumble" Jones and Beverly Robertson. Stuart chased and caught a train of 125 wagons full of much needed supplies, but this so delayed his advance that he did not arrive at Gettysburg until the second day of fighting, too late to provide badly needed scouting information to Gen. Lee. The Battle for Gettysburg had started July 1, 1863.

Stuart later defended his absence on July 1 by stating that Jenkins' men had been selected as the advance guard of the Army, and numerically were adequate for the mission. "If the peculiar functions of the cavalry

with the army were not satisfactorily performed in the absence of my command, it should be attributed to the fact that Jenkins' Brigade was not as efficient as it ought to have been, and as its numbers (3800) on leaving, Virginia warranted us in expecting." Stuart's statement nearly doubled the actual strength of the Brigade, but Jenkins' men had shown their inexperience in fighting of the sort familiar to the veteran troops of Jeb's command.

At Gettysburg on July 1 A.P. Hill's Third Corps had engaged the ^{Union's} Iron Brigade (the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division of the First Corps) and suffered heavy losses to Archer's Division. Heth's and Pender's Divisions relieved Archer's Division. About 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. Ewell's Second Corps moved toward Gettysburg from the northwest. Rodes' Division attacked, but the battle quickly went awry for his troops. All of Rodes' troops were heavily engaged (Does this include Jenkins' Brigade??) when John Gordon and Heth of Hill's Third Corps arrived almost simultaneously from both right and left and pushed the Federal troops hard. As Heth's men faltered, Pender's Division drove through them in a terrifying charge to clear the Union troops from Seminary Ridge. Federal I and XI Corps suffered a great defeat with 4000 troops captured in Gettysburg, another 1000 on Seminary Ridge. The Union troops retreated to Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill south of town, but Ewell did not press his advantage.

There is no further mention of any action by Jenkins' Brigade in Freeman's book, but Jenkins himself was wounded at Gettysburg and it is probable the 16th Regiment fought throughout the battle of July 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

There was terrible fighting on the second day and again on the third day, when Gen. George Pickett's Division charged into history on Cemetery Ridge. On July 4 all was quiet and Lee slipped back into Virginia.

After Gettysburg General Lee reorganized the cavalry. Stuart convinced Lee that the existing Brigades were too large: Fitz Lee had five regiments and one battalion; "Rooney" Lee (Chambliss was acting commander) had five regiments; Hampton three regiments and three "legions;" Jones' four regiments and a battalion; and Jenkins' three regiments (including the 16th) and two battalions. However, "the men from Western Virginia insisted they were raised for special or local service and were entitled to remain together. Lee thought it unwise to raise an issue with them." On this basis, Lee divided his cavalry into two Divisions with seven Brigades. Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton got one Division, Maj. Gen. Fitz Lee the other. Jenkins' Brigade was not in the new organization of Stuart's Cavalry.

Both Andrew's and M. M.'s scanty records begin August 31, 1863, when the 16th Regiment Virginia Cavalry was in another new organization. On November 18, 1863, M. M. was captured by the enemy at Louisa, Kentucky, on the Big Sandy River only a few miles from his home in Wayne County. I don't know if he was in an engagement or captured while home on leave. One Federal muster sheet has him listed as a Deserter from the Rebel Army, but he was sent to Rock Island, Illinois, prison as a Prisoner of War.

Albert Jenkins had been killed at some time after Gettysburg and the command of his Brigade, including the 16th, passed to a newly commissioned Brigadier General, John McCausland, who was 27 years of age. They would have moments of glory and times of shame together.

By June of 1864 Maj. Gen. David Hunter was moving his Union army from Lexington and the Shenandoah Valley across the Blue Ridge Mtns. toward the east where he could move down the James River and threaten Richmond. By this time Lt. Gen. Jubal Early commanded the Second Corps. On June 12 Early was told to move to oppose Hunter. He would join forces with Maj. Gen. John Breckinridge, who was already in the vicinity of Lynchburg. (13)

As Hunter and his Union troops turned toward Lynchburg, Breckinridge hurried to the city and organized its defense. He had two small Brigades of infantry and the corps of cadets from Virginia Military Institute. Also, "in front of the enemy were two small, badly mounted and poorly armed forces of Confederate cavalry. One of these was under a newly commissioned Brigadier of some experience and of definite capacity." General McCausland, the 16th Regiment and probably Corporal Sansom were in the field at Lynchburg. The second group of cavalry was led by Brig. Gen. John Imboden. At this time Early arrived in Lynchburg with most of the Second Corps and Hunter retreated after only minor skirmishes.

For the next few months of the summer and fall of '64 the armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia were stalemated at Petersburg. However, "Jube" Early's Second Corps was fully occupied in driving Hunter back to the North. Early's poorly organized cavalry, including McCausland's Western Virginians, were often outrun by the Union troops. All cavalry was now under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert Ransom, who had been reporting to Breckinridge.⁵ The cavalry were now placed under Early's own command. He had about 10,000 infantry under Generals Rodes, Gordon and Ramseur. The cavalry and artillery added another 4000 men. "The mounted forces were to prove, in a double sense, the weakness of Early as a commander." Another condition which might impair the efficiency of his men "was the fact that about half the infantry, including even company officers, were without shoes."

Jube decided to try for an invasion of Maryland. On July 2, a year after Gettysburg, he was at Winchester, Va. (14). On July 3 his little army was in contact with Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel's advance guard. Early drove through Harper's Ferry (5) and on July 6 entered into Maryland. On July 9 they were at Monocacy (15) and encountered resistance.

Old Jube was slow in getting his troops deployed. About noon Early was on the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio RR which parallels the Monocacy River at this point. To his surprise he saw Gen. McCausland's Brigade ride down to a river ford where they crossed, dismounted and furiously

⁵ Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart was wounded by one of Custer's men in a fight near Yellow Tavern as Sheridan moved toward Richmond on May 11, 1864. He died May 12 in great agony, but composed and resigned to his death.

assailed the Federal line held by Gen. Lew Wallace's Brigade. (He authored Ben Hur). McCausland's men captured a battery but suffered terrible losses. McCausland attacked twice with troops of the 14th, 16th, 17th, and 22nd Regiments Virginia Cavalry.⁶ Andrew Sansom, now a sergeant in Company E must have been in this fight.

Early said, "McCausland's movement, which was brilliantly executed, solved the problem for me." He immediately ordered John Gordon's Division to cross the river and complete the turning movement McCausland had begun. Gordon's old Brigade, now under Clement Evans, and York's Louisiana Brigade started the attack and were quickly joined by Terry's Brigade. They routed the Federals of Wallace's Brigade from VIII Corps, plus a small force of cavalry and Rickett's 3rd Division of the VI Corps, which Grant had detached from the war at Petersburg to defend Washington against Early. To the north Rodes' Division pushed hard at the Ohio 149th where Tom Ware's grandfather was fighting.

By July 11 Early's troops, with Rodes' Division in the van, were in sight of Washington D.C. (16) This brought the entire Union VI Corps back from Petersburg (17). Early did not have the strength needed to make the attack on Washington and the Confederacy had reached its high water mark. Sgt. Andrew Sansom must have seen Washington. The Confederates had not taken Washington, "but we've scared Abe Lincoln like hell," Early said.

Early returned to Virginia with some losses, some gains and considerable booty, including \$220,000 in cash he had levied against Hagerstown and Frederick. "Scarcely less appreciated by 'Old Jube' was the report of his cavalry commanders that they had destroyed numerous railroad and highway bridges." However, a weakness in Early's operations was the lack of consolidated command for his cavalry. Robert Ransom was incapacitated; "McCausland had several bold exploits to his credit; Bradley Johnson, Harry Gilmer and John Imboden had ridden far and burned bridges," but without an able leader they were not a unified body of fighting men.

As soon as Early was back in Virginia, four of the Union commanders gathered forces to attack him: Sigel, Hunter, Maj. Gen. Averell, and Brig. Gen. George Crook. Ramseur's Division of the Second Corps was badly mauled by Averell when part of Hoke's Brigade panicked and ran. In the meantime, Crook's troops retreated to the Potomac before Early. In their retreat they wantonly burned the homes of several prominent Virginians. Early planned a retaliation.

On July 29 Early ordered McCausland to take his Brigade and Bradley Johnson's Brigade to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania (8) to demand \$100,000

⁶Col. Thomas A. Ware's great grandfather, Thomas Ware was a 3rd sergeant in the 149th Ohio Volunteer Infantry at this battle. This group was on the Union right flank where several boys from Ross County were captured by the Confederates. McCausland's Brigade attacked the Union left flank.

in gold or \$500.00 in paper currency for indemnification of property burned by the Federals in Virginia. The town citizens refused "to pay 5 cents." Gen. McCausland waited from 5:30 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. and then directed the town be fired." This order provoked virtual mutiny on the part of some of his officers and men. Col. Wm. Peters of the 21st Virginia Cavalry said he would break his sword and throw it away before he would obey such an order." McCausland showed him Early's instructions and placed him under arrest. Other soldiers were of a different temper and the town was soon ablaze. Early never expressed regret for the order.

McCausland and Johnson withdrew west to Cumberland, Maryland (18) and then south down the Shenandoah Mtns. to Moore field, Virginia (19) where they believed they were safe, but Averell descended on Johnson and routed his Brigade. McCausland was on the other side of the South Branch of the Potomac, but was badly driven, also. Averell captured four guns, 420 prisoners and 400 horses. It was August 7, 1864. (During November and September, Sgt. Andrew Sansom would be on horse detail trying to replenish their badly depleted reserves.)

Johnson wrote a bitter denunciation of McCausland stating that McCausland had failed to discipline the men during the raid. "Johnson charged that the men of McCausland's Brigade had been guilty of infamous conduct. Johnson specified: 'Every crime in the catalogue of infamy has been committed, I believe, except murder and rape. Highway robbery of watches and pocket-books was of ordinary occurrence . . . Pilage and sack of private dwellings took place hourly.'"

However, the Army was inclined to hold Johnson himself responsible, but in the end nothing was done to either commander, or to improve discipline. Both brigades were shamed by Chambersburg and shattered at Moorefield. (This may explain why Andrew never talked much about the War, he may have been ashamed of the actions of some of the men.) At this time he apparently made 4th Sergeant. There are no records for him after December 31, 1864, when he was away on horse detail, but he was in "for three years or the War."

As the end drew near, McCausland's Brigade was present at the Battle of Five Forks (20) on April 1, 1865. They had been sent there for rest because "the sore-backed, hard-ridden horses needed attention. They were placed in reserve under Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Rosser north of Hatcher's Run," a mile north of subsequent fighting. The young general had caught a seineful of fish out of the Nottoway River and had invited Generals Pickett and Fitz Lee to a fish fry. Before they could finish eating they learned they were separated by the Federals of Sheridan's Cavalry from the Army to the east. Pickett and Fitz Lee left to rejoin their troops, but Rosser went on with his fish fry. It was rudely interrupted by Sheridan's Federal troops. Most of Pickett's men were captured.

Fitz Lee and G. W. Lee rejoined Rosser (and McCausland) north of Hatcher's Run. They apparently were never in the Battle. The end was only a few days away for the Army of Northern Virginia.

There is no more mention of McCausland's Brigade by name, but it probably remained with Tom Rosser's cavalry until the end. On April 2 the cavalry north of Hatcher's Run was dispatched by Lee to defend the Southside Railroad.

On April 2 Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill, commander of the Third Corp was killed and the Federals reached the Southside RR. On April 6 Dick Ewell was captured with most of his troops; Custis Lee, son of the commanding General, had to surrender; nearly all of Dick Anderson's troops were captured, and several other general officers were killed or captured. General Lee had lost two of his four Corps. Longstreet's First Corps had escaped and Gordon's Second Corp fought their way to Sayler's Creek.

As Longstreet headed for Farmville (21) a courier reported that 600 or so Federal troops were in that area to burn the bridges across the Appomattox River. "These must be saved, cost what they might, because the Army's line of retreat might carry it north of the river." Longstreet ordered Tom Rosser and his mounted Division "to picket all roads and send out scouts in every direction." Munford with Fitz Lee's Division and Gary's Brigade followed Rosser.

"Close to mid day (of the 6th) they met near the 'High Bridge' the Union infantry . . . under Brig. Gen. Theodore Read." After a brief fight the Union infantry surrendered en masse. Total prisoners numbered about 780. On the 7th Gordon was able to use the "High Bridge" to continue his retreat to the west.

On April 7th Gen. Lee received a request to surrender. "Old Pete" Longstreet said, "Not yet."

On the 8th Generals Dick Anderson, George Pickett, and Bushrod who had no command left to them were relieved from duty. The end was near. As the sun set on the 8th of April the sky to the east, the south and finally to the west of Lee's little Army reflected the red glow of Union camp fires. "Only to the north was the darkness unrelieved by firey notice that the enemy was waiting and almost had surrounded the Army" of Northern Virginia.

On the 8th Grant sent Lee a second letter stating "Peace being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon, namely, that the officers and men surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged." Lee agreed to meet Grant, not to surrender, but to consider how Grant's proposal "may affect the C.S. forces under my command."

At daybreak, Palm Sunday, April 9, John Gordon spread his men boldly in line of battle along the road between Appomattox (22) and Lynchburg. There were only 1600 muskets left of the 7500 he had a month earlier. Tom Rosser and his cavalry were there (Was McCausland and Sgt. Samson still there, too?) Fitz Lee had made an agreement with Gordon that Fitz could lead all of the cavalry off the field before a truce was called. Gordon was soon involved in heavy fighting. Lee asked Longstreet to notify Gordon a truce would be asked. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House April 9, 1865.

Fitz Lee, Rosser and Munford and the greater part of their cavalry rode off to escape surrender and to renew the campaign, as they hoped, with Johnson. We may never know if Sgt. Sansom went with them.

The Army had its last day together on April 12 when they paraded to lay down their arms. The parade was led by Maj. Gen. John Gordon, commander of the Second Corps. First place fittingly was given to the Stonewall Brigade followed by most of Jackson's old Division. There were thirty two regiments, but by now each of the regiments occupied so little of the muddy road that their flags appeared to be massed. "The regimental battleflags crowded so thick by thinning out of men, that the whole column seemed crowned with red."

Brig. Gen. Joshua Chamberlain and the 1st Division of the V Corps were to receive the arms. Without any gesture of triumph he gave the word, a bugle rang out and instantly, regiment by regiment the Union troops shifted to carry arms, the marching salute. Gordon heard the sound and half startled, turned his horse to General Chamberlain, brought his own sword into salute and gave the order to his troops to return the salute with carry arms. Said Gen. Chamberlain afterward: "On our part not a sound of trumpet more, nor roll of drum; not a cheer nor word nor whisper of vain-glorying . . . but an awed silence rather, and breath-holding as if it were the passing of the dead."

On November 24, 1864 M. M. Morrison had taken the oath of allegiance to the United States (coerced) and was paroled from Rock Island Prison to return home to Wayne, West Virginia.

Andrew Sansom probably headed home to his family and hillside farm in the spring of 1865, probably after Appomattox. It is ironic that while he and M. M. Were fighting for the CSA their home had become part of the United States on June 20, 1863.

The War was over for two Western Virginians.