

## Five Forks: Analyzing Confederate Leadership in the Ninth Offensive

### **Abstract:**

The Battle of Five Forks, although largely forgotten or in Civil War history or clumped together with larger battles, was of great importance in contributing to the fall of Petersburg. Entrenched in the Siege of Petersburg for nearly ten months, Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee both struck out to change the tide of the war in the spring of 1865. The result of a sweeping Union flanking movement, the Battle of Five Forks was short, but the Confederate rout turned into the collapse of the entire city and the fall of Richmond just days later. In this essay, I aim not to analyze the causes or effects of the battle, but rather the reasons for which the Confederacy was unable to block the Union advance. I will give a short summary of the battle and its preceding movements, and then I will look at 4 Confederate generals intimately involved with the battle to see how their actions, and possible blunders, may have influenced the battle's outcome.

### **Context (Confederate Waterloo):**

On March 27th, 1865, four of the greatest generals in American history met in a small room aboard the River Queen outside City Point, Virginia. Ulysses S Grant was there, having departed from the front lines at Petersburg only the previous day. With him was Abraham Lincoln, fresh from his second inauguration just 3 weeks before, who had taken a ferry to City Point with his wife Mary Todd and son Tad.<sup>1</sup> Grant had also invited William T. Sherman and Rear Admiral David Nixon Porter. Together, the men discussed the progress of the Civil War, now nearing the end of its fourth year. They hoped it would not reach a fifth. Their primary concern was that Robert E. Lee and his Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, who had been besieged at Petersburg for nearly 10 months, would find a way to break loose of Grant's tight hold on the city and move to join the army of Joseph Johnston, still holding their own on the Carolinas.<sup>2</sup> Within sight of Petersburg and just miles from Richmond, Sherman and Grant assured the president that the end of the war was in sight. As it happened, they were closer than they thought.

Lincoln's visit had come at the most opportune time; the siege had begun to turn. Just two days before the meeting at City Point (the day Lincoln arrived in Virginia), the Confederates had launched an attack against the Union embankments- an attack which failed spectacularly. Pushed by both his faithful "War Horse" James Longstreet and by his conscience to prevent further casualties, Lee had decided to launch an attack to stun the Union army and to provide cover for an escape from Petersburg. John B. Gordon, a hard-fighting Georgian, was assigned to the attack, which was set for a small fort that lay at a bulge in the Union lines. Gordon's forces charged the fort in the morning hours of March 25th, pushing surprised Union defenders out of their

trenches, and capturing their commander, Napoleon B. McLaughlin.<sup>3</sup> But the tide turned just as quickly as reinforcements rushed to meet the rebels and within hours, the fort was back under Union control. The losses at Fort Stedman, numbering almost 4000, were a massive blow to the Confederacy's spirit.

The victory at Fort Stedman primed Grant to launch his own attack, after a bit of quick maneuvering. He weakened his right flank, drawing away three divisions of Ord's Army of the James as well as Ranald Mackenzie's cavalry, to move from the north side of Petersburg to the extreme south, and to replace the II Corps of Andrew Humphrey. Humphrey would move to the left in a kind of domino effect, freeing the V Corps of Gouverneur K. Warren and the cavalry of Phillip Sheridan to make a strike against Confederate positions, namely against the Southside Railroad, the last railroad into Petersburg not yet controlled by the Union. Ord "promptly" reached his rendezvous and "[Humphrey and Warren] were directed on the arrival of Ord, and on his getting into position in their places, to cross Hatcher's Run and extend out west toward Five Forks," wrote Grant in his memoirs.<sup>4</sup> On the night of March 29th, a torrential rain turned the roads to mud, preventing any fluid movement by Grant's forces, but the next day, Warren set off from his lines, moving towards Five Forks to his northwest, closer to Confederate lines.<sup>5</sup> Essentially, Grant had given Sheridan the provision that in case of potential loss, he was to cut his cavalry off from the Army of the Potomac and join Sherman in North Carolina to fight Johnston's army. In truth, Grant had every intention of finishing the war right there, and that Sheridan's instructions had been a blind to the other generals. This stroke of genius allowed Sheridan to have not only full command of Warren force as well as his own, but also gave him a wide range of motion across the line. Lee, however, predicted the move and dispatched his own forces under George Pickett to counter Sheridan's.

The Battle of White Oak Road, named for the country road that ran parallel to the battle site a half mile or so northwards, was dominated by randomness, with the Confederacy slowly gaining an upper hand. Despite the splitting up of the Union army during the battle, at around 6:30 or 7 PM, Pickett abruptly stopped his slow advance and retreated to White Oak Road and Five Forks, not even bothering to check for a Union advance or counterattack.<sup>6</sup> Realizing that they had breathing space, Warren and Sheridan reorganized their troops. At least so goes the Union story. Joshua Chamberlain criticized this turn of events, saying that Sheridan should have either occupied Five Forks on the 30th (as in fact Grant had recommended), or should have stayed back to harass Lee's communications.<sup>7</sup> The Confederates, namely Pickett and his wife (who wrote his "battle stories"), claim that they did in fact hold the advantage that night, but were afraid of fighting too far from their trenches, and were forced to fall back.<sup>8</sup> Whatever the truth might be, by the morning of April 1st, the Union Army was still reorganizing and the Confederacy was falling back to Five Forks; control of the woodlands had barely changed since the 29th, when Warren and Sheridan had first set out. Sheridan planned to make his decisive strike early the next day. Warren, however, had other plans.

As the remnants of Pickett's division trickled back to Five Forks, Sheridan planned to attack early and seize the advantage, taking Five Forks early in the morning.<sup>9</sup> He called for Warren to join him at Dinwiddie as soon as possible; Warren's definition of "soon" was very different from Sheridan's.<sup>10</sup> Having started marching at 5 AM, Warren found that the downpour of the 29th had flooded Gravelly Run, and thus he believed that he must have bridges to ford the stream. Urged on by both Grant and Meade, Warren didn't fully join Sheridan at Dinwiddie until 11 and wasn't prepared for action until 4 PM, although one of his divisions (under Romeyn Ayres), reached Sheridan earlier and fought with him for the battle. Sheridan later commented that Warren gave "the impression that he wished the sun to go down before the dispositions for the attack could be completed".<sup>11</sup> Indeed, it was close to dusk when Warren and Sheridan attacked.

The battle itself was short, but vicious. Warren three divisions hit the cavalry and infantry on the left flank of Pickett's line, which had been refused at an angle from White Oak Road. Amid the firefight, Crawford's division drifted northwards, flanking the troops of Thomas Munford and cutting off the road to Pickett's shad bake (Ford's Road or Depot).<sup>12</sup> Warren himself could not be found on the battlefield, sowing confusion among his soldiers and leading to his untimely dismissal from command by Sheridan soon after the battle.<sup>13</sup> It wasn't a consolation to the Confederates that their commanders, three of them in fact, couldn't be found either. As it turned out, both George Pickett and his second in command, Fitzhugh Lee, had been invited to a shad bake by Thomas Rosser, the reserve commander, nearly a mile to the rear of their line, across Hatcher's Run.<sup>14</sup> The Confederate left kept attempting to reform their left flank as they retreated, but the pressure from persistent Union advances was too high. Upon hearing the news of the battle, Pickett rushed to the front just as Sheridan began his frontal attack against the well defended lines of Pickett's artillery. Despite the delaying action of Willie Pegram, the "gallant" boy artilleryman, the center collapsed as well, and by just 9 PM, the battle was over.<sup>15</sup>

The complete collapse of the Confederate line only blazed the way for Sheridan to take control of the Southside Railroad. When Grant heard the news, he issued orders for a predawn attack the next day.<sup>16</sup> The Third Battle of Petersburg smashed the Confederate lines, and beset on all sides by Union soldiers, Lee was forced to abandon Petersburg. The city fell on the 2nd, and Richmond went on the third. The Battle of Five Forks destroyed the last bastion of hope that Lee held out for an escape to North Carolina. The merits of the Battle of Five Forks, and its causes and effects, have been discussed much, however. What is more intriguing is the leadership, namely that of Confederate generals, during and before the battle, which led to this disastrous fall.

### **Pickett:**

Pickett's inaction at Five Forks was well documented over the course of the battle and during its aftermath. It was not, however, Pickett's absence which itself influenced the Confederate defeat, but rather his failure to notify a single member of his staff of the shad bake.<sup>17</sup> Pickett

reportedly left for Rosser's command, nearly a mile to the army's rear, without even notifying Rooney Lee of his whereabouts.<sup>18</sup> Despite Pickett's blunder, there were plenty of chances to fix it, had either Pickett, or Fitzhugh Lee been vigilant enough. To complicate matters, at 2 PM, the advance division of Sheridan's advance, led by William P. Mackenzie overpowered the lone brigade of William P. Roberts near the Chimneys, to the west of Five Forks. Pickett's poor placement of a couple brigades to hold the nearly mile long gap between him and the rest of Lee's army at Petersburg simply could not withstand Mackenzie's advance.<sup>19</sup> When Munford found Fitz Lee to give him warning of the approaching Union forces, he was brushed aside and told to check on the issue and report back to the commanders, who would not be seen for another 2 hours.<sup>20</sup> At this stage, both generals were unaware of the advance of Warren V Corps and clearly did not see the skirmish with Mackenzie's cavalry as serious; Munford reported joking all along their line during the fighting.<sup>21</sup> At around 4:30 PM, Munford realized the magnitude of the force they were facing, but his couriers could not find either Pickett or Rosser. In fact, the highest ranking officer at this time was W. H. Rooney Lee, who was stationed at the opposite end of the battlefield, unaware that he now held such a position.<sup>22</sup>

The lack of communication during the initial Union attack was central to the entire Confederate collapse. James Longstreet, Lee's "War Horse", asserted later that it was the "neglect" of the Confederate left for failing to "report the advance of the enemy" that doomed the army, but whether or not Pickett knew this fact is in contention.<sup>23</sup> Other couriers reported finding Pickett and the other generals, only to be sent back to the battle empty-handed; Munford only discovered this fact weeks later.<sup>24</sup> Whatever knowledge Pickett had of the Union advance, it went unused as Warren Corps had managed to push back Munford, who was forced to create a "refused" line at nearly a right angle facing east. As Samuel Crawford's division began to drift further north, Munford's line, now supported by Matt Ransom's brigade, was left isolated, flanked on their left and facing immense pressure on their front. Pickett and Rosser were nowhere to be seen, and Rooney Lee, left in charge of a battle he had scarce knowledge of, was faced with Munford's hasty messages for help. Left without a leader, like "tin soldiers, to hold their position without orders for any emergency," the Confederate left collapsed around 4:30.<sup>25 26</sup>

It was also around this time that Pickett discovered the sheer extent of the Union advance. Crawford, who had been busy flanking Munford and Ransom to the north, took possession of Ford Road, just ahead of the shad bake, just as the Confederate left collapsed. Pickett only noticed this when he watched his messenger captured by Union soldiers only a couple hundred yards away. It was due to an acoustic shadow from the nearby pine trees, dampened by recent rains, that the sounds of intense battle had been shielded from the shad bake.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Pickett reacted to the discovery by mounting his horse and galloping back towards Ford Road where he encountered Munford on the retreat. Accounts suggest that Pickett attempted to rally his troops, perhaps for personal image or perhaps for hope of buying some time, but the damage was done.<sup>28</sup> By 5 PM, the attack on the Confederate line had expanded past the left and onto their front and left. Pickett sought regiments to plug the gaping hole in the Confederate lines, but as

Leslie Gordon notes, “it was too late for anyone to play savior.”<sup>29</sup> With the left flank gone, the remainder of Pickett’s force was rolled up, leaving open Sheridan’s path to the Southside Railroad. Pickett’s blunders had repercussions into the next day

Upon hearing of the Union victory at Five Forks, Grant ordered an assault against the entire Confederate line, to force a final retreat. The attack was set for the following day, but Lee had received no knowledge of any Confederate collapse on April 1st. It was one thing for communication to break down within Pickett’s force on the eve of a battle; it was quite another to neglect reporting back to the commanding general. Lee, resting at his headquarters only miles from Five Forks, had in fact been dictating for reinforcements to be sent to Pickett at Five Forks just as Grant’s attack was launched.<sup>30</sup> It was only when an aide noticed the distant advance of Union skirmishers that Lee realized their line had already been broken.<sup>31</sup> Where was Pickett during all this? His troops were still marching back from their defeat, aiming to cross the southern branch of the Appomattox River and rejoin Lee’s flank.<sup>32</sup> Lee and Pickett, as a result of their lapse in communication and Pickett’s decided failure in alerting Lee of any defeat, indirectly doomed the Confederacy further. A. P. Hill, one of Lee’s most trusted generals, was killed as he rode to investigate, and thus the Confederacy lost another skilled general at a time when they were most needed.<sup>33</sup> While there is much to be said about the lack of dialogue between Lee and Pickett, it is clear that Pickett attempted to do much to excuse himself of any blame for the battle itself.

The primary defense of his actions given by Pickett himself, and by extension by his wife of the time, La Salle Corbett Pickett, was that he was waiting for reinforcements. After retreating from the battles at Dinwiddie Courthouse and Gravelly Run on March 31st, Pickett allegedly sent Lee for reinforcements to support his troops in the upcoming fight. Even at this dire time in the life of the Confederacy, there seemed to be an inherent belief in the power of Robert E. Lee.<sup>34</sup> “In spite of the darkening gloom”, wrote La Salle Pickett, the men were “hopeful and full of faith” in Pickett and in the invincibility of the Confederate force.<sup>35</sup> Thus, Pickett had seemingly decided on the night of March 31st, that reinforcements *would* come, and continued to assert afterwards that he had, in fact, sent for them. Despite Pickett’s insistence, his behavior before and during the battle does not suggest the overcautious man that Pickett claimed he was. Rosser, who had invited Pickett to the next day’s shad bake, noticed Pickett’s nonchalant air, maybe a result of drinking at the bake, and Pickett himself carelessly described the breastworks thrown up around Five Forks as “temporary.”<sup>36 37</sup> Pickett’s undue confidence in Lee may have had to do with his abrupt withdrawal from Dinwiddie Courthouse the previous day. After Pickett had Sheridan on the run, he suddenly stopped, and withdrew to a suitable position along Five Forks, almost a mile from where he had been. Many commanders, Munford among them, were dissatisfied with Pickett’s actions, but in typical Pickett fashion, an excuse was created.<sup>38</sup> “Half an hour more of daylight and we would have gotten the Court House”, Pickett claimed years later, but in a scathing criticism of the action, Munford insists that had his brigade been allowed to continue its chase of Sheridan, the loss at Five Forks might not have occurred.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless,

having pulled back to Five Forks, and receiving Lee's telegram to "Hold Five Forks at all hazards", Pickett might have seen orders from Lee as promise of reinforcements. Despite mentioning no explicit help, Pickett claimed that he expected reinforcements from the message.<sup>40</sup> Lee's telegram (which actually reprimanded Pickett for his withdrawal) is disputed to even have existed, and itself is debated on its merits. A telegram was sent on the night of the 31st to Jefferson Davis and John Breckenridge, but no reinforcements were mentioned in it at all.<sup>41</sup> All in all, Pickett's reasons for expecting reinforcements are dubious at best, and in any case, it is clear that no such message was relayed from Lee to anyone else.

Pickett's second line of defense against accusations of inaction, mostly from his own men, but also from Confederate higher ups, was that of deflecting the blame. This was Pickett's most consistent tactic in dealing with failure, and he'd had his fair share of it. Pickett blamed Lee following the disastrous charge at Gettysburg ("The old man had my division slaughtered"), and similarly blamed his divisions following battles at Bern and New Market.<sup>42 43</sup> Here, Pickett lashed out at his cavalry regiments, namely on the left those who were broken by the initial Union attack, and even blamed Fitzhugh Lee.<sup>44</sup> The accusation against Fitzhugh Lee, has been ridiculed, as Lee was with Pickett during the shad bake. Although Lee does shoulder blame for this defeat, namely in that he neglected to check up on Munford's report during the battle's first skirmishes with Mackenzie's troopers, but that blame amounts to less than that due to Pickett.<sup>45</sup> The former claim, however, placing the blame on the left flank of the line, does hold merit. This much even Munford, who held that flank, admits: "General Pickett then goes on to take the hypothetical assumption that, "Had the cavalry on the left done as well as that on the right, the day would probably have been ours. It might have been so. We will not deny it; nay, we will not doubt it."<sup>46</sup> Undoubtedly, however, the right flank was strengthened in no small part due to the leadership of Rooney Lee, whose experience lent itself to the fight to be had. Munford however, under the command of Fitzhugh Lee, was faced with an uphill battle. While the organization and use of Munford's troops, especially joined with the force from Ransom's divisions, might have been used to take advantage of Crawford's northward crawl, blaming a Confederate defeat as momentous as this on the failure of an outnumbered and weary flank was Pickett's way of justifying his mistakes.

The flanking of Munford and Ransom by Crawford's division accentuates Pickett's poor deployment on the night of the 31st. While only 300 soldiers were placed to the east of Five Forks- 300 soldiers to guard a mile and a half gap between Pickett and the remainder of Lee's force- Rosser's reserves numbered nearly a thousand.<sup>47</sup> Had Rosser moved his troops to cover the gap between the two lines (Pickett's and Lee's), and kept the 300 or so cavalymen to guard the wagons at Hatcher's Run, Mackenzie would undoubtedly have had more of a struggle. It was, admittedly to Pickett's credit to keep the artillery in the center of the Confederate line, however, as "Gallant " John Pelham controlled the center better than anyone else might have. It was also Pickett negligence to bolster Pelham with any substantial cavalry or infantry as reinforcement, so that upon Pelham's death under mounting Union pressure, Pickett was forced to muster the

retreating forces to go back into the fight, a move that might have been wholly avoided if the left flank had been strengthened a little more and proper reinforcement had been sent to aid Pelham.<sup>48 49</sup>

Pickett's blunders at Five Forks were ridiculed among not only Confederate high command, but also among his own troops. Munford describes the names of ranking Confederate generals- Fitz Lee, Pickett, and Rosser- "hung in dusty streamers of regret."<sup>50</sup> Munford, along with many lower ranking generals at Five Forks, also asserts that the shad bake was the single mistake that doomed the Confederacy to failure.<sup>51</sup> While the exact details of the bake are unknown, Pickett's absence certainly impacted the battle to its greatest extent. Interestingly, Munford compares Five Forks to the 1623 Battle of Lutzen and the 1812 Battle of Borodino, both of which had been fought at times without commanders and in great confusion.<sup>52</sup> Lee took a much more constrained route, yet his anger at Pickett's lack of communication is clearly shown. J. E. B. Stuart's absence at Gettysburg still haunted Lee, and Pickett had seemingly handed him a much worse defeat in the same way. "Is that man still with the army?", Lee remarked bitterly at Appomattox a week later, when he finally surrendered his army.<sup>53</sup> Pickett's reputation was forever shattered at Five Forks.

### **Robert E. Lee:**

Robert E. Lee's involvement in the Battle of Five Forks was minimal at best: it is clear that his communications with Pickett had broken down sometime after the 30th of March. Lee's involvement rests more with the allegations from Pickett that reinforcements had to be sent to Five Forks. When Pickett retreated from Dinwiddie Courthouse to Five Forks on March 31st, Lee sent him the following telegram: "Hold Five Forks at all Hazards. Protect the road to Ford's Depot and prevent Union forces from striking the South-side Railroad. Regret exceedingly your forced withdrawal and inability to hold the advantage you had gained."<sup>54</sup> This order was the result of the fighting of the previous days, but that fighting was not communicated back to Lee as well as it should have been. On March 30th, Lee received notice of skirmishing following the Battle of Lewis' Farm, which he passed off as "no serious attack."<sup>55</sup> While Warren's Corps, still at Vaughan Road and Dabney's Mill, were advancing towards Sheridan, Lee's passing off the incident at Lewis' Farm as a skirmish was concerning to say the least. Decidedly, it was not up to Lee to judge the situation along White Oak Road, but the slowdown in any decisive movement might have contributed to the weakened Confederate force on April 1st. The lack of military action on March 30th led to the increased pressure on Sheridan and Warren from Pickett, who expected reinforcements to come in. The battles at Dinwiddie Courthouse and White Oak Road on March 31st were simply a manifestation of Pickett's confidence in Lee and his reserves waiting by Five Forks.

The main reason that the battle of Five Forks happened at all was Pickett's sudden withdrawal to Five Forks at sundown on the 31st. With the withdrawal came the "Hold Five Forks" telegram, but Lee's other correspondence that day shows no signs of worry or foresight

into Grant's plan.<sup>56</sup> He sent only one other substantial telegram that day- to Secretary of War John Breckenridge, but in it he only mentioned the addition of 3 brigades from Richard Anderson into the battlefield, only mentioning Pickett's retreat in passing, saying "Our troops were then withdrawn, and were followed by the enemy, who in turn drove us back to our lines. Our loss was not large, and we captured over four hundred prisoners."<sup>57</sup> This message was relayed successfully and pushed no further by Confederate High Command. Had it been investigated, it might have been possible for Lee to send Pickett the necessary reinforcements, but that would have been above and beyond for Lee, who had injured himself earlier and was disposed of for the days before the battle. Even so, it was not completely infeasible to say that Lee could have made a change in the battle had he acted early.

The true danger to Pickett's force on March 31st, one that Lee should have been able to decipher from Sheridan's movements, was the same danger that was eventually exploited during the battle itself- a gap was opening up between Lee and Pickett's forces.<sup>58</sup> This gap, evident to Sheridan, stretched from The Chimneys south of Hatcher's Run to the eastern end of White Oak Road. If Sheridan attacked this gap, he could effectively cut off Pickett from the defenses of Lee's trenches and lines. Twice before the battle, Sheridan remarked upon the benefit of having Pickett dislodged from Lee's main force. In a telegram to Grant at headquarters, he mentioned that "if I am cut off from the Army of the Potomac, [Pickett] is cut off from Lee's Army... ." <sup>59</sup> Then again on April 1st, he remarked to an aide that "We at last have drawn the enemy's infantry out of its fortifications and this is our chance to attack it."<sup>60</sup> The intentions of Sheridan were clear in the early stages of his movement out of Grant's lines and heading northwest across the Boynton Plank Road. He had even captured Confederate rebels at Dinwiddie Courthouse who had knowledge of Pickett's movements.<sup>61</sup> Lee, however, would not discover the extent of Sheridan's knowledge until the next day- April 1st, 1865, the day of the battle itself, when he found that Sheridan was poised to strike at Pickett's exposed force directly at Five Forks. His hurry to make sense of the situation led him to write another letter, this time bypassing Secretary of War Breckenridge in favor of messaging Jefferson Davis directly, warning him of potential defeat and advising him to prepare for Richmond's evacuation.<sup>62</sup> While Douglass S. Freeman considers this letter a symbol of Lee's confidence in his army (in that he had not recommended evacuation any earlier), it actually shows the faith the army had in Lee.<sup>63</sup> It shows that there was a Confederate belief in the invulnerability of Lee, and that he wouldn't advise evacuation until it was necessary. This belief in some part led to the mellow response to a breakdown in communication that happened on the 31st of March and 1st of April.

To Lee's credit, his response to the defeat at Five Forks does in some part serve to redeem his actions before the battle. Following the attack ordered by Grant on Petersburg, and Lee's clumsy discovery of the Union breakthrough, Lee finally recognized the inability of his depleted force to hold the Union lines any further. John B. Gordon, Lee's trusted lieutenant and the architect of the failed assault on Fort Stedman, mentioned that his troops were spread out like telegraph poles, one soldier for every 15 feet.<sup>64</sup> With his left and center weakened and his right



pummeled into submission by advancing Union soldiers, Lee ordered a retreat from Petersburg. Although Five Forks arguably doomed the Confederacy on April 1st, Lee's timely withdrawal from Petersburg the next day might have given the Confederacy a new life, albeit a short one. A final message was sent to Jefferson Davis, who was in church that morning: "My lines are broken in three places. Richmond must be evacuated this evening."<sup>65</sup> As recorded by one of Gordon's aides, as Lee rode out to see the breakthrough of the Union army, he remarked that "It has happened as I told them in Richmond it would happen. The line has been stretched until it is broken."<sup>66</sup> This is seemingly the case, as the movement of troops away from the left and center to strengthen Pickett before the 29th of March weakened Gordon's troops to their dismal state. Whose fault is that movement; it the Confederate high command that the order came. It seems that Lee and James Longstreet had opposing views on the method that should be taken to stop Sheridan from reaching Five Forks.<sup>67</sup>

Longstreet is a unique case in the study of Confederate leadership: his views on almost every major action, especially late in the stage of the war differed from that of Lee and Jefferson Davis. Even now, with just weeks left in the war, Longstreet was at odds with Lee over the movements to defend Five Forks. The primary conflict was over which division should be employed to lead the defense of the Southside Railroad.<sup>68</sup> Longstreet wanted the Virginian William Mahone's division to be brought in from Bermuda's Hundred and Pickett to take his place. Lee, however, thinking that Pickett could not be sufficiently used as a diversion, wanted him to lead the attack.<sup>69 70</sup> In the end, Lee won out, but Longstreet remained bitter about what he was a poor choice for commander; he had always been distrustful of Pickett after the charge at Gettysburg. Nevertheless, Longstreet defended Pickett's actions during the battle, and asserted that the defeat was no one's fault but the Union's.<sup>71</sup>

There is finally even Grant's praise of Lee's decisions during his campaign, but these remarks seem to be either remembered poorly or embellished to give more than his due credit. Grant assumed that it was "natural" that Lee would see through his flanking maneuver and move to intercept him there.<sup>72</sup> Grant expected this movement so much that he had given Sheridan a contingency plan to avoid fighting before he was prepared.<sup>73</sup> This included an invitation to either attack Lee head on, or skirt his defenses and aim for disruption of Lee's army rather than head on combat. It seems that Lee chose the wiser route by ordering Pickett to hold Five Forks, a reassurance in the case of Sheridan's "espionage". This insurance didn't pan out, as Sheridan opted for the attack, which, being outnumbered, Pickett would have found hard to stem either way. Lee's decision, in this case, seems to have been properly justified.

### **Thomas Rosser**

In a way, the many mistakes of Pickett were caused by and exacerbated by those of Thomas Rosser. Rosser's role in the battle of Five Forks was small, but the repercussions of his infamous shad bake were quickly noticed. While he commanded the Pickett's reserves and held their

wagons, Rosser never completely joined the battle, even after the bake had ended. This lack of participation kept a crucial force from the battle, particularly when troops were the most needed.

Out of the more persistent brigades fighting on March 31st before Pickett's seemingly untimely withdrawal was Rosser's, who pushed on near Dinwiddie Court House (at the junction of Crump Road and three other less used roads around a mile from Five Forks).<sup>74</sup> It was not until Pickett had already reached Five Forks, that Rosser was ordered to fall back as well, at 8 AM according to his diaries.<sup>75</sup> Rosser's reserves, made up of the brigades of Dearing and McCausland, were stationed by Pickett just North of Hatcher's Run.<sup>76</sup> The swollen river, flooding from the rains that plague Virginia in the spring, had caused Rosser to halt before crossing the stream and setting up camp. His men, he alleged, were too tired from the march, and his horses were too "hard-ridden".<sup>77</sup> While the true state of Rosser's reserves before the battle had not yet been discovered, the reasons he made to nearby officers, notably to Pickett himself, may imply a different reason for staying behind. The previous day, using a borrowed seine, Rosser had caught shad in the Nottoway River, which ran nearly parallel to Hatcher's Run, curving away closer to Petersburg.<sup>78</sup> Shad, a silver fish that had been integral to the culture and identity of the colonies in previous decades, was prized as a delicacy, and Pickett was likely famished, overconfident, or both.<sup>79</sup> Whatever the reason for the eagerness, Rosser's invitation was heartily accepted.

While the invitation to the bake was likely made in good taste, it is that one decision around which the battle is argued to have turned. As the skirmishing began on April 1st, far off in the woods near the Confederate angle, Fitzhugh Lee recounts that he was, with Pickett and Rosser, "talking" at the rear.<sup>80</sup> Thomas Munford noted this distance to be something around 2 miles.<sup>81</sup> F. Lee also alleges that he was attempting to ask Rosser about ammunition for his troops, which would have been unusual for him to do.<sup>82</sup> Having shown a particularly nonchalant attitude towards the preparations for a battle he never thought would come, asking Rosser for reinforcements seemed uncharacteristically aware. The bake itself went smoothly as recounted by many officers who watched it, but no account of any alcohol was mentioned. The omission seems strange, since the shad bake was a treasured feast for Tidewater Virginians; such a bake seldom went without alcohol, and drinking during the bake might more easily explain the actions of the generals to ignore the warnings of disaster.<sup>83</sup> In either case, the news of the battle did not reach Rosser until a little after the fighting had started. As William Crawford's division of the Union army drifted slowly further north, flanking Munford and cutting off Ford's Road in the process, a message came for the generals. The timing of these couriers is unclear, but in all likelihood, they were sent by Munford after the fighting had begun to find the commanding generals. They notified Pickett of the situation, but the acoustic shadow of the pine trees surrounding them seemed to deafen the potential noise of the battle.<sup>84</sup> It was not until well after 4 PM that the first messengers were sent out by Pickett himself, and those messengers were captured across from Hatcher's Run almost immediately.

With regards to the exchange of messages between Pickett and his lieutenants, if it can be called an exchange, Rosser kept quiet, and stated that the messengers did not warn them of the enemy's advance: "All appeared to be quiet".<sup>85</sup> He also cited his hand injury, which he had sustained the previous day traveling from the Nottoway River to Five Forks, as a reason for staying away from the battle.<sup>86</sup> Finally, Rosser claimed to be following the orders of Fitzhugh Lee, and seeing as Lee was present at the battle too, felt no need to react in a major way to the messages. Even when Pickett and Lee rode off to the front, Rosser stayed behind, not even providing troops from his reserves. Rosser's most often employed reason for not participating in the battle was that his troops were tired, and more importantly, that his horses were too.<sup>87</sup> However, the artillery of Willie Pegram, the gallant artillery-man, had also faced a strenuous march through the muddy swamps that extended from the right flank of R. E. Lee's Petersburg line.<sup>88</sup>

While a more detailed account of Rosser's actions on March 31st and April 1st are rare, his autobiographical work Riding With Rosser provides some insight into his motives for keeping his reserves out of the battle. While he does claim that his men and horses were tired and needed supplies, he also claims that the surrounding area was too wooded for his cavalry to participate in the battle.<sup>89</sup> Ignoring the fact that Munford's cavalry, mostly dismounted, had already been stationed along the battle line, Rosser's cavalry was in fact needed by Pickett as the battle progressed into its later stages. The battlefield of Five Forks contains a thick forested area that runs northeast along the original Confederate line, which, according to maps drawn up by the Union army, existed at that time too.<sup>90</sup> The far left of the Union line, which receives little attention, was anchored in perhaps the most wooded part, facing northwest along the White Oak Road. The junction of Five Forks itself creates a decently sized plain behind the Confederate defenses, bounded by Ford's Depot on the left and Church's Crossing on the right. This area would have been prime for Rosser's cavalry to be placed- just rough enough to provide elementary cover, but not too wooded for the cavalry to move freely.

The negligence of Rosser (or Pickett for that matter) to see the chance to use Rosser's cavalry might have been a major infringement on the effort to hold the center. Backed only by a small number of infantrymen, it was the artillery of William Pegram, the gallant "boy soldier".<sup>91</sup> The bespeckled Pegram was attacked by Sheridan's dismounted cavalry (that of Custer and Merritt to be exact) and was broken in three places before falling back. Pegram himself was killed, a major blow to the morale of the retreating Confederates. Had Rosser's cavalry, however tired and worn, been there to prevent full collapse in the center, it might have reinforced the belief in Confederate spirit which was failing in the final stages of the battle. But it wasn't there and the line fell.

By his own accounts, Rosser seems to have been drawn along by Pickett's overconfidence in his forces, a trend that follows through many of Pickett's generals. He writes that it seemed a "surprise to General Pickett", but that he [Pickett] should have been alert "in the presence of an enemy which he had so recently been fighting".<sup>92</sup> Despite this vote of confidence (or rather

doubt) in Pickett, Rosser did commit forces to help stem the Union advance across Ford Road. In particular, his Dinwiddie Troop, as it was called, were called as guides to escort Pickett and his skirmishers safely back to Confederate lines. Rosser's movements before and after the battle are still partially in doubt, but his actions, however negligent, do not seem to be enough to compare with those of Pickett or even Fitzhugh Lee.

### **Fitzhugh Lee**

In Lee's Lieutenants, Douglass Southall Freeman shows a rare change of character by criticizing the actions of Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee as "overconfidence" and a "lack of understanding of the dread immediacy of the crisis".<sup>92</sup> While it may seem like a small issue to critique, the description of overconfidence may be better applied to Fitzhugh Lee than to Pickett. It was F. Lee who supervised the arrival of Pickett's forces at Five Forks on the night of March 31st, and it was his job to set up their defenses against any Union attack. To this goal, Lee performed very poorly, and his lack of awareness in predicting the possibility of Union advances, particularly after Pickett's disastrous withdrawal from Dinwiddie the previous day. Years after the battle, during General Gouverneur Warren's court martial for alleged insubordination (ordered by Sheridan for Warren delay in attacking the Confederate left and his supposed absence during the battle itself while he was with Crawford's troops), Fitzhugh Lee elaborated on their misplaced defensive structures, saying that "[they] were not expecting any attack that afternoon".<sup>93</sup> Lee also claimed that they had heard nothing of the movements of Warren, who was still marching up to join Sheridan at Dinwiddie.<sup>94</sup> Here we see yet another example of the communication breakdown during the Five Forks campaign, as the retreating forces of Pickett were unsure of the position and power of the advancing federals- a grave mistake. Yet despite the overconfidence that Lee seemingly demonstrates, his belief in the nonexistence of the Union attack was rooted in a kind of myth. This myth Freeman describes well: it was "the general belief...that the commanding General [R. E. Lee in this case] somehow would contrive to achieve the 'impossible'", even though Lee's lines were stretched far beyond their breaking point.<sup>95</sup> Essentially, just as Pickett had believed in Lee's reinforcements based on his questionable message sent back to headquarters, F. Lee also believed apparently that there would be some saving grace keeping Five Forks from facing a Union attack. This belief would have been correct had it not been for the inability for any divisions from Richard H. Anderson's Corps to arrive.<sup>96</sup> 11 miles of Confederate lines were being occupied by no more than 11,000 troops, and the far left flank of the Confederacy anchored by the James River was being depleted to reinforce Pickett's efforts.<sup>97 98</sup> Had only R. E. Lee received and read Pickett's message, if there ever was one, and reported back to Pickett that reinforcements would not be available, Lee's defenses might have been stronger in their placement.

While the blame for Confederate overconfidence might not fall on F. Lee himself, there was one concrete chance for Lee to right his wrongs. As the attack on Munford's front began, Lee

was preparing to depart for the shad bake from his headquarters near Boisseau's Farm on Ford's Road.<sup>99</sup> This is where Munford found him to report the advancement of Warren V Corps and McKenzie's cavalry battalions, a report that Lee found alarmist. Seemingly still under the impression that the Union threat was not as powerful as his subordinates assumed, Lee simply commanded Munford to "go over in person" and "see what this means", before leaving with Pickett for the rear.<sup>100</sup> Although Lee told Munford to inform him about potential developments, he never informed Munford (nor anyone else) of his whereabouts, leading to confusion among the chain of command as the battle began.<sup>101</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Pickett's actions at Five Forks seem inexcusable. For all of Pickett's justification, and for all of his blaming (and that of his wife as well), his negligence at Five Forks is glaring. His contemporaries seemed to notice as much. Pickett's first mistake seemed to be his untimely withdrawal to Five Forks on the 31st, although, if his accounts of being pursued by the Union forces is true (despite not being supported by other accounts), the move might have saved his army. From there, Pickett neglected setting up proper embankments and to cover the gap between his troops and those of the main Confederate line, which was the first location to be attacked on April 1st. From there came the legendary shad bake, which drew him from the action until the battle was essentially unwinnable. Yet he tried, rallying some troops behind him, but for Pickett, the damage was done. Despite his insistence that reinforcements should have arrived, Pickett's faith in Lee seems to have been misplaced. Equally to blame are Thomas Rosser and Fitzhugh Lee. Being placed at the reserves of the army, no general pushed so hard to be absolved of blame as Thomas Rosser. He claimed that his march to Five Forks was long, that his men were tired, and that he couldn't reach the battlefield in time. Despite all this, his role in the battle of thinking up the shad bake places him at the foremost of the generals on whom suspicion lies. Even more guilty is Fitzhugh Lee, who unlike Pickett, received *direct contact* from his subordinates, Munford in this case, telling him of the impending attack. Here, we turn to the other Lee, R. E. Lee, that is. Despite being distant from the proceedings at Five Forks, Lee's preliminary defensive actions against Sheridan might have been better thought out, and he could have pushed Jefferson Davis to provide Pickett with reinforcements, but apart from Pickett's insistence, there is nothing to show that Lee ever expected anything out of the ordinary.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Glass, Andrew. 2018. "President Lincoln Confers with Sherman and Grant, March 27, 1865." POLITICO. 2018. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/27/this-day-in-politics-march-27-1865-482279> (Accessed March 3)

- <sup>2</sup>“10 Facts: The Petersburg Campaign.” 2018. American Battlefield Trust. 2018  
<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/10-facts-petersburg-campaign> (Accessed March 3)
- <sup>3</sup>“The Battle of Fort Stedman: March 25, 1865.” 2018. The Siege of Petersburg Online. August 22, 2018.  
<http://www.beyondthecrater.com/resources/bat-sum/petersburg-siege-sum/the-battle-of-fort-stedman-summary/>.
- <sup>4</sup>Grant, Ulysses S. *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant*. (Princeton, NJ: Collectors Reprints, Inc., 1998) p. 443-444.
- <sup>5</sup>Bearss, Edwin C., and Chris Calkins. *Battle of Five Forks*. (Lynchburg, VA: H.E. Howard, 1985) p. 6.
- <sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 72.
- <sup>7</sup>Chamberlain, Joshua Lawrence. *The Passing of the Armies*. (Pennington, NJ: Collectors Reprints, Inc., 1995) p. 83.
- <sup>8</sup>Pickett, George E. 1825-1875. *Heart of a Soldier: as Revealed in the Intimate Letters of Genl. George e. Pickett*. (Place of publication not identified: Nabu Press, 2010) p. 170.
- <sup>9</sup>Bearss, p. 76.
- <sup>10</sup>Grant, p. 448.
- <sup>11</sup>Gardiner, Asa Bird. 1881. *The Battles of "Gravelly Run," "Dinwiddie Court-House," and "Five Forks," Va., 1865.: Argument on Behalf of Lieut. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan. U.S.A., Respondent*. (Chicago, IL: publisher not identified) p. 107.
- <sup>12</sup>Bearss, p. 98.
- <sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 110.
- <sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 112.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup>Gordon, John Brown, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (Lexington, KY: First Rate Publishers, 2017) p. 144.
- <sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup>Akers, Anne Trice Thompson, and Thomas Taylor Munford. “Colonel Thomas T. Munford and the Last Cavalry Operations of the Civil War in Virginia,” (n.d) p. 59.
- <sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 61.
- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup>McCarthy, Michael Joseph. *Confederate Waterloo the Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Controversy That Brought down a General* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2017) p. 142.
- <sup>23</sup>Longstreet, James. *From Manassas to Appomattox* (Bremen: outlook Verlag, 2012) p. 600.
- <sup>24</sup>Freeman, Douglas Southall. *Lee's Lieutenants. a Study in Command*. Vol. 3. (New York: Scribner Classics, 1997) p. 668.
- <sup>25</sup>Munford, p. 66.
- <sup>26</sup>Gordon, Lesley J. *General George E. Pickett in Life & Legend*. (United States: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000) p. 150.
- <sup>27</sup>Munford, p. 71.
- <sup>28</sup>Gordon, p. 152.
- <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Longstreet, p. 604.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 605.

<sup>32</sup> Pickett, p. 170.

<sup>33</sup> “The Death of A.P. Hill.” in Stone Sentinels.

<https://stonesentinels.com/petersburg/petersburg-western-front/death-ap-hill/>. (Accessed February 10, 2020)

<sup>34</sup> Gordon, p. 152.

<sup>35</sup> Pickett, La Salle Corbell. *Pickett and His Men*. (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1990) p. 371.

<sup>36</sup> Gordon, p. 151.

<sup>37</sup> Pickett, p. 171.

<sup>38</sup> Munford, p. 46.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Simson, Jay W. *Crisis of Command in the Army of the Potomac: Sheridans Search for an Effective General*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2008) p. 26.

<sup>41</sup> In fact, even the issue of sending out a telegram is in debate, since Breckenridge himself never confirmed or noted that he had received the telegram, even following the end of the war. It is highly doubtful that he would have made a move whether he received it or not, but a curious point nonetheless.

<sup>42</sup> Mike. ““That Old Man....”.” Throwing down the Gauntlet, <https://madnessmike.blogspot.com/2007/09/that-old-man.html>. (Accessed January 1, 2019).

<sup>43</sup> Pickett, p. 102.

<sup>44</sup> Munford, p. 73.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>46</sup> Munford, p. 73.

<sup>47</sup> A number likely exaggerated by Rosser himself before the battle- the actual numbers appeared closer to 800; Rosser, Thomas Lafayette. *Riding with Rosser*. (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1998) p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> Pickett, p. 173.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Munford, by contrast, greatly praises Pelham’s actions during the battle; Gordon, p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> Munford, p. 32.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>54</sup> Gordon, p. 148.

<sup>55</sup> Freeman, Douglass Southall. *Lee’s Dispatches*. (Place of publication not identified: Nabu Press, 2010) p. 352.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>57</sup> “The Siege of Petersburg Online.” The Siege of Petersburg Online. 2020.  
<http://www.beyondthecrater.com/>. (Accessed February 10).
- <sup>58</sup> Gordon, p. 149.
- <sup>59</sup> Macdonald, John. *Great Battles of the Civil War*. (NY, NY, USA: Chartwell Books, 2015) p. 176.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 180.
- <sup>61</sup> Longstreet, p. 597.
- <sup>62</sup> Freeman, p. 354.
- <sup>63</sup> Freeman, p. 359.
- <sup>64</sup> J. Gordon, p. 420.
- <sup>65</sup> David allegedly received the dispatch at a church service and immediately stood, walked out and ordered the evacuation back to the capital.
- <sup>66</sup> Gordon, p. 419.
- <sup>67</sup> Longstreet, p. 593.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>70</sup> Freeman, p. 660.
- <sup>71</sup> Longstreet, p. 600-601.
- <sup>72</sup> Grant, p. 443.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>74</sup> Freeman, p. 664.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid, p. 665.
- <sup>77</sup> Msw, and Msw. “Five Forks.” Weapons and Warfare,  
<https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2018/12/26/five-forks/>. (Accessed December 20, 2018).
- <sup>78</sup> Munford, p. 57.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>81</sup> Msw, and Msw. “Five Forks.” Weapons and Warfare,.
- <sup>82</sup> Freeman, p. 668.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>84</sup> Longstreet, p. 598.
- <sup>85</sup> Freeman, p. 664.
- <sup>86</sup> Longstreet, p. 598.
- <sup>87</sup> Rosser, p. 44.
- <sup>88</sup> Freeman, p. 665.
- <sup>89</sup> Rosser, p. 45; Freeman, p. 665.
- <sup>90</sup> “MAP: The Battle-Field of Five Forks, VA. Fought April 1st 1865 (Chamberlain, Passing of the Armies).” The Siege of Petersburg Online,



<http://www.beyondthecrater.com/resources/maps/petersburg-siege-maps/ninth-offensive-maps/the-battle-of-five-forks-maps/map-5-forks-apr-1-pota/>. (Last modified March 25, 2015).

<sup>91</sup> Gordon, p. 156.

<sup>92</sup> Rosser, p. 50.

<sup>94</sup> Pickett, p. 172.

<sup>95</sup> Gordon, p. 149.

<sup>96</sup> Freeman, p. 665.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 665.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 665.

<sup>100</sup> Grant's strategy involves hustling nearly three fourths of a Corps from the James River to the North down to take Warren place. He managed to keep the Confederacy in the dark by instructing the abandoned camps to be kept lit and the bands to continue playing. Longstreet never discovered the deception.

<sup>101</sup> "MAP: The Battle-Field of Five Forks, VA. Fought April 1st 1865 (Chamberlain, Passing of the Armies)." The Siege of Petersburg Online, <http://www.beyondthecrater.com/resources/maps/petersburg-siege-maps/ninth-offensive-maps/the-battle-of-five-forks-maps/map-5-forks-apr-1-pota/>. (Last modified March 25, 2015).

Akers, Anne Trice Thompson, and Thomas Taylor Munford. "Colonel Thomas T. Munford and the Last Cavalry Operations of the Civil War in Virginia," n.d.

Bearss, Edwin C., and Chris Calkins. *Battle of Five Forks*. (Lynchburg, VA: H.E. Howard, 1985)

Chamberlain, Joshua Lawrence. *The Passing of the Armies*. (Pennington, NJ: Collectors Reprints, Inc., 1995)

Freeman, Douglas Southall. *Lee's Lieutenants. a Study in Command*. Vol. 3. (New York: Scribner Classics, 1997)

Freeman, Douglass Southall. Lee's Dispatches. (Place of publication not identified: Nabu Press, 2010)

Gardiner, Asa Bird. 1881. The Battles of "Gravelly Run," "Dinwiddie Court-House," and "Five Forks," Va., 1865.: Argument on Behalf of Lieut. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, U.S.A., Respondent. (Chicago, IL: publisher not identified)

Glass, Andrew. 2018. "President Lincoln Confers with Sherman and Grant, March 27, 1865." POLITICO. 2018.  
<https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/27/this-day-in-politics-march-27-1865-482279>  
 (Accessed March 3)

Gordon, John Brown. Reminiscences of the Civil War. (Lexington, KY: First Rate Publishers, 2017)

Gordon, Lesley J. General George E. Pickett in Life & Legend. (United States: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

Grant, Ulysses S. Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant. (Princeton, NJ: Collectors Reprints, Inc., 1998)

Longstreet, James. From Manassas to Appomattox (Bremen: outlook Verlag, 2012)

Macdonald, John. Great Battles of the Civil War. (NY, NY, USA: Chartwell Books, 2015)

McCarthy, Michael Joseph. *Confederate Waterloo the Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Controversy That Brought down a General*. (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2017)

Mike. ““That Old Man....”.” Throwing down the Gauntlet,  
<https://madnessmike.blogspot.com/2007/09/that-old-man.html>. (Last modified January 1, 1970)

Pickett, George E. 1825-1875. *Heart of a Soldier: as Revealed in the Intimate Letters of Genl. George e. Pickett*. (Place of publication not identified: Nabu Press, 2010)

Pickett, La Salle Corbell. *Pickett and His Men*. (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1990)

Rosser, Thomas Lafayette. *Riding with Rosser*. (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1998)

“The Battle of Fort Stedman: March 25, 1865.” 2018. The Siege of Petersburg Online. August 22, 2018.

<http://www.beyondthecrater.com/resources/bat-sum/petersburg-siege-sum/the-battle-of-for-t-stedman-summaries/>.

“The Death of A.P. Hill.” in Stone Sentinels.

<https://stonesentinels.com/petersburg/petersburg-western-front/death-ap-hill/>. (Accessed February 10, 2020)

“The Siege of Petersburg Online.” The Siege of Petersburg Online. 2020.

<http://www.beyondthecrater.com/>. (Accessed February 10)

“10 Facts: The Petersburg Campaign.” 2018. American Battlefield Trust. 2018

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/10-facts-petersburg-campaign> (Accessed March 3)