BRIGADIER GENERAL ST. JOHN R. LIDDELL'S DIVISION AT CHICKAMAUGA: THE STUDY OF A DIVISION'S PERFORMANCE IN BATTLE

A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

MICHAEL R. KING, MAJOR, USMC
B.A., Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, 1980

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ABSTRACT

BRIGADIER GENERAL ST. JOHN R. LIDDELL'S DIVISION AT THE BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA: A STUDY OF A DIVISION'S PERFORMANCE IN BATTLE by Major Michael R. King, USMC, 141 pages.

This thesis is a historical analysis of Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell and his division during the Battle of Chickamauga. Liddell's Division was an ad hoc unit, formed just prior to the battle. During the battle, the unit was involved in five different engagements over a period of three days. These engagements resulted in varying degrees of success and failure. In today's context the performance of the division can be seen as mostly a failure, but from the American Civil War perspective the division's performance in many ways was a success. The division's experiences over the three-day period included: fighting against the overwhelming firepower of a new weapon and suffering numerous casualties; surprising and routing three enemy brigades before being surprised, flanked, and forced to retreat; lacking the will to attack across an open field littered with dead and wounded comrades; attacking and flanking the enemy then being threatened with cut off from the main army; and finally being attacked unexpectedly from the flank and routed.

The thesis begins with a general summation of the battle and an introductory discussion of the structure, leadership, tactics, weapons, and training of the Confederate armies during the American Civil War. The thesis then continues with an examination of General Liddell's life and background before and during the early part of the war. Next, the thesis discusses, as a prelude to Chickamauga, Liddell and his brigades' experiences at the Battle of Stones River and during the Tullahoma Campaign. The thesis continues with a description of the background and combat experiences of the brigade commanders and the units that comprised Liddell's Division. Thereafter, the thesis analyzes the performance of General Liddell and his division at the Battle of Chickamauga and draws conclusions as to the proximate causes of the performance: causes that are related to the terrain, the organization of the division, the lack of enemy information, and the tactical focus of Liddell and his commanders.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Battle of Chickamauga was one of the greatest might-have-been battles of the entire American Civil War.[1] Fought on the 19 and 20 September 1863, the battle could have been the turning point for the Confederate struggle in the mid-south. Instead, the battle, although a tactical victory for the Confederates, was strategically indecisive and quite costly. Confederate casualties would total more than 18,000 as compared to more than 16,000 Union casualties.[2] Chickamauga, as a result, would go down in history as the bloodiest two-day battle of the Civil War, fought along a sluggish creek whose Indian name means, ironically, "River of Death."[3]

The armies that grappled along the banks of the Chickamauga were commanded by Major General William S. Rosecrans (Army of the Cumberland) and General Braxton Bragg (Army of Tennessee). Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell commanded a division in Major General W. H. T. Walker's Reserve Corps, Army of Tennessee. This division was a temporary unit formed as the Confederate forces were being pushed south from Chattanooga. Liddell took command of the ad hoc division in August 1863. The division consisted of Liddell's Brigade, commanded by Colonel Daniel C. Govan, and Walthall's Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Edward C. Walthall. Although having just been formed, the division was not without battle experience, for each brigade had participated in earlier Army of Tennessee campaigns. The division would see significant action during the battle. Afterwards, the division's two brigades would be reorganized into other divisions and Liddell would lose his command. How did

Liddell's Division perform at Chickamauga? Why was General Liddell relieved of his command? Was General Liddell's performance and that of his division such that he deserved to lose his command? Were General Liddell's personal actions responsible for his division's performance? If not, then what were the proximate causes of the division's performance at Chickamauga? The intent of this thesis is to focus on Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell and attempt to answer these questions.

This thesis will study the past combat performance of General Liddell and the brigades which comprised his division. Additionally, this study will follow General Liddell and his division through the Battle of Chickamauga and will attempt to determine the causes of the division's performance. In the process of answering these questions, numerous subordinate questions will be raised which must also be answered. What were General Liddell's strengths and weaknesses as a combat leader? How did General Liddell's leadership traits affect his division's performance at Chickamauga? How had the brigades of the division performed during other campaigns and battles? What were the combat leadership traits of Liddell's Brigade and the regimental commanders? How did their leadership qualities affect the division's performance at Chickamauga? What was the state of morale, discipline, and training of Liddell's Division? The answers to these questions will form the framework for this study.

In order to thoroughly analyze the performance of Liddell and his division, it is important to first summarize the battle and consider some aspects of combat during the American Civil War which are essential to this study. During the Civil War, three million men would see service, and at least 600,000 would be killed, a figure slightly less than the total of all Americans killed in all the other wars the United States has fought.[4] The battle with the heaviest two-day casualty total would be the Battle of Chickamauga.

By July 1863, the Army of Tennessee, commanded by General Braxton Bragg, had been defeated at the battle of Stones River at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and was being driven out of its namesake state by the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Major General William S. Rosecrans. As the forces moved south, Rosecrans was able to outmaneuver the Confederate forces and by September 1863, had successfully pushed Bragg out of Tennessee and had captured Chattanooga with little resistance.

Chattanooga was appropriately named the gateway to the lower Confederacy.[5] Chattanooga was a vital military objective for both armies because of the four major railroad systems which merged at Chattanooga's central railroad junction. The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad connected Chattanooga with middle Tennessee; the Western and Atlantic Railroad ran to Atlanta; the Memphis and Charleston Railroad proceeded west to the Mississippi River; and the East Tennessee Railroad ran to Knoxville and destinations in Virginia.[6] These rail systems were vital because they allowed for the strategic concentration of soldiers from widely separated areas and provided a lifeline to the Confederate armies in the field.[7] As a result, military and political leaders recognized the importance of railway transportation as a prerequisite for success. The railroads which converged on Chattanooga would play a prominent role in the outcome of the battle.

Chattanooga was also important as a supply depot for Confederate commissary, quartermaster, and ordnance stores.[8] An extensive complex of Confederate military hospitals originated in Chattanooga and extended to Atlanta. Of most importance was the symbolic nature of the area. To control Chattanooga was to control the gateway to the heartland of the South. Union possession of Chattanooga would expose Georgia with its vital resources.[9]

As a result of Rosecrans's skillful maneuvers and effective deception plan and Bragg's inability to concentrate his forces to protect Chattanooga, the initial battle for Chattanooga took

place south of the city, in Georgia, along Chickamauga Creek. Eluding his Union pursuers, Bragg finally concentrated his forces at LaFayette, Georgia. Here reinforcements strengthened his forces to approximately 67,000 men, outnumbering the almost 60,000 strong Army of the Cumberland. Rosecrans, continuing to try to outmaneuver Bragg, attempted, in a piecemeal fashion, to outflank Bragg. Twice Bragg tried to destroy isolated segments of Rosecrans's army, but poor command and control, as well as lack of initiative and procrastination on the part of his subordinate commanders, led to failure. Realizing that he had spread his army across more than forty miles of rugged terrain with few connecting roads, Rosecrans began to concentrate his forces and began moving them north toward Chattanooga along the west bank of the Chickamauga.[10] Hoping to wedge his troops between Rosecrans and Chattanooga, Bragg ordered his forces to proceed northward along the east bank of the Chickamauga and cross downstream of the Union forces. After crossing the creek, he planned to sweep south and drive the Union forces away from Chattanooga. On 18 September, Bragg ordered a dawn attack but again this effort would fail due to his inability to motivate his subordinates. By evening, Bragg's forces had overcome stiff resistance at several crossing points and were finally camped on the west bank of the Chickamauga. Bragg's plan for the next day was to attack the Union left flank and cut off Rosecrans's line of communications to Chattanooga. Instead, Bragg's orders were vague, the assault was uncoordinated, and neither side gained any decided tactical advantage.[11] During the night, the railroads displayed their strategic importance as Lieutenant General James Longstreet's Corps was delivered into the fray. Because Knoxville was in the hands of the Union, Longstreet had been forced to take the long way around via the Carolinas and Atlanta; a distance of almost 1,000 miles, in ten days, using no less than ten different railroads.[12] With the completion of his reinforcements, Bragg decided to reorganize his army and placed Longstreet in command of the left wing. Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk was in command of the

Confederate right wing. On September 20, Bragg again repeated his earlier plan by sending Polk against the Union left and Longstreet against the Union right. Initial action was indecisive. Fate intervened when Rosecrans inadvertently shifted a division from the center of his line and opened a gap. By a strange coincidence, Longstreet attacked the Union line at the precise location where the gap had opened. As the Confederates burst through the gap, without opposition, the Union right collapsed sending Rosecrans and two of his corps in retreat to Chattanooga. Only the "Rock of Chickamauga," General George H. Thomas, would remain on the field to repulse Confederate attacks in the afternoon and cover the Union retreat. Despite an ideal opportunity, Bragg refused to exploit his success by pursuing and destroying the fleeing Union army. Instead, he allowed it to reach the safety of Chattanooga and in doing so he unknowingly killed any chance the Confederacy had to retake middle Tennessee and possibly save the heartland of the South.[13]

The Army of Tennessee, like all Confederate armies, was essentially an army built from scratch. The Confederates patterned their military system after that of the Union. This system consisted of an active regular organization and the militia, a volunteer civilian force that could swell in size commensurate with any emergency.[14] For the south, the regular army existed on paper only. The south relied instead on the volunteer forces that each state would provide. Throughout the war, states maintained state allegiance by continually mustering new units and recruiting replacements for existing units from the same regions. This local tie to recruiting created units with strong relationships between the men but later would serve to make recruitment more difficult as areas were depleted of able bodied recruits. As the war progressed, units often lost men faster than the states could recruit replacements. As a result, units that were reduced to combat ineffectiveness were often consolidated.[15] In General Liddell's Brigade,

which was commanded by Colonel Daniel C. Govan during the battle of Chickamauga, the 2d/15th , the 5th/13th, and the 6th/7th Arkansas Regiments were all consolidated regiments.

Confederate armies were organized in a similar manner as their Union counterparts. Army organization reflected a strong Napoleonic influence. The volunteer infantry regiment, usually commanded by a colonel, comprised ten companies and its number was fixed by the Confederate Congress at 1,045 men.[16] However, this number was not universally standard as some regiments began their campaigns with more and, as the war progressed, often less than the theoretical number of troops. During the Battle of Chickamauga, General Liddell reported that his entire division totaled 3,175 men.[17] The 5th/13th (consolidated) Arkansas Regiment reported 450 effectives, while the 8th Arkansas Regiment reported 387 men taken into action.[18] These numbers were consistent in Liddell's other brigade as the 29th Mississippi Regiment reported 368 effectives, while the reported strength of the 30th Mississippi Regiment was 306 men.[19] There was no battalion organization between the colonel and the company commanders. Usually four to six regiments formed a brigade under a brigadier general. The next higher unit, the division, was commanded by a major general or brigadier general and had a less standard organization. Normally Confederate brigades consisted of regiments from the same state. During the battle of Chickamauga, General Liddell had one brigade of Mississippi regiments and one brigade with predominantly Arkansas regiments.

Confederate military leaders came from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Leadership came from a mixture of regular and militia officers, Mexican War veterans, men of political significance and assorted prominent citizens. Of the 1,108 officers in the regular federal army at the outbreak of war, 270 would resign and become officers of the Confederacy; many were West Point graduates; 283 would serve; and others, like General Liddell, merely had some type of military training.[20] But for the most part Confederate military leaders were provided

military training through the harsh realities of on-the-job training. The local flavor of the recruitment process accounted for much of the lack of experience because the process amounted to nothing more than a political spoils system, in which military leaders were often appointed to positions in order to reconcile factional interests, build party power, and pay debts.[21] Some officers, with no military experience and appointed to positions as part of this spoils system, would fail miserably at the expense of unnecessary casualties to their soldiers, while others would excel and rise in rank based on their demonstrated abilities.

With this lack of experience, military leaders thirsted for doctrinal manuals to guide them in the conduct of battle. The commanders who fought at Chickamauga were highly influenced by and trained in the battlefield tactics of Napoleon.[22] Baron Antoine Henri Jomini was the most popular military theorist during the time that the American Civil War was fought. Jomini was considered the foremost authority on Napoleon and his *Traite des Grandes operations Militaire* was a well-read interpretation of Napoleon's strategies and tactics. His *Art of War* became the leading military text of the time. In these works he emphasized Napoleon's concept of lines of operations and his way of concentrating a superior force against an inferior force. He further stressed the importance of "mass" over all other principles of war and the necessity to maintain tight formations in the face of enemy fire.[23] Jomini's writings would influence several American military theorists. Students at West Point, from 1830 to 1871, would study tactics from Dennis H. Mahan who had studied extensively in France. Union Major General Halleck and Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard, both West Point graduates and students of Mahan, would develop their versions of *The Art of War* , espousing offensive war, lines of operations, and concentration of forces. The standard infantry tactical manual at the beginning of the war was written by West Point graduate Major William J. Hardee, class of 1838. His *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* (1855) manual was simply a revised version of

General Winfield Scott's *Infantry Tactics* (1835), which was based on French tactics during the Napoleonic Wars. For General Liddell, the short-lived student at West Point, these works would have certainly played an important role in the development of his knowledge of military tactics. With regards to Hardee, there is little doubt that he had a significant impact on Liddell's military career, especially since Liddell began his service to the Confederacy in September 1861, as Hardee's aide-de-camp.[24]

The command and control of units during the Civil War was strictly of a personal nature. Commanders would, in effect, read the battle by studying the terrain, listening to the sounds of firing, and visualizing the position of their units and the enemy. At the brigade level, the commander could most often see his entire line of troops at a glance and could make adjustments by simply riding back and forth from one regimental commander to the next. However, heavily wooded terrain, such as that at Chickamauga, reduced visibility, suppressed sound, and generally made it difficult for commanders to read the battle. These factors were compounded at night or in fog or smoke. Much of this confusion could have been overcome by the use of efficient staff officers. Nevertheless, during the Civil War the Confederate armies suffered from a lack of trained staff officers. This shortage was due to the absence of a staff college or any reliable institution to train officers. Additionally, the tendency of commanders to appoint their staff based on family, friendship or political considerations contributed to the problem. As a result, staff officers were instructed by a painful process of trial and error. By necessity or preference, Civil War staffs were small in number. In his *Record*, Liddell mentions that his staff was comprised of an assistant adjutant general, an aide-de-camp and a brigade inspector.[25] This caused most commanders to resort to handling many of the staff functions themselves. This situation was even more complicated by the fact that very little was written down and the fact

that much of the commander's understanding of what was transpiring on the battlefield was due to his direct personal experiences.

During the American Civil War, commanders reflected the influence of Napoleon in the tactical employment of their units.[26] Based on this influence and the experience of the U.S. Army during the Mexican War, the offensive was considered the decisive form of battle. The most common form of tactical offensive maneuver was the frontal assault. The theory behind the frontal assault was to achieve surprise if possible, but if surprise was not possible, to rupture the enemy line by concentrating a succession of attacks, one after the other, against a relatively narrow sector of the enemy position.[27] Each attack was designed to weaken the enemy and if the process was repeated enough the enemy would capitulate. The central principle for the attacking commander was to maintain a tight battle line. The command and control required to accomplish this feat was very difficult to maintain while traversing thickly wooded terrain and facing the wall of fire from an enemy in defensive positions. Furthermore, the advent of the rifled musket and the minie ball made the frontal assault even more of a challenge. In response to the invention of this weapon, Hardee wrote his *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. Hardee emphasized a change to the speed of advance from 110 steps per minute to the "double-quick time" of 165 steps per minute.[28] The reason for this change was to give the attacking soldier the ability to cover approximately 150 yards of ground per minute. Unfortunately, this change did little to enhance the soldiers' chances against the increased maximum effective range and accuracy of the rifled musket.

Many officers soon realized the advantages of conducting flanking movements over the frontal assault. From a geometric standpoint, it was easy to see that in linear warfare the flanking attack favored the attacker who wished to concentrate his forces against a portion of the enemy line. Yet, again, the major difficulty with this tactic was command and control. The commander

not only had to identify the enemy's flank, and position his forces to the advantage but had to do so by synchronizing his attack with the attacks of units around him. Reluctantly, commanders repeatedly attacked each other frontally, with resulting high casualties, because that was the easiest way to conduct offensive operations.[29]

By September 1863, Civil War battle tactics had evolved to the point that brigades were the basic maneuver units. Divisions were usually comprised of at least two brigades. When employed on the field of battle, these brigades would attack in sequence from left to right or right to left depending on the mission, the enemy location, the terrain, and the number of brigades available. At the Battle of Chickamauga, the employment of brigades was complicated by the heavily wooded terrain and by a command and control system which relied on the personal actions and voice commands of commanders. As was seen throughout the Civil War, attacks quickly devolved into a confusing blur of regimental attacks and withdrawals completely beyond the control of higher-level commanders. The result was that attacks were piecemeal, frontal, and uncoordinated; thus they generally failed to dislodge defenders.[30]

Much of a unit's resilience in battle depended on the length of time its men had been campaigning, and especially the length of time they had been living together as a unified team.[31] An important factor in the development of this team concept was the indoctrination of new recruits. Simply stated, the new recruit was quickly exposed to two essential elements of military life. The first was the experience of survival as it related to existing in the unit. Recruits, as a matter of survival, learned how to march, how to eat, and where to sleep. The second element was the almost endless experience of drill. The emphasis on drill was done to counteract and minimize the confusion of maneuver in combat. Units would drill in the morning and afternoon, and spend the evening studying drill theory. Drill was seen as a standardized means of moving large numbers of men quickly and efficiently around the battlefield. Moreover,

drill was seen as a method of steadying the troops during combat and providing esprit de corps. This basis for discipline and obedience was often the only method of keeping troops attentive to their duty when minie balls began flying.

The standard infantry weapon used in the Civil War was the .58 caliber, single-shot, muzzle loading, rifled musket. As compared to the smoothbore musket, the rifling system of this weapon greatly increased its range and accuracy. These weapons fired a hollow-based, conoidal bullet or minie ball. The advanced technology of the rifled musket would serve to make the infantry tactics of the Napoleonic and Mexican Wars obsolete. With this weapon, defenders could engage targets at up to 1,000 yards, with 500 yards being the maximum effective range. A well trained soldier could sustain an average rate of fire of three well aimed shots per minute. There were numerous types of rifled muskets available during the war. At least one brigade of Liddell's Division was armed with the .577 caliber Enfield rifle.[32] This rifle was a British import that weighed 8.7 pounds, was 54 inches long, could be fitted with an 18 inch bayonet, and had a graduated rear sight of 800 yards.[33] An additional advantage of the standardized rifles was standardized ammunition. This made resupply easier because the quartermaster no longer was beleaguered with the task of resupplying different calibers of ammunition.

Liddell's Division had two artillery batteries assigned to it during the Battle of Chickamauga. These batteries were four gun units. The guns assigned to Confederate batteries were not composed of standard makes and models. Confederate batteries usually operated with guns of mixed types and calibers. In use with the Army of Tennessee during the Battle of Chickamauga were 6 pounder guns, 12 pounder howitzers, the 12 pounder gun-howitzer or Napoleon, as well as rifled cannons.[34] The heavily wooded and rugged terrain at Chickamauga severely limited the effectiveness of artillery. A lack of good fields of fire resulted in batteries, for the most part, following in the trace of the brigades to which they were assigned.

This thesis will build upon the aforementioned aspects of the civil war by focusing on the performance of Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell and his division at Chickamauga. Chapter 2 will discuss General Liddell's life and background before the Civil War. In order to understand General Liddell's leadership abilities, it is important to study his life and the experiences that made the man. What was his education level and what was his military experience before the war? How did he make a living before the war? What caused him to join the Confederacy? What was his family background? What were his combat experiences prior to the Battle of Chickamauga? What positions did he hold in the Confederate army prior to Chickamauga and did these billets prepare him for command?

Chapter 3 will delve into the Stones River and Tullahoma Campaigns. Why is the Battle of Stones River important to Liddell and his brigade? How did Liddell's Brigade perform at Stones River? Did Liddell lead his brigade to success or was their participation a failure? Did this battle prepare Liddell and the brigade for future conflict? What did the brigade do after the battle? What did the brigade do during its stay in the area around Tullahoma? What was the state of the brigade's morale, discipline, and training during this time? What role did the brigade function during the Tullahoma Campaign and was it successful?

Chapter 4 will discuss the circumstancs surrounding Liddell's advancement to division command. The chapter will also take an in-depth look at the brigades in Liddell's Division and examine the history of each of these units prior to the Battle of Chickamauga. What was the performance of these units prior to Chickamauga? Had they been successful? What was the reputation of these units? Which states did these units come from? Who were the leaders of these units? Had they been successful in the past? How experienced were the men of the units? What was the level of training, discipline, and morale of the men? The chapter will also discuss

the events leading up to the battle. Why did the battle happen? What happened as part of the campaign prior to the battle? Why were the armies drawn to the terrain at Chickamauga?

Chapter 5 will focus on Liddell's Division at Chickamauga on 18, 19, and 20 September 1863. What was the terrain like at Chickamauga? Did the terrain help or hinder the attacking Confederates? What happened on 18 September in preparation for the battle? What was Liddell's role on this day and what happened to his division? Did Liddell accomplish his mission and what was the state of his unit at the end of the day? What missions did Liddell perform on 19 and 20 September? Was his division ready for action? When did his unit see its first action? What was the unit's performance? Was it successful? Was Liddell given missions commensurate with his division's capabilities? Did Liddell receive clear, concise, timely, and executable orders? How did his brigade commanders perform? Were both brigades tasked equally? Did either brigade outperform the other? If so, why? What was the performance of the brigades? What factors contributed to their performance? What part did Liddell play in the action? What was the state of readiness for his division after the previous days of fighting? What was the endstate for Liddell's Division? Was the division successful or did it fail?

Finally, Chapter 6 will conclude the thesis by drawing conclusions concerning the division's performance at the battle and will attempt to identify lessons that remain useful today.

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[1]J. D. Morelock, The Army Times Book of Great Land Battles: From the Civil War to the Gulf War (New York: Berkeley Books, 1994), 27.

[2]Charles P. Roland, An American Iliad: The Story of the Civil War (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 154.

[3]Morelock, 27.

[4]Ibid., 3.

[5]Roland, 151; and Dr. W. G. Robertson, LTC E. P. Shanahan, LTC J. I. Boxberger, and MAJ G. E. Knapp, Staff Ride Handbook for the Battle of Chickamauga, 18-20 September 1863 (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1992), 47.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Gary W. Gallagher, introduction to Victory Rode the Rails: The Strategic Place of the Railroads in the Civil War by George Edgar Turner (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 1.

[8]Robertson, 47.

[9]Roland, 151.

[10]Mark Mayo Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Company, 1959), 152.

[11]Roland, 153; and Boatner, 151.

[12]Turner, 283; and Roland, 152.

[13]Morelock, 27.

[14]Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones, How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 10.

[15]Robertson, 6.

[16]Hattaway, 11.

[17]The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. 30 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890),254.

[18]Ibid., 266; and 269.

[19]Ibid., 282; and 285.

[20]Robertson, 4; and Hattaway, 10.

[21]Hattaway, 11.

[22]Morelock, 3.

[23]Morelock, 4; and Hattaway, 12.

[24]St. John R. Liddell, Liddell's Record, ed. Nathaniel C. Hughes (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, Inc., 1985), 36.

[25]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 255; and Liddell, 79.

[26]Robertson, 21; and Morelock, 5.

[27]Paddy Griffith, Battle Tactics of the Civil War (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 27.

[28]Edward Hagerman, The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 20.

[29]Robertson, 26.

[30]Ibid., 25-32.

[31]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 277.

[32]Robertson, 18.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid.

CHAPTER 2

LIDDELL BEFORE CHICKAMAUGA

St. John Richardson Liddell has been characterized as North Louisiana's greatest contribution to the military leadership of the Confederate States of America.[1] His experience during the war was varied and broad. He was granted study of General Beauregard's battle maps prior to the Battle of Bull Run; he saw action in Missouri in 1861; he fought with the Army of Tennessee through 1862 and 1863; he operated in the Trans-Mississippi Department in 1864; and he ended the war defending Mobile.[2] Although lacking significance as a major historical figure of the war, he was well connected with some of the war's major players. These acquaintances allowed him to move through the war with an uncommon freedom and provided to him opportunities to participate in some of the war's most significant events. Although his personal relationships opened doors for him, it was his own abilities that allowed him to succeed. He developed an excellent reputation in the Confederate army. As a result, he possessed "in very full measure the confidence of Generals Albert Sidney Johnston and Braxton Bragg."[3] Basil Duke noted that "no officer of his rank in the Confederate Army, perhaps, saw more constant and important service, or witnessed or became personally familiar with events of real historic value."[4] His career is even more remarkable when considering some of the difficulties in his prewar life and the questionable start to his military life; a start which began with his dismissal from West Point.

St. John Richardson Liddell's grandfather was born in Ireland and emigrated to America. He settled in South Carolina and fought in the American Revolution. His father, Moses Liddell (1785-1856), moved west to Mississippi from South Carolina in 1805.[5] Moses worked in many of the Mississippi River communities until 1812, when he settled down in Woodville, Mississippi. In 1814, he married a fellow South Carolinian, Bethia Frances Richardson (1788-1824).[6] Moses and Bethia would have four children, one son and three daughters. St. John Richardson Liddell, the oldest, was born on 6 September 1815, at Elmsley, the families plantation, near Woodville.[7]

During his formative years, Liddell was repeatedly told the story of his grandmother's father, who had been burned to death in his home by the Tories and Cherokees, during the American Revolution. As a result, Moses' mother was left homeless and impoverished. St. John, or as he was commonly called John, did not have a similar difficult childhood. His father, Moses, had become a wealthy planter which allowed him to provide to his children the best education available in Mississippi. Along with this education came an opportunity to socialize with other members of prominent families in Mississippi and Louisiana. John would become well traveled, often visiting New Orleans and Natchez. In 1832, John entered the University of Virginia.[8] Soon after enrolling, he decided to apply for admission to West Point. In order to secure his admission, he sought the help and recommendation of many of the influential men he had met in Mississippi. Finally, in 1833, after a Congressman from Mississippi and friend of Moses recommended him, he received an appointment to the United States Military Academy.[9]

Liddell's education at West Point was shortlived but the friendships that he made during that brief time would later affect his wartime service. Among his classmates of the class of 1837, were Braxton Bragg, John C. Pemberton, Joseph Hooker, Jubal Early, W. H. T. Walker, and W. W. Mackall.[10] Bragg, Walker, and Mackall would later play a significant role in Liddell's

military career. Liddell entered West Point in the summer of 1833, but by December he was homesick. He wrote to Moses requesting that he be given permission to resign and come home. After Moses granted his request, he instead stayed in school, even though he had achieved very little in regard to academic distinction. On 19 February 1834, he was abruptly discharged from West Point.[11] Officially, he was dropped "for deficiency in studies," although U.S. Military Academy Order #5 states:

> Cadet John Liddell of Mississippi, a member of the U.S. Military Academy, having been reported to this Department for conduct highly subversive of good order and discipline, and for gross violation of many of the Regulations of the Institution, is by order of the Secretary of War hereby discharged from the service of the United States. He will therefore cease to be a member of the Military Academy, from the promulgation of this order at West Point.[12]

Despite this official explanation, in reality Cadet Liddell was expelled for wounding a fellow cadet in a duel.[13] Apparently, Liddell had some kind of dispute with a cadet named Perry which resulted in arrests and court-martials. The dispute was likely caused by the forced cultural exchange, as related to the mixing of students from different backgrounds, and the close quarters of the barracks at West Point. These differences in culture and opinion were deep seeded and emotional. After his departure, Liddell received a letter from a fellow cadet who wrote, "Perry has nearly recovered, he limps considerably from the wound which he received in his seat of honor. You will receive in a few days a letter signed by the whole corps save seven or eight Damned Yankees commending your conduct."[14] Regardless, Liddell's conduct and his willingness to turn to violence to settle a disagreement had abruptly ended his days at West Point. He returned to Mississippi confused and lacking direction in his life. On his way home, his letters indicate that he may have even tried to join the Navy while enroute.[15]

Upon his return, he dabbled in farming with his father while searching for a tract of land to buy. In 1837, his father purchased for him a plantation in Catahoula Parish, Louisiana.[16] The plantation was located along the Black River just south of Trinity, Louisiana. By 1841, Liddell

was prospering and had named his plantation Llanada.[17] On 2 September 1841, he married Mary Metcalfe Roper, daughter of a Judge in Maysville, Kentucky.[18] John and Mary would have ten children. The Liddells would also adopt John's orphaned niece, who came to live with them in 1841.

With Moses' help John's plantation continued to prosper and expand as John continued to borrow a great deal of money from his father. By 1855, the plantation totaled over 1500 acres and had 150 slaves living on it.[19] The operation of the plantation consumed Liddell's life. The management of his slaves was a primary concern. He nursed them, he whipped them, and he mourned them.[20] Although his slaves were considered as property and essential to the operation of his plantation, Liddell realized that their safety and protection was his responsibility. In 1851, he was badly burned and nearly lost his life, while trying "to save a little Negro from the flames."[21] This event reflects Liddell's courage and willingness to risk his life for issues he deemed important, a pattern that would continue throughout his life. This pattern was evident in his dismissal from West Point and would weigh heavily in his business dealings, his relationships with his neighbors, and his later military career.

In 1847, Liddell's life would be changed forever by a feud, which by the time it ended would take the lives of at least seven men. The Liddell-Jones feud, or the Black River War as it would also be called, would last for twenty-three years.[22] Liddell's rival was Charles Jones, who owned Elmly, an adjacent plantation in Catahoula Parish. Jones was considered a very wealthy man. In 1860, Elmly and its slaves were valued at $250,000.[23] Several stories exist concerning the origin of the feud. One version explains that the dispute began over a flock of geese belonging to Jones. Another one concerns a governess in Liddell's house. Still another involves Liddell's failure to acknowledge a toast, to female virtue, given by Jones at a dinner. Anyhow,

the feud would eventually consume Liddell's life as evidenced by an entry is his diary in May 1848, where he wrote, "this man has been in pursuit of my life since October last."[24]

Regardless of the reason for the feud, the most accurate version of the feud indicates that hostilities began on 3 April 1848, when Liddell rode over to see one of his neighbors, the Nichols family, whose land adjoined the Jones plantation. St. John, who was accompanied by his sister-in-law, could not get his buggy through the bayou so he left it with a slave at the corner of Jones's field. When he returned Jones was armed and waiting for him "in the most suspicious manner" and his actions "indicated impudence or hostility."[25] After some words the two parted without any bloodshed. However, the feud escalated on 16 April 1848, after Jones attacked and wounded a friend of Moses and St. John, for no apparent reason.

By 26 April 1848, the feud was well involved. On this day Liddell accompanied Mrs. Nichols to the Jones plantation. Apparently, Jones had made some unproved slanderous comments concerning the fidelity of Mrs. Nichols and she intended to have Jones sign a retraction. To her surprise, Jones attempted to make Mrs. Nichols admit that what he had said was true, to which she promptly pulled a pistol and shot him in the face. As he ran to his house two more shots of disputed origin were fired, at least one of these striking him. Upon reaching his home, Jones immediately wrote a note accusing Liddell of being his "murderer."[26]

Liddell left his account and his thoughts on the affray in his diary. He wrote that he expected trouble when he accompanied Mrs. Nichols to the Jones plantation and that he was armed, as was Jones. He wrote that Mrs. Nichols shot Jones when Jones unbuttoned his coat. He also pointed out that despite Jones's claim that Liddell had shot him, it was Mrs. Nichols who fired all of the shots. He related that his only regret was that he "did not finish Jones off."[27]

In another entry, Liddell related exactly his feelings concerning Jones and the entire affair:

> Jones seems to persist in it--"that I am his murderer--that I shot him the fatal shot." &--He [Jones] certainly is satisfied that he is not dead.--He certainly forgets too that he met me on the Bayou below his place to kill me, & that I was entirely ignorant of his designs upon me--& that there were too many persons along with me. He forgets that this was disclosed me by Curry's letter to him--exhibited by Judge Taliafero--He forgets too his attack upon a member of my family--He forgets that he has spoken of the manner in which he could easily kill me, viz. when he found me unarmed that he would insult me--that I would rush upon him & he would slay me justifiably.--This was contemplated when he met me with arms on the Bayou. What would he have done with my sister to stop her testimony? As she happened to be along--Mr. & Mrs. Nichols' presence prevented the catastrophe. I only wish now that I had . . . finished the affair for Mr. N;--but I thought that the revenge of his injured honor belonged to her exclusively & aided her so far as was compatible with her safety.--Jones forgets that he & his wife have left here with violent threats. Forgets that he has used treachery all along.[28]

After his wounding, Jones left the Black River area to recuperate and for four years the situation was diffused. However, Liddell's life had been changed and he would remain "seriously alarmed as to his personal safety."[29] Henceforth, Liddell would remain close to home, keeping an ever watchful eye for danger. Expressing his concern and determination, Liddell noted in his diary, "I shall stand upon my named rights and shall assuredly defend myself, and destroy whomsoever I suspect has designs on me."[30]

In April 1852, Jones returned to the Black River community. Soon afterwards the rekindled feud reached a climax. On 26 June 1852, two friends of Jones, who had threatened Liddell, were ambushed and murdered. One was found dead in his carriage on the Trinity Road and the other was found dead in front of Liddell's plantation, Llanada. Understandably, Liddell was arrested and charged with murder. Liddell's friends justified his conduct on the grounds that the numerous threats made against him, by his adversaries, led him to believe that he was to be waylaid and assassinated. After an attempt to change venue, the case was tried in Catahoula's District Court. Finally, after two Grand Juries, two "Not True" bills, one regular jury, and a "not guilty verdict," Liddell was acquitted in April 1854.[31]

By 1857, a truce had been negotiated between the two rivals and a document produced, explaining that the Liddells and Joneses would pass each other as strangers and without recognition. Furthermore, the agreement required that if either party had a grievance that they would notify the other prior to taking any action. Liddell refused to sign the document. The significance of Liddell's refusal would ensure that trouble would come again. In the meantime, Liddell's and Jones's service to the Confederacy would serve to divert their attention.

St. John Liddell's pre-war efforts included renewing some of the military associations of his past. In particular, during January 1860, he corresponded and later met with Colonel Braxton Bragg, who was functioning as the Louisiana State Commissioner of Swamp Lands.[32] Their discussions concerned the establishment of a military school, along the Red River, in order to prepare soldiers for the impending war. Liddell opposed such a proposition because he felt that there was no time to reap the benefits of such a school. The most important aspect of his correspondence with Bragg was the views that he expressed concerning the war and the Union. Liddell related to Bragg that it was the practices of the radical republicans that had driven the South to war and that a republic's people had the right to be "exacting and fanatical when controlled by corrupt representative leaders."[33] In short, Liddell explained to Bragg that he believed in the Southern cause and blamed the Yankees for the war. Bragg eventually offered Liddell his first commission as an officer. Liddell declined the invitation because his friends were, at the time, attempting to secure for him a command of one of the newly organized regiments of the state. However, this command never materialized because Liddell lacked the necessary political clout to be appointed by the Louisiana legislature.

By June 1861, Liddell was so concerned with the conflict and his lack of a command that he ventured to Richmond, Virginia to offer his services to the South. Liddell gave his wife, Mary, power of attorney to transact plantation business and to run Llanada while he was gone.

Along the way he met with Brigadier General William J. Hardee in Memphis, Tennessee. The two renewed their association from West Point, where Hardee had been in the class of 1838. They agreed that if no other opportunities presented themselves, that Liddell would become a volunteer on Hardee's staff upon his return from Virginia.[34]

Soon after his arrival in Virginia, Liddell called upon another acquaintance of his from West Point, General P. G. T. Beauregard. Beauregard was also a member of the West Point class of 1838. The General did not offer Liddell a position but did allow him the opportunity to study the maps and battle plans for the impending First Battle of Bull Run. While in the area, Liddell also took the opportunity to find his oldest son, Judge, sixteen years of age, who was a Junior 2nd Lieutenant in Wheat's Louisiana Tigers.[35] Finding his son in good health, he proceeded on to Richmond where he was introduced to President Jefferson Davis. Liddell notes in his *Record* that he had not seen the President since his childhood and states "our families had lived in the same county in Mississippi and were well-known to each other."[36] Despite this relationship, a command was never offered to Liddell, so he reluctantly returned to the west.

In August 1861, Liddell joined General Hardee in Greenville, Missouri. As promised, General Hardee assigned him to his staff. Liddell's *Military Service Record* indicates that on 15 September 1861, he volunteered to serve, at his own expense, as Hardee's aide-de-camp, with the rank of colonel.[37] This position gave Liddell his second chance for a military career. Soon thereafter, Hardee's command was ordered to Bowling Green, Kentucky. In the service of Hardee, Liddell quickly gained his confidence and proved to be "determined and trustworthy."[38] His superior performance was recognized by other officers of the army, most notably by General Albert Sidney Johnston. Johnston was so impressed by Liddell that he selected him to be his confidential courier.[39]

Johnston more than likely chose Liddell to be his courier because of his demonstrated abilities, but the fact that Liddell was acquainted with President Jefferson Davis cannot be overlooked. Liddell's first mission as confidential courier came on 9 January, 1862. Johnston, in a last ditch effort to convince the Confederate government that he needed arms and reinforcements for his badly outnumbered forces in Kentucky, decided to send Liddell to Richmond to plead his case. Colonel Liddell received a letter and verbal instructions from General Johnston concerning the message he wanted delivered to President Jefferson Davis. Johnston explained to Liddell that he perceived his position vulnerable to the enemy positions of Generals Buell and Grant. Johnston expressed to Liddell that "he regretted very much the inadequacy of his own force" and desired Liddell "to impress the President with the necessity of sending reinforcements and arms."[40]

While at Johnston's headquarters, Liddell renewed his relationship with another influential acquaintance, Colonel W. W. Mackall. Mackall was Johnston's chief of staff and Liddell's West Point classmate. Mackall would also serve as General Braxton Bragg's chief of staff. Liddell's relationship with Mackall was most likely beneficial to his career. Mackall was Liddell's insider, a position of obvious value for an ambitious man like Liddell. For Liddell, Mackall served as a point of contact for information concerning activities of the army. Mackall would maintain this status throughout Liddell's tenure with the army.

Colonel Liddell traveled to Richmond by railroad, arriving in a snowstorm on 14 January. When Liddell presented Johnston's letter to the President he found him to be in a "disturbed and careworn" frame of mind.[41] Davis's demeanor would be further exacerbated by the contents of the letter. After reading the letter, Davis exclaimed irritably, "My God! Why did General Johnston send you to me for arms and reinforcements when he must know that I have neither? He has plenty of men in Tennessee, and they must have arms of some kind---shotguns,

rifles, even pikes could be used . . . . Where am I to get arms or men?"[42] Colonel Liddell, not to be intimidated by the remarks, suggested that troops could be sent from areas less threatened. But Davis contemptuously responded that he could not deprive other areas of their defenses. Liddell attempted to impress upon the President the importance of Johnston maintaining his position; a position that allowed for the protection of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, a major line of communication. However, his argument was ineffective and Davis remained unyielding. As Davis showed Liddell to the door he invited him to dinner the next day. Liddell accepted the offer believing it would give him the opportunity to again address Johnston's concerns.

To his dismay, Davis spent the dinner reminiscing about their childhood and school days. Their discussion concerned the academy and the teacher that they had shared in Mississippi. As the President bid farewell to Liddell, he mentioned, "Tell my friend, General Johnston, that I can do nothing for him, that he must rely on his own resources."[43] Although Liddell had not been successful in his mission, he could not help but feel some satisfaction because at least this time his visit to Richmond was under different circumstances. At least now he was functioning as part of the Confederate cause and not as the latecomer looking for a job.

On 16 January 1862, Liddell left Richmond for Bowling Green in a crowded, cold, railroad car. By the third day, when the train reached Chattanooga, Tennessee, he had developed a bronchial condition with a painful cough.[44] To restore his health, he obtained a thirty day leave from General Hardee and went home.

While in Louisiana, Liddell received word of the surrender at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, and the loss of Nashville. In an effort to somehow complete his earlier mission and thereby enhance Johnston's position, he again went in search of reinforcements. He called on the Governor of Louisiana and urged him to send steamboats from New Orleans to Arkansas in order

to transport Major General Van Dorn's command to General Johnston in Tennessee. The Governor refused. When Liddell asked the Attorney General to intercede, he was told that "the Governor had been repeatedly snubbed by the President and will not subject himself to any further indignities from that quarter."[45] Astonished at such a petty attitude in such a crisis, Liddell impulsively exclaimed, "I would take a thousand snubbings to save the cause."[46] The Attorney General responded with, "Well, the Governor will not, and it is useless to talk about it further."[47] As a result, the steamboats remained at their wharves and Johnston waited for reinforcements.

Liddell rejoined Johnston's army near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where it had retreated from Bowling Green and Nashville. Soon after returning to the army, Johnston again approached Liddell and ordered him to deliver papers to President Davis in Richmond. Still suffering from the malady caused by his earlier trip, Liddell attempted to excuse himself, but to no avail. This time the letters he carried concerned the conduct of the officers who had surrendered at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. As a result, his stay in Richmond was short. He began his return trip on 10 March 1862. Since the East Tennessee railroads had been destroyed by Union sympathizers, his route took him to Chattanooga via Atlanta. By the time he reached Huntsville, Alabama he had contracted typhoid and when he arrived at Tuscumbia, Alabama he was completely prostrated.[48] During his sickness, General Hardee stayed with Liddell and personally nursed him. General Hardee's surgeon considered Liddell's illness so critical that a telegram was sent to his wife requesting her presence. When Hardee was finally called away for duty, Liddell was placed under the care of a local doctor in Tuscumbia, who had to force his mouth open and "pour necessary acids and food for subsistence down" his throat.[49] By the time his wife arrived, Liddell had recovered enough to make it to the railway station and escape to Corinth, Mississippi just ahead of Union forces.

In Corinth, Liddell's health steadily improved as he resumed his duties as Hardee's aide. The army was now commanded by General Beauregard. He had assumed command after General Johnston had been killed at the Battle of Shiloh. After Shiloh, the Confederate forces had retreated to Corinth and the Union forces of Buell and Grant were advancing upon them. Here Liddell would lead his first troops into combat.

On 1 May 1862, the Union pushed forward a brigade in order to seize a ridge which overlooked the town of Farmington. In response, Hardee sent Liddell to the front with orders for the brigade commander holding the position. When he arrived, he was asked by the commander to take control of one of his regiments because the officer in charge "was inefficient and the men, in consequence, were greatly demoralized."[50] Liddell grasped the opportunity despite lacking any familiarity with the force. As he attempted to move the regiment forward, he inadvertently brought the regiment into an open position in front of a battery of the enemy. Instantly, from a distance of about 450 yards, six guns opened up on the regiment. In his *Record*, Liddell recorded the action that followed:

> I saw at once that the men had not gotten over the effects of the Battle of Shiloh. I encouraged them, by riding along their front, to move up. But they hesitated and halted. The bursting shells over and amongst them caused them to drop down in sections and companies, a few brave excepted. Notwithstanding the efforts of their officers, they would neither move forward nor arise from the ground. They were clearly unreliable and, for the time, had lost all spirit and usefulness. I had nothing left me but to direct their withdrawal to the base of a hill in their rear where they might safely await further orders.[51]

Realizing that he was in an untenable situation, Liddell quickly turned the regiment over to the only field officer present, with orders to rejoin their brigade. This first chance at combat leadership was a disappointment and an embarrassment and was surely an eye opener for Liddell. Liddell realized that he had a lot to learn about combat leadership. Undoubtedly, Liddell learned from his mistakes because his next attempt would be more successful.

This brief skirmish, although resulting in the loss of the ridge, helped to slow down the advancing Union army, now under the command of General Halleck. Advancing with extreme caution, the Union army spent the month of May getting into battle position. By the time the Federals were ready to attack, Beauregard had evacuated Corinth and had marched his army to Tupelo, Mississippi. Once satisfied that he would not be attacked, Beauregard took leave from the army on 17 June 1862, to recuperate his health. While he was gone, the command of the army was turned over to another past acquaintance of Liddell's, General Braxton Bragg.

Liddell's first combat leadership experience did not lessen Hardee's confidence in him. On 21 May 1862, Hardee gave Liddell his first command, composed of the 17th Tennessee Infantry Regiment and the 48th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment.[52] Throughout the evacuation of Corinth, Liddell commanded this temporary brigade. In June, despite being given this opportunity, Liddell approached Hardee and requested that he be transferred to an army closer to his home so that he might be better able to sustain himself. This request would be the first of several attempts that he would make at trying to return to a position closer to his home. Up until this time Liddell had been serving at his own expense. He was now having difficulty paying his own way. Instead of granting his request, Hardee set about trying to keep him on his staff. When a group of colonels from Arkansas requested that Liddell be made their brigade commander, Hardee nominated another. Finally, the decision was given to General Beauregard. On 10 June, 1862, Liddell was appointed to command of his first permanent brigade. The brigade was comprised of the 2nd Arkansas, commanded by Colonel D. C. Govan; the 5th Arkansas, commanded by Colonel L. Featherston; the 6th Arkansas, commanded by Colonel Samuel Smith; the 7th Arkansas, commanded by Colonel D. A. Gillespie; and the 8th Arkansas, commanded by Colonel J. H. Kelly; and Captain Charles Swett's Warren (Mississippi) Light Artillery Battery.[53]

Despite the new command, Liddell's financial situation remained bleak. Eventually he succumbed to his financial difficulties and began drawing on the Treasury of the Confederate States. On 12 September 1862, Liddell received the sum of $495.19 for service with the Confederate army from 12 July 1862.[54] No longer was Liddell serving at his own expense.

During June and July 1862, Bragg organized the Army of Tennessee and began preparations to conduct a campaign into middle Tennessee and possibly Kentucky. Working with General Kirby Smith and his army in East Tennessee, Bragg intended to drive the Union forces out of Tennessee, liberate Kentucky and threaten the entire Ohio River Valley. From Tupelo, Bragg first moved his forces to Chattanooga. The infantry moved by rail. Due to the loss of the rail lines from Chattanooga to Memphis, Liddell's Brigade was forced to travel a circuitous route to Mobile, Alabama then to Montgomery, Alabama and finally to Chickamauga Station near Chattanooga, Tennessee.

At Chickamauga, on or about 10 August 1862, Liddell received confirmation of his appointment to Brigadier General, dated 12 July 1862.[55] Exuberant over his command and promotion, Liddell noted in his *Record*:

> The effective strength of my brigade was about 2,000. I had taken great interest in their drill and discipline. The evident improvement had inspired an *Esprite de Corps* that could not fail to excite the pride and raise the confidence of all in its future usefulness. It pleased me to drill them; and evolutions of the line had become as familiar and easy of rapid execution by practice as regimental drills. Instead of being a hardship, I was often solicited by both officers and privates to practice the maneuvers.[56]

Liddell's interest in the drill, discipline, and training of his brigade is directly related to his earlier brief but humbling experiences in combat. Liddell was determined not to repeat his previous performance. Although lacking a great deal of military experience, he recognized the importance of the relationship between training and the frame of mind of his troops. His emphasis on training served to build cohesion in his brigade while enhancing unit and individual confidence.

The training also gave his troops an opportunity to witness and gain confidence in Liddell's leadership ability. These intangibles would prove their worth in the battles to follow.

Throughout the summer and early fall of 1862, Bragg played a game of hide and seek with Buell, the Union commander. Their parrying took place across much of Kentucky. By October, Buell had massed his forces against Hardee's Corps near Perryville. Liddell's Brigade was now part of a division commanded by General Simon Buckner. During early October, Bragg pushed forward Buckner's Division, of General Leonidas Polk's Corps, as reinforcements for Hardee's Corps. On 7 October, Hardee's line lay generally in a north to south position, with his left resting near the town. Liddell initially anchored Hardee's left, just north of Perryville. From this position, Liddell was pushed forward about one mile in front of Perryville, to a position of observation.[57] That evening Liddell could not sleep, for his "thoughts reverted continually to the probable events" of the next day and his "moments were full of anxiety."[58] Naturally, Liddell was concerned about the impending battle because this would be his first time leading his brigade into combat and, given his previous experience, he surely had his doubts and concerns.

On the next day, 8 October, the battle of Perryville took place, with the main fighting occurring northwest of the town. The day dawned with 16,000 Confederates opposing a Federal force of about 27,000.[59] After initially receiving fire from the enemy, Liddell was ordered by Buckner to the rear, to function as the division reserve. About 10:00 P.M., Bragg arrived on the field to find that Polk had not begun his attack. Disgusted, Bragg took charge and prepared the Confederate line for the attack. At about 1:00 P.M., Bragg ordered his forces forward. As Buckner's Division attacked the enemy right, Liddell remained in reserve, observing the fight from a ridge which overlooked the battlefield. Liddell watched as his fellow Confederates

slowly pushed Buell's army nearly two miles. As evening closed in, Liddell was suddenly thrust into the fight with the order "go where the fire is the hottest."[60]

As Liddell's men advanced in the twilight, a strange and almost comical incident occurred with General Polk. Polk, watching Liddell's advance, suddenly saw the men fired upon by what he believed to be another Confederate unit. "Dear me, this is very sad, and must be stopped," Polk muttered and in response quickly proceeded over to the erring commander and asked why he was shooting his friends. "I don't think there can be any mistake about it," replied the surprised officer, "I am sure they are the enemy." "Enemy," exclaimed Polk, "why I have only just left them myself---cease firing, sir; what is your name, sir?" The officer gave his name and his Union regiment, and asked in return, "and pray, sir, who are you?" Polk, realizing his mistake, brazenly shook his fist in the Federal officer's face, and said: "I'll soon show you who I am. Cease firing at once." Polk then turned his horse and rode slowly back to join Liddell. "They are enemies; fire upon them," Polk yelled as he reached the Confederate line. "General, every mother's son of them are Yankees," exclaimed Polk. Liddell's men responded with deadly volleys, which routed the startled Federal regiment and they quickly retreated off the field. It was now dark and too late to pursue. This would be Liddell's only assault of the day for the battle was almost over.[61]

Although the Confederates could rightly claim victory, Bragg decided to withdraw when he discovered that Buell was concentrating his forces to surround the inferior numbered Confederate army. Early the next morning, Bragg withdrew his army and marched to Harrodsburg, Kentucky to reunite with Kirby Smith's forces. The two formed a defensive line in preparation for Buell's attack, but it never came. In response, Bragg withdrew completely from Kentucky and proceeded to Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

At the Battle of Perryville, Liddell's Brigade had finally been battle tested. Liddell, as well, could now be considered a combat veteran. The action, although brief, left a lasting impression on his men. Years later his assistant adjutant general, Captain G.A. Williams, would recall that at Perryville:

> Liddell was of striking appearance, dignified; of soft speech, gentle, winning manner, graceful in gesture; he was the type of the cultivated gentleman of his time and kind. He endeared himself to his staff by his considerate treatment; to his soldiers by his careful attention to their wants and comfort in camp, as well as by his gallant bearing in action, where he shone like Rupert in the charge. . . .His patriotism was pure; his motives disinterested; his service distinguished. He was a Louisianian who commanded troops from another State; for this reason he has never received, at the hands of Louisiana, recognition for the honor he reflected upon them.[62]

Williams' characterization of Liddell summarizes Liddell's personality and leadership qualities. Characteristics that can be seen throughout his life. Liddell, like many of his fellow compatriots, was a southern gentlemen, untrained in the military art, yet steadfast in his beliefs and willingness to fight. His leadership style was founded in the school of common sense. He knew that to be successful he must be a fearless leader and must take care of his men.

His concern for his men was never more evident than while headquartered in middle Tennessee awaiting the Battle of Stones River. It was here that Liddell, at his own expense, provided to his entire command a Christmas dinner which included sheep, pigs, poultry, and vegetables. For many of his men this would be their last feast, for by the dawn of the new year they were again hotly engaged with the enemy and many would pay the ultimate sacrifice for the South.

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[2]St. John R. Liddell, Liddell's Record, ed. Nathaniel C. Hughes (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, 1985), 9.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., 11.

[6]"Liddell, St. John Richardson," A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography Vol. I, A to M, ed. Glenn R. Conrad (Louisiana Historical Association, 1983), 513.

[7]Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Gray (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 187.

[8]Liddell, 12.

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[11]Busbice, 49.

[12]Liddell, 13.

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[14]Grady WcWhiney, Braxton Bragg and Confederate Defeat (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 10.

[15]Liddell, 13.

[16]Warner, 187.

[17]Busbice, 50.

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[19]Liddell, 17.

[20]Ibid., 19.

[21]Jack D. Welsh, M.D., Medical Histories of Confederate Generals (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1995), 140.

[22]Michael Lanza, "The Jones-Liddell Feud," (Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University), 1.

[23]Lanza, 3.

[24]Liddell, 22.

[25]Lanza, 4.

[26]Lanza, 7; and Liddell, 23.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Lanza, 8; and Liddell, 23.

[29]Liddell, 24.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Lanza, 12; and Liddell, 25.

[32]McWhiney, 147; and Liddell, 29.

[33]Liddell, 30.

[34]Ibid., 32.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Military Service Record of St. John R. Liddell (National Archives Washington, DC), microfilm reel 331.

[38]Busbice, 50.

[39]Warner, 187.

[40]Stanley F. Horn, The Army of Tennessee (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 60; and Liddell, 39.

[41]Horn, 60.

[42]Horn, 60; and Liddell, 41.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Welsh, 140.

[45]Horn, 121; and Liddell, 51.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Welsh, 140; and Liddell, 62.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Liddell, 50.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Ibid., 71.

[53]Larry J. Daniel, Cannoneers in Gray: The Field Artillery of the Army of Tennessee, 1861-1865 (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1984),10;and Liddell, 78.

[54]Military Service Record.

[55]Ibid.; and Liddell, 79.

[56]Liddell, 79.

[57]The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. I (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 1110.

[58]Liddell, 88.

[59]Howell Purdue and Elizabeth Purdue, Pat Cleburne: Confederate General (Hillsboro, TX: Hill Junior College Press, 1973), 147.

[60]The War of the Rebellion, 1159.

[61]McWhiney, 318; and Liddell, 93.

[62]Liddell, 101.

CHAPTER 3

STONES RIVER AND TULLAHOMA CAMPAIGNS

"It has been determined, as a measure of the first importance, that a combined movement should be made at this time into Middle Tennessee."[1] With this directive, Bragg's army began its march south out of Kentucky. As Bragg's army marched, a controversy brewed over his competence. During the Kentucky campaign, Bragg's men had marched over a thousand miles and now were returning to where they had started two months before. The Confederates' morale was steadily dropping after tactical victories at Richmond, Munfordville, and Perryville had yielded little operational success.

In response, Bragg was summoned to Richmond to meet with President Jefferson Davis. During the meeting, Bragg successfully deflected responsibility for the indecisiveness at Perryville. He blamed Major General Leonidas Polk for the ill-fated Kentucky campaign. Subsequently, when Polk was dispatched to Richmond, he in turn, blamed Bragg for the failure of the Kentucky campaign and related to Jefferson Davis that Bragg had also lost the confidence of Generals Kirby Smith and Hardee. Bragg's criticism had not undermined Polk, for instead of censuring or removing Polk for his insubordination and dereliction during the campaign, Davis rewarded him with a promotion to Lieutenant General.[2] Davis also appointed Joseph Johnston as department commander over Bragg. Davis' failure to deal with Polk's insubordination effectively ensured that the back-biting of Polk and others would continue within the Army of Tennessee. This precarious command relationship would not make Bragg's job any easier in the future.

While Bragg kept his command, his adversary in Kentucky did not fair so well. General Buell's conduct in Kentucky had been unsatisfactory to President Abraham Lincoln and General Henry Halleck. They both felt that Buell had been too indecisive as the commander of the Army of the Cumberland. As a result, he received on 30 October 1862, as he was moving the army back to Nashville, an order from Washington to turn his command over to General William S. Rosecrans.[3] As the new commander, Rosecrans assembled and concentrated his nearly eighty thousand troops around Nashville.

Bragg decided to concentrate at Murfreesboro in order to "defend Middle Tennessee or attack Nashville."[4] In a letter to General Beauregard on 12 November, he expressed his intentions; "should the enemy move out of his entrenchments at Nashville, we will soon fight him."[5] Bragg's army had suffered during the movement from Kentucky. Battle losses, straggling, and desertion had devastated the Confederate infantry. Only 50 percent of his original force was present. An autumn drought had ruined crops and an early snowstorm coupled with a lack of clothing, blankets, shoes and food had left the soldiers that remained susceptible to disease from exposure to the elements. Private John M. Berry of the 8th Arkansas Infantry Regiment, Liddell's Brigade, remembered that for days they "had hardly anything to eat except parched corn."[6] Many soldiers weakened by hunger fell victim to pneumonia, typhoid, scurvy, and dysentery.[7] Regardless, Bragg intended to deploy his forty thousand soldiers at Murfreesboro and await an opportunity to go on the offensive.

Bragg reorganized his army into two corps under Lieutenant Generals Polk and Hardee.[8] Hardee had under his command Major General S. B. Buckner's Division which included Liddell's Brigade. Buckner did not remain long as a division commander for he was soon ordered to Mobile, Alabama, to command its defenses. When Buckner left, Pat Cleburne was promoted to major general and given the command. This promotion surprised many despite

Cleburne's outstanding performance during the Kentucky campaign. Liddell noted in his *Record,* that "General Cleburne was promoted over his seniors, S. A. M. Wood and B. R. Johnson, to command . . . this promotion was effected by Hardee, who was very partial to Cleburne."[9] Cleburne's Division contained his old brigade, led by newly promoted Brigadier General Lucius Polk, Liddell's Arkansas Brigade, Bushrod Johnson's Tennessee Brigade, and S. A. M. Wood's Alabama and Mississippi Brigade.[10]

On 26 December 1862, Rosecrans began his advance on Bragg. Rosecrans was unsure of where the Confederate force was actually located. So on that day he sent three columns south along roads leading out of Nashville. The Army of Tennessee was formed in a wide thirty mile arc southeast of Nashville, with Murfreesboro as the center. Bragg had positioned his forces in this manner so that they could watch the enemy and still be easily concentrated where needed.[11] General Hardee anchored Bragg's left at Triune and Eagleville, twenty miles west of Murfreesboro. Cleburne's Division was positioned at College Grove near Eagleville. Once Bragg determined the objective of the Federal force, he began to concentrate his army at Murfreesboro. The Federal advance was stiffly contested by Confederate cavalry, which gave Bragg time to position his army.

Bragg had chosen for the field of battle a section of ground about two miles northwest of Murfreesboro. The area was bisected from north to south by the Stones River and east to west by the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and the Nashville Pike.[12] The position that he selected was not particularly well suited for defense.[13] Most of the area was open farm country without natural barriers. Where there were trees they grew in thick patches that could conceal both armies and disrupt movement. The ground was rough and uneven, interspersed with outcroppings of limestone ledges broken by deep crevices, and strewn with huge boulders.[14] Bragg wanted to hold Murfreesboro because it was his supply depot and because the surrounding

country fed his army. He also feared a retreat southward would expose East Tennessee to invasion. He selected the battleline because it was the only place he could concentrate his army and still cover the roads from Nashville.[15]

By 30 December 1862, Bragg had positioned his army of approximately 38,000 to attack. Polk's corps was located between Stones River and the Triune Road, facing to the northwest. That evening, Bragg repositioned Hardee's Corps, minus Breckinridge's Division, to the left to lengthen Polk's line. He kept Breckinridge on his right, east of the river.[16] In order to move to the left, Hardee's Corps had to cross the Stones River, a formidable task at night for a corps of men. Private John M. Berry, 8th Arkansas Infantry Regiment, Liddell's Brigade, described the river crossing: "the night before the battle we began crossing Stones River on wagons standing in the water with boards reaching from one to another. It was a bitter cold night."[17] Once in place, Hardee pushed McCown's Division out front and placed Cleburne's Division about 500 yards behind in a second line.[18] Bragg's plan was to attack with the left wing using a right wheel. The left wing would pivot off Polk's right flank, swing around to the northeast and force the enemy beyond the Nashville Pike.

Whether by coincidence or an odd twist of fate, Rosecrans had also prepared his army to attack. His force of approximately 54,000 was poised to conduct a similar right wheel against the Confederate right wing, which consisted of Breckinridge's Division. Rosecrans had ordered his attack to begin at 7 A.M., as soon as the men had finished their breakfast.[19] But Bragg had ordered his attack at daybreak and as a result the Confederates surprised Rosecrans and gained the initiative.

As ordered, Hardee's troops stepped off smartly at 6 A.M. on 31 December 1862. With McCown's Division in the lead they quickly surprised the Federals who were preparing their breakfast. Cleburne's Division also moved forward "stepping short upon the right and full upon

the left, so as to swing round the left as directed."[20] Liddell's Brigade was on the extreme left of the division. Liddell's Brigade was comprised of the 2nd Arkansas Regiment, commanded by Colonel Daniel C. Govan; the 5th Arkansas Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John E. Murray; the 6th and 7th Consolidated Arkansas Regiment, commanded by Colonel S.G. Smith; the 8th Arkansas Regiment, commanded by Colonel John H. Kelly; and Swett's (Mississippi) Battery, commanded by Lieutenant H. Shannon.[21]

As Liddell's men moved forward, they literally found themselves running to maintain the right wheel while units in the center advanced at a walk. To their right was Cheatham's Division which "did not move forward at the same moment" as Cleburne's Division and as a result a gap was soon developed between the two. Hardee ordered S. A. M. Wood's Reserve Brigade to fill the gap. Liddell's men had moved more than a half mile when they began to receive fire to their front. McCown's Division, instead of swinging to the east, had drifted north away from the advancing Confederate line, thus creating another gap which was inadvertently being filled by Cleburne. Cleburne's Division was now the only unit on this part of the field. This unexpected thrust of Cleburne into the front line eliminated Hardee's second line and his ability to exploit success. Liddell still occupied the division left. To his left was a brigade of McCown's Division. To his right was the brigade of Bushrod Johnson and to Johnson's right was Polk's Brigade.[22]

As Liddell's men approached Rosecrans' line, one Federal soldier noted "the men were good-sized, healthy, and well clothed, but without any attempt at uniformity in color or cut."[23] Together Liddell, Johnson, and Polk assaulted the enemy's first line and drove it back to their second line. Liddell later reported, "after a contest lasting about half an hour, we repulsed the front line, driving it back upon the second, which also gave way upon our approach, after a short struggle."[24] Liddell continued his pursuit despite losing contact with Johnson on his right. During these early assaults Liddell's Brigade seized two Federal hospitals, numerous prisoners,

and the battle colors of three Federal units. The 2nd Arkansas Regiment killed the Federal brigade commander, General Sill, and captured the colors and the commanding officer of the 22nd Indiana Regiment, the same regiment that it had faced at Perryville.[25]

As the pursuit continued, the men became fatigued, and the lines became fragmented and disorganized. The enemy retreated more than a mile and a half to the Wilkinson Pike before establishing a rallying point. Here the enemy resisted stubbornly until a concerted effort by Liddell, Polk, and Wood broke their defenses and sent them retreating again. Later, Private John Berry of the 8th Arkansas Regiment recorded the demeanor of his brigade commander, the intensity of the fight, and the unexpected compassion displayed on the battlefield:

> Passing through the yard of a nice farmhouse, we captured some of the Federal outposts, who pleaded for mercy. General Liddell swore at them, telling them they were fine fellows, invading our country and then asking pardon. Old Jake, the bugler, whacked one of them over the head with his saber, saying, with an oath: "you youst get home, den."
>
> On we went, and in an open field we found ourselves face to face with the Federal force stationed behind a rail fence. I thought they would kill us all. We laid down . . . and, firing as best we could, would roll over on our backs and load, then turn back and fire.
>
> I remember shooting right over Dick Jones's head. He looked back at me and said: "'John, you'll shoot me." I said: "No, I'll not. You keep your head down." I loaded, and bang went my gun again, right at his ear. It so deafened and alarmed him that he turned again, used some very rough words, and declared I would kill him yet.
>
> Soon . . . McNair's (Texas) brigade came up, swung into line, and charged the Federals. Those in our front gave way. We drove them across fields, through the woods, and into a cedar hill. In the edge of some woods I came upon a wounded Federal. He had been shot in the knee. At his request I placed a piece of wood under his leg, so as to give him an easier position. I told him I was nearly dead for water. He offered me a drink from his canteen. I took a few swallows of the best water, it seemed, that I ever drank.[26]

Dr. Charles Doolittle, a Union surgeon, also experienced Liddell's wrath. Doolittle had stayed behind to care for the wounded at the Gresham house. When Liddell's men overran the hospital, Doolittle pleaded with Liddell to stop the firing. Liddell responded with an impassioned rebuttal that he personally would rather die than fall prisoner to the Yankees. The Doctor further noted that Liddell "cursed us for everything that was mean under the sun."[27] Liddell had more reason to be angry than just hate for Yankees. Only moments before, Liddell

had been told that his son Willie had been killed during the first engagement. Later Liddell would discover that Willie, who had been serving as a volunteer aide-de-camp on his staff, had been shot in the thigh and would survive.[28]

So swift and relentless was the Confederate onslaught that by ten o'clock in the morning they had driven Rosecrans' right wing in a wide sweep of four or five miles to the Nashville Pike, and by noon Bragg's first objective had been attained: the Federal line had been doubled back like a jack-knife blade until its right wing was at a right angle with the original line of battle.[29] Meanwhile, the Confederate drive gradually lost momentum. Hardee finally regained control of McCown's Division and sent them in the attack to their right. This movement cut off Liddell's Brigade, which had stopped to replenish their ammunition, from the rest of Cleburne's Division. When Liddell advanced again, he found himself on the extreme left of Hardee's line. As Liddell moved forward he drifted north away from the division. During this movement Liddell met some resistance but successfully drove the enemy over the Nashville Pike. At one point Liddell noted that "finding myself alone . . . with no support on my right or left, I halted my command in the woods." Topping the crest of a hill, Liddell discovered that he had full view of the Nashville Pike and the enemy's supply trains. Seizing the initiative he set up his artillery battery and began shelling the trains. By this time there was a three-quarters of a mile gap between Liddell and the division. Cleburne, determined to reunite his brigades, sent Johnson to his left to reconnect with Liddell.[30]

After joining again with Johnson, Liddell continued his pursuit. During the next assault, two of Liddell's regimental commanders, Colonel Kelly of the 8th Arkansas and Colonel Smith of the 6th and 7th Arkansas, were wounded and had to retire from the field.[31] Yet, again, Liddell's Brigade drove the enemy from their position. As the rest of the division continued the pursuit, Liddell halted his command in order to regroup. While doing so, he took time to

converse with a group of Federal doctors at a hospital that his men had seized. The doctors asked for his protection. Due to the success of his brigade and the fact that his son was still alive, Liddell was in a much better mood than when he confronted Dr. Doolittle earlier in the morning. Liddell obliged the request and told the chief surgeon "to chalk my name on the walls and claim it for me."[32] Then, recalled Liddell, the unbelievable happened:

> While this was occurring, which was in an incredibly short space of time, I discovered our lines breaking rapidly to the rear, although there was little firing going on at the time. I immediately galloped to the rear, to head off the stragglers and check the retreat, not knowing what was the cause of this sudden movement.[33]

By riding among the retreating troops and encouraging them to return to the fight, Liddell stemmed the rout and realigned the retreating troops, which consisted mostly of Johnson's brigade.

It was now after three o'clock and Cleburne's men had attacked over four miles of rocky, wooded terrain and they were too tired and too depleted to finish off the Union forces to their front. Cleburne would later report:

> My men had had little or no rest the night before; they had been fighting since dawn, without relief, food, or water; they were comparatively without the support of artillery, for the advance had been too rapid to enable my single battery to get in position and answer the enemy; their ammunition was again nearly exhausted, and our ordnance trains could not follow.[34]

It was in this condition that Cleburne's men received an enemy counterattack which pushed them to the rear. The division fell back to the position that it had occupied prior to the last assault. Here Hardee gave the order to hold the position and defend if counterattacked. The enemy did not counterattack and the day and the year ended with the Army of Tennessee threatening to destroy the Army of the Cumberland.

That evening Liddell approached Hardee and expressed his concern that the army was squandering an opportunity to rout the Federal force. He pointed out that they effectively

commanded the Nashville Pike and the railroad and that if all reserves were brought up, one more Confederate attack would win the battle.[35] Hardee would not listen. Instead he mumbled that "he was disgusted" and rode away.[36] Liddell's plan seemed feasible but there was no reserve to bring up. It is at this time that the Army of Tennessee began to feel the absence of General C. L. Stevenson's Division which had been sent to Mississippi by Jefferson Davis. Hardee would later speculate that Cleburne's assaults could have been the decisive point of the battle given the proper reinforcements to exploit their success. Regardless, the day had been quite successful for Cleburne's Division and for Liddell. He would later recall that during his heaviest engagement the enemy left "a long line of dead and wounded, on the ground, they were standing when struck."[37]

On 1 January 1863, neither army attempted to change its position and neither initiated a major action. During the day, Liddell's Brigade was involved in a reconnaissance in force in order to determine whether or not the enemy was still to the front. After making contact with the enemy, Liddell drove the enemy skirmishers back past the same house, used as a Union hospital, that he had claimed the day before. Satisfied that Rosecrans's army was still in position, Cleburne brought Liddell's Brigade back to its original position.

On 2 January, Bragg ordered Breckinridge to seize a hill on the east side of Stones River, which commanded the right of the Confederate line. Breckinridge protested and attempted to change Bragg's mind but the order stood. Breckinridge's men pushed the enemy from the hill, pursued down the other side, and fell victim to a counterattack from three Union brigades and the massed artillery of fifty-eight guns.[38] Breckinridge fell back with a shattered division. His defeat destroyed Bragg's hopes for success. Bragg, fearing a renewed attack on his right, ordered Hardee to reposition behind Breckinridge's Division. Liddell recalled: "It commenced to rain very hard when I moved that night . . . I found myself occupying my original place" on the right

bank of the river.[39] The Army of Tennessee remained on the field until the morning of the next day when Bragg decided to withdraw. Bragg based his decision on captured documents which indicated that the enemy numbered 70,000 men and were receiving large reinforcements from Nashville.

In his *Record,* Liddell recalled a conversation he had with Bragg just prior to the retreat:

> His manner it seemed to me was thoughtful and hesitating and he finally gave me to understand that the troops were exhausted . . . and to withdraw . . . was necessary. I replied that my men . . . I felt assured would carry the thing through with the rest of the army, at all hazards. He then told me that the enemy was receiving large reinforcements. I then said, "General everything depends on your success here. If you will throw your army between Rosecrans and Nashville you will cut off reinforcements . . . and then I will fight him to the last." To this he said "General, I know that you will fight it out, but others will not." I exclaimed, "Give the order, General, and every man will obey you." After some hesitation, he said, "No, it has now become a matter of imperative necessity to withdraw. It must be done at once."[40]

Bragg's decision to withdraw would prove to be a serious detriment to the morale of the army. Liddell remembered that the effects were immediate:

> When I went back to my command, some of the men called out to me, "What's up now, General?" I answered impatiently, "Ask General Bragg." They saw the hidden meaning and said, "Well, boys, retreat again. All our hard fighting thrown away, as usual." [41]

The Battle of Stones River was over. For the Army of Tennessee another tactical victory had failed to result in an operational success. As at Perryville, the men felt that they had won a victory yet they were unable to reap the rewards of victory due to no fault of their own. The Confederate Army had lost 11,739 men: 1,294 killed, 7,945 wounded, and about 2,500 captured and missing. While the Union army had lost about 13,249: 1,730 killed, 7,802 wounded, and 3,717 captured and missing.[42] Liddell's Brigade lost more men killed and wounded than any other brigade in Hardee's Corps. Liddell suffered 5 officers and 81 men killed, 503 wounded, and 18 missing, for a total of 607, out of 1,709. His brigade now totaled 1,108 men.[43]

For Liddell and his brigade, the combat experiences at Stones River were unlike anything they had experienced in any prior engagements. In advancing toward the Nashville Pike they had fought several pitched battles and had performed excellently. The power of their attacks was greatly out of proportion to their number. After suffering heavy losses they had reformed and attacked again and again. They had assisted in driving a superior enemy force three to four miles over difficult terrain. The long hours of practicing drill had paid off in their successful execution of the right wheel and their repeated assaults.

Just as important was the leadership ability displayed by Liddell, which won the confidence of his men and superiors alike. Liddell had bravely led his men in a series of aggressive assaults. These assaults, although often lacking coordination and support from sister units, were successful and yet costly. All things considered, Liddell and his brigade had performed admirably in their first true test of battle. In the past they had been involved in other engagements but not to this extent. Cleburne was impressed enough to make a significant comment in his official report: "Brigadier General Liddell led his brigade with a skill, courage, and devotion which, I believe, saved my left flank from being turned by the enemy."[44] Regardless of his success, Liddell painted a different picture when he later wrote to his wife, "Could I have dreamt that such scenes would await me, I would have fled."[45] Nothing had prepared Liddell for the carnage and horrors that he had witnessed on the battlefield. The experience of this battle would do well in preparing Liddell and his men for conflicts in the future.

On the morning of 3 January 1863, General Braxton Bragg gave the order for his army to retreat. The retreat was slow and miserable. The muddy conditions of the roads caused by rain and sleet aggravated the situation. Bragg split his army and marched his weary and demoralized men south. Initially, Bragg decided to establish defensive positions along the Elk River some

fifty miles south of Murfreesboro. But when it became clear that Rosecrans was not pursuing him, he decided to defend along the Duck River. The Army of Tennessee took up positions along the Duck with Polk on the left at Shelbyville and Hardee on the right at Tullahoma. Except for some minor repositioning in April, the Army would remain in these positions until June.[46]

Cleburne's Division, as part of Hardee's Corps, marched south from Murfreesboro to Manchester then to Estill Springs. At the conclusion of their forty-eight mile march, they pitched their tents on 6 January. Two days later they were ordered to march back north to Tullahoma, about thirty-five miles south of Murfreesboro.[47] This seemingly indecisive marching did little to improve the morale of the men. On 9 January, Cleburne positioned Liddell's Brigade at Wartrace Station, about twenty-nine miles from Murfreesboro. Liddell's Brigade would remain in this position until 24 April, when the brigade would be ordered to outpost duty at Bell Buckle, Tennessee, some five miles closer to Murfreesboro.[48] Regarding this new position, Liddell would later recall that "the locality was beautiful, and better winter quarters could not have been assigned me."[49]

What followed was a six-month period of inactivity that allowed the men to rest, recuperate, and resupply. By 10 January, the men had been well fed, permanent shelter had been improvised and most of the creature comforts obtained.[50] The men built earthworks and field fortifications for their protection and defense. As the months of the winter and spring rolled past, the Army of Tennessee once again began to look like a fighting force. Despite the fact that the Tullahoma region offered little in the way of subsistence, Bragg's army was generally in good condition. The men were well fed, well rested, and all equipment had been repaired and replaced. The soldiers were all armed, with reserves on hand, and ammunition, clothing, and

shoes were in adequate supply.[51] Slowly the morale and spirit of the Army of Tennessee returned.

For Liddell's Brigade, reconstitution and reorganization was an immediate priority. The staggering losses at Stones River and the lack of replacements for the depleted regiments necessitated additional consolidation. The 2nd and 15th Arkansas Regiments were consolidated under Colonel Daniel C. Govan. The 5th and 13th Arkansas Regiments were consolidated under Colonel L. Featherston and the 8th Arkansas Regiment was consolidated with the 1st Louisiana Regiment under Colonel John H. Kelly. The 6th and 7th Arkansas Regiment (Consolidated) received a new commander, Colonel D. A. Gillespie.[52] This reorganization would remain through the Battle of Chickamauga.

Throughout this period, respect for private property and safety of the local citizens was of utmost concern to the leadership of the army. In an effort to remain good neighbors and guests, Hardee published General Order No.11 on 25 April 1863, which stated:

> On the transfer of the command to this cultivated and fruitful region, the lieutenant general commanding appeals to the intelligence and patriotism of the soldiers to respect the rights and the property of citizens, whose labors are necessary to the subsistence of our armies, and invokes the cooperation of officers of every grade to prevent the deprivations and repress the irregularities of the evil-disposed. Officers are especially directed to see that no rails are used or destroyed, and that no fencing is pulled down. Wherever fencing has been destroyed, and the individuals committing the depredations cannot be discovered, details will be made from the regiment, if that can be identified; if not, then from the brigade, and if the brigade cannot be fixed upon, then from the division to which the parties belong, to split the rails and replace the fencing.[53]

In compliance with these orders, Liddell went to great strides to assist the local citizenry. When time came for the spring harvest his men were put to work. Later in his *Record* he noted, "Finding myself amongst good people, I gave cheerful permission to my men to aid the citizens in harvesting their crops of wheat and rye and afterwards planting their corn."[54] Liddell also had his men repair the railroad around Bell Buckle for public use. This assistance would serve

Liddell and his men well during their stay, for they were often welcomed into homes throughout the area. Liddell's willingness to assist the local citizens, the ones most affected by the war, reveals the humane side of his personality and his loyalty to the people of the South. This aspect of his character would also form the foundation for his leadership style.

When not assisting the local populace, the days were spent strengthening fortifications, drilling, conducting marksmanship training, and conducting personnel and weapons inspections. Company and regimental drills were held daily except in stormy weather and on Sundays. Morning drill began at 8 or 9 o'clock; afternoon drill, at 2 o'clock; dress parade, at sunset. There were also occasionally brigade drills.[55] Private Thomas Jefferson Newberry, of the 29th Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Walthall's Brigade, which would later become part of Liddell's Division at the Battle of Chickamauga, recalled in letters home:

> We have had very good luck to stay here at this place as long as we have (Shelbyville) . . . the first knight [sic] we got here we did not think it was hardly worth while to streach [sic] our tents . . . it will soon be six months since we got here . . . we went out yesterday and worked on our brestworks [sic] we cut down timber in front . . . we have exelent [sic] ditches to fight in . . . we have bin [sic] having shooting matches . . . our Company shot day before yesterday . . . we had four shoots [sic] a piece . . . we shot at a board with a man printed on it . . . the first shoot [sic] we had we shot two hundred yards . . . the next was three hundred and the next lot was four and the last was six hundred . . . Sometimes we struck the board . . . I hit it twice the first time and last . . . Some of them hit it every time and some of them missed it every time . . . Do wish you could of bin [sic] to see us drill for the prise [sic] . . . three Companys in our Regiment was drilled to see which was the best to drill against the Brigade and our Company beat the other two and then our Company had to drill for it . . . We drill in skirmish drills and in every other drill . . . a Company in 27 Mips[issippi] got the prize . . . the prize was something like a hundred dollars and ninety days rest . . . Our Company can go through the manuel [sic] of arms as nice as you ever saw and we can ourder [sic] arms so near together you can hardly tell but one gun hit the ground.[56]

This focus on training would prove to be beneficial to the units in the future. The proficiency developed and displayed during this period built confidence, improved unit cohesion and esprit de corps, and improved the maneuver of units on the battlefield. The ultimate result was the development of tactically sound, combat-ready fighting units.

Cleaning and care of the rifle and bayonet was also stressed. The man having the cleanest gun among the detail for daily guard duty was excused from a round of duty. On one occasion Cleburne inspected one of Liddell's regiments. All was well as he went slowly down the line until he reached Private Ben Stewart, who seldom cleaned his gun. The General took the gun, examined it closely, and handed it back. Looking the soldier in the face with reproach, he said, "I hope I do you no injustice, my man, but I don't think you have washed your face for several days." After this incident, Private Stewart's gun and face were always ready for inspection.[57] This quick turn around by Private Stewart can be seen as an indication of the high level of self-pride, unit pride and small unit leadership within the brigade.

One of the outstanding features of Hardee's Corps was the emphasis on reviews. The reviews not only improved the drill of the corps as a unit but had other results as well. For Hardee, a review was not a review without a gallery, and he always went to great lengths to provide one. His reviews became social events, and delighted Southern ladies came frequently from as far as northern Alabama to attend them. Hardee would send eager young staff officers off into the countryside to bring back "loads" of guests. At one April review, for instance, five hundred women turned out to cheer the men. Hardee did not intend for the women to be mere window dressing. In the middle of the reviews he would call forward men in his command who had behaved meritoriously, introduce them to the ladies, and have an account of their services read aloud. After the reviews Hardee would have entertainment provided for his visitors; tournaments, horse races, banquets, parties, dances, and serenades.[58]

On one occasion, Lieutenant Colonel James A.L. Fremantle of the Coldstream Guards, attended a review of Liddell's Brigade at Bell Buckle, Tennessee. His remarks in his *Diary* provide an excellent description of the unit:

There were three carriages full of ladies . . . the weather and the scenery were delightful

. . . . General Liddell's brigade was composed of Arkansas troops--five very weak regiments which have suffered severely in the different battles, and they cannot be easily recruited on account of the blockade of the Mississippi.

The men were good-sized, healthy, and well clothed, but nearly all were dressed in gray or brown coats and felt hats. I was told that even if a regiment was clothed in proper uniform by the government, it would become parti-colored again in a week, as the soldiers preferred wearing the coarse homespun jackets and trousers made by their mothers and sisters at home. The generals very wisely allow them to please themselves in this respect, and insist only upon their arms and accouterments being kept in proper order.

Before the marching past of the brigade, many of the soldiers had taken off their coats and marched past the general in their shirt sleeves, on account of the warmth. Most of them were armed with Enfield rifles captured from the enemy. Many, however, had lost or thrown away their bayonets.

Each regiment carried a "battle flag," blue, with a white border, on which were inscribed the names, "Belmont," "Shiloh," "Perryville," "Richmond," "Kentucky," and "Murfreesboro." They drilled tolerably well, and on advance in line were remarkably good; but General Liddell had invented several dodges of his own, for which he was reproved by General Hardee. . . .I imagine that the discipline in this army is the strictest in the Confederacy, and the men are much better workers than those I saw in Mississippi.[59]

Fremantle's complimentary observations were a tribute to the leadership abilities of Liddell and his subordinate leaders and to the pride and dedication of his men. Since assuming command of the brigade, Liddell had maintained the unit as a disciplined, well-trained, battle-proven fighting force. The brigade had undergone quite a change from when it was first formed in Arkansas. At that time Hardee had remarked to Liddell, "These men have no manners, and I am afraid we can't make much out of them."[60] The change was so significant that Hardee would later be unable to recognize the unit. In his *Record*, Liddell recalls an occasion when Hardee visited his camp at Bell Buckle and was surprised by the salutations and courtesy granted him by Liddell's troops. Regarding the incident Hardee exclaimed, "Why, these men are very polite. Who are they?"[61] Liddell remembered that Hardee seemed astonished that these were the same Arkansas troops that he had organized earlier in the war.

The conduct of Liddell's men reflected the strong and compassionate leadership he provided them. Another entry in his *Record* details his perceived lack of discipline problems within the brigade and gives insight into his leadership style. While discussing discipline and

obedience to orders, he wrote, "They had uniformly behaved well, had obeyed orders implicitly and faithfully. In the whole course of my service with them, I never had occasion to prefer charges against a single individual for improper conduct."[62] This observation is remarkable given the prevalence of disciplinary proceedings within the Army of Tennessee. Liddell further explained his method of discipline as, "I always accomplished my purpose and preserved discipline by private reprimand and pledges on honor alone, which invariably elated the spirit of the soldiers."[63] The obedient behavior of the Arkansas troops is more than likely related to this tendency to counsel and admonish in private rather than embarrass in public. No doubt, Liddell earned the respect of his men by the dignified manner in which he dealt with leadership.

The state of Liddell's command and its accomplishments are even more significant when considering the personal distractions that he was suffering. Throughout the spring, Liddell worried about Yankee gunboats along the Black River and the safety of his family. He worried about his wife and the operation of the plantation. In a letter to her on 2 June 1863, he expresses his concerns and his feelings of loneliness:

> I can't send Judge (his son) home to help you. He has joined Co. F, 1st Louisiana Cavalry. I would come if I could. I have thought of tendering my resignation because I am over age and would like to do what I can for my own state. I myself feel like I am amongst entire strangers, even with my own command. There is nobody but my servant Peter with me, whom I knew before, hence I am alone and feel often times exceedingly solitary in a crowded camp of soldiers.[64]

These feelings would not prevent Liddell from commanding and fighting when the time came, but eventually, these concerns would result in Liddell requesting a transfer to the Trans-Mississippi Department. Despite his concerns, Liddell remained focused on maintaining the readiness of his brigade and his performance was not affected.

While stationed at Bell Buckle, Liddell had plenty of time to reflect and think about the war and the future of the Confederacy. However, the inaction caused him to become "restless

and discontented." During this period Liddell never lost faith in the reasons that he fought for the South. Liddell was a state rights man even though he believed in slavery and owed his livelihood to its practice. In his *Record,* he recalls a conversation he had with Cleburne concerning the issue of slavery. This recollection provides insight into his reasons for fighting. Regarding the conversation he wrote, "Cleburne visited me one day and in our conversation on the state of affairs he said, 'Would you be willing to give up slavery for the independence and recognition of the South?' 'Willingly,' I said.' " Continuing on he wrote that the North "forced a war upon the South to preserve her true rights and prosperity." For Liddell the issue worth fighting for was not slavery but the freedom of the southern states "to frame our laws and institute our own national policy."[65] It was this belief in state rights that caused Liddell to leave his family and fight for the South. It was also this belief that would allow him to "willingly" agree to abolish slavery on the hope that the Confederacy would somehow prevail, even though the loss of manpower could jeopardize the operation of his plantation. Finally, it was this belief and its manifested cause that would keep him in the service of his country to the very end.

While Liddell was suffering from the aforementioned distractions, his brigade's morale was actually fairly good. The spirit of Liddell's troops was reflected in company reports. Captain P.C. Ewan, Company F, 15th Arkansas Regiment, reported at Wartrace, "we now remain in good spirits, patiently waiting for peace or another fight and it matters but little to us which comes first just so that we are victorious." Lieutenant Elias Wellborn, Company C, 15th Arkansas Regiment, wrote while at Wartrace, "we are now preparing to give the Yanks another twist."[66] This high state of morale and willingness to fight would gain the confidence of Liddell's superiors. In response, Liddell was ordered on 6 June 1863, to move two regiments and an artillery section to Liberty Gap, three miles north of Bell Buckle, and to keep a picket at the railroad gap at New Fosterville.[67] Liddell's orders were to picket strongly the gaps to his front.

In June, Rosecrans, after being prodded by Lincoln and Halleck, finally began to move on Bragg. Rosecrans' intention was to dislodge Bragg from his entrenched camp. Bragg was still positioned with Hardee's Corps near Wartrace and Polk's Corps near Shelbyville. There were several roads by which Rosecrans could advance south against Bragg. To cover all avenues of approach, Bragg had his army stretched nearly seventy miles with the bulk of it concentrated on the direct routes to Chattanooga, Hoover's, Liberty, and Guy's gaps.[68] The center of Bragg's line appeared to be the focus of the Federal advance. Instead, Rosecrans outsmarted Bragg by feinting an attack on the most likely avenues of approach and flanked him on his right. Rosecrans continued this form of operational maneuver, attacking where Bragg least expected, throughout the Tullahoma campaign.

The Federal advance began on 24 June 1863. Rosecrans feinted toward Polk's position at Shelbyville and then threw the weight of his army against Hardee, in an effort to flank the Confederate right. Remanants of Liddell's Brigade would begin their fight with the enemy in the afternoon. As the fight grew Liddell would personally direct the fighting and his men would hold off the Federal force for two days. At about 1:00 P.M., Liddell was notified by Colonel L. Featherston, then commanding Liddell's two regiments blocking the gap, that his skirmishers had been driven in and the enemy was rapidly advancing. Liddell rushed to the gap in order to assess the situation. Upon his arrival he discovered that the two regiments were already engaged. Assisted by a drenching rain and the advantages of rocky terrain, Liddell's men put up a stubborn defense. Despite their efforts, Liddell had no reinforcements to support them and was "compelled to fall back before superior numbers" to the next range of hills. In this location, Liddell skillfully positioned his artillery by splitting the battery and placing a section on each of two hills. In these positions the artillery was able to "retard the enemies advance in masses" for the remainder of the afternoon. Liddell hurriedly brought up his other regiments from Bell

Buckle. By 5:00 P.M., the rest of Liddell's Brigade had arrived at the gap, coming up "through the rain and mud, everything soaked." Once darkness fell, Liddell chose to fall back to his camp at Bell Buckle and to feed and rest his men for the next days fight. A company of cavalry reported to him for duty so he placed them on the hills to "watch the movements of the enemy during the night and report any change." That evening Liddell received orders from Hardee to hold his position and to be ready to fall back if required.[69]

By the twenty-fifth, Liddell's position at Liberty Gap and New Fosterville was opposed by a Federal division. The enemy had not changed its position during the night so Liddell positioned two regiments on hills to south of the gap. To the front of these positions was the Wartrace Creek. In his official report he described the terrain as such: "These knobs and hills were probably in places 100 feet or more in height above the level of the creek, varying in elevation irregularly at different points, and covered with timber and thick underbrush." On a hill south of these regiments he placed his artillery battery and one regiment as the reserve. Liddell had left his other regiment at Bell Buckle to guard the approaches to the town.[70]

Throughout the day only minor skirmishing occurred. In the afternoon the Federal division was reinforced by two brigades. About 4:00 P.M., Liddell noticed that the enemy appeared to be pulling back through the gap so he ordered Featherston's regiment to move forward to ascertain the enemy's intentions. Featherston's movement forward was quickly stopped by the enemy. Liddell responded by sending another regiment to his aid. This regiment was also stopped and had to fall back. Just as Liddell's regiments returned to their original position, the enemy attacked. For the remainder of the day Liddell would exchange attacks with the enemy. The battle soon became a stalemate as neither force could dislodge the other. Complicating Liddell's efforts was his inability to resupply ammunition to his regiments due to the "boggy nature of the ground." During the last Federal assault of the day, the 2nd Arkansas

Regiment lost its regimental colors when the color bearer was shot and pitched forward over a bluff, throwing the flag down among the Federals. Despite "great mortification" the regiment did not discover the loss until it was too late. Short on ammunition and unable to hold the gap, Liddell pulled back to two hills south of the gap. The Federal attempts to push through the gap ended with nightfall.[71]

On the morning of the twenty-sixth, Brigadier General S. A. M. Wood's Brigade was advanced to support Liddell. Throughout the day, the Federals kept up constant skirmishing but failed to advance from their original positions. Bragg, thinking that the Federal main attack would come through Liberty Gap, ordered Polk's Corps to move to the gap for a flank attack. But before Polk could arrive, Bragg learned early in the evening that Rosecrans' main force had passed through Hoover's Gap and flanked his right. Bragg issued immediate orders to withdraw to Tullahoma.[72]

As a testament to the fighting ability of Liddell's Brigade, one of the Union generals fighting for Liberty Gap thought they were fighting "the whole of Cleburne's Division," and a Union colonel thought that the Federals were "stubbornly opposed by a much larger force than ours." Another Union colonel said, "When we were within one-half or three-fourths of a mile of the enemy, the effect of their sharpshooters was terrible." The commander of the Union division, Brigadier General Richard W. Johnson, reported, "The affair at Liberty Gap will always be considered a skirmish, but few skirmishes ever equaled it in severity." The Federal casualties at the gap were 267.[73]

Liddell would later report that "Our soldiers were exceedingly eager and excited, and gallantly maintained the contest for some time." Continuing on he recalled, "The conduct of officers and men in my command was unexceptionable. The defiant shouts of our soldiery in the face of the enemy during these different engagements indicates an obstinate resolution in the

cause of their country that only requires to be properly directed to inflict always severe punishment upon the foe who challenges them." Despite Liddell's glowing self appraisal, the fight had been for naught. Although Liddell's men had inflicted severe losses on the enemy, their gallant stand had played perfectly into the Federal deception. Even more disheartening were the losses that Liddell suffered, losses which would be hard to replace. Liddell's casualty figures totaled 120. This number included 25 dead, 77 wounded, and 18 missing.[74]

On the evening of the twenty-sixth, Liddell was ordered to cover the withdrawal of Cleburne's Division. Operating in a miserable rain, the brigade completed the mission without a loss. The next morning Liddell was relieved of his duties as rearguard by a brigade of cavalry. On the twenty-eighth, the brigade arrived in Tullahoma and immediately prepared defensive positions along with the rest of the division and the army.

Bragg decided to fight at Tullahoma, but his determination did not convince his soldiers. Liddell relates in his *Record* how he wagered a bet with Colonel Govan that Bragg would defend Tullahoma. The two agreed to an oyster dinner as the prize for the winner. Liddell's response concerning the outcome of the bet gives indication as to what Bragg did. Liddell wrote, "I owe the Colonel for the lost wager yet."[75]

Meanwhile Rosecrans continued to pressure Bragg. By the thirtieth, he threatened to flank Bragg again. Bragg ordered his men to retreat south of the Elk River in an effort to save his army. On 1 July, after hours of debate over what to do, during which Polk and Hardee both recommended a withdrawal, Bragg was again in retreat. The leaders had agreed to proceed south and fight at Cowan, but Bragg, decided to retreat over the Cumberland Mountains to Chattanooga.[76] By 4 July, Rosecrans had maneuvered the Army of Tennessee almost completely out of its namesake state. He had successfully accomplished this feat without a major battle, but

he had not destroyed Bragg's army. His failure to destroy Bragg would come back to haunt him, at a place called Chickamauga.

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[65]Ibid., 120.

[66]Perdue, 187.

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CHAPTER 4

DIVISION COMMAND AND THE CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN

In a masterful, lightning quick, nine-day campaign, Major General William S. Rosecrans and his Army of the Cumberland had pushed General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee into Chattanooga and the southeastern corner of Tennessee. Rosecrans had achieved nearly unparalleled success. His Tullahoma Campaign had been almost bloodless. But Rosecrans had not destroyed Bragg's army, nor had he yet captured Chattanooga. Instead of continuing his relentless drive on Bragg, he halted his army along a line from Winchester to McMinnville, in sight of the formidable barrier of the Cumberland Mountains.[1] In this location, Rosecrans planned to rest, resupply, and reconstitute in preparation for further advances. He also took this time to repair the rail lines south to Stevenson, Alabama. Rosecrans understood the importance of his next move and was willing to forego pursuit for proper preparation.

Meanwhile, Bragg and his army spent the summer of 1863 encamped at Chattanooga. Due to insufficient intelligence and information, Bragg was unsure of Rosecrans' intentions. On 17 July, Bragg estimated it would take Rosecrans six weeks before he could advance.[2] Bragg felt that his own movements depended largely on what Rosecrans did. So the Army of Tennessee idly waited for Rosecrans to move.

Rosecrans began his advance on 16 August and by 21 August his forces were shelling Chattanooga.[3] Bragg had expected Rosecrans to use the same technique that he had used throughout the Tullahoma Campaign: feint against the Confederate left and attack the right. He

believed that Rosecrans' most likely course of action would be to move northeast, cross the Tennessee River, and seize Chattanooga. This movement would take him close to Major General Ambrose Burnside, who was operating against Knoxville. Bragg feared that the two might link up and conduct a concerted effort against him. In response, Bragg positioned his forces heavily to the northeast of Chattanooga in an effort to prevent Rosecrans from coordinating an advance with Burnside. But for Rosecrans, this course of action was too obvious and too dangerous because it took him away from his supply lines. Instead, Rosecrans turned the obvious course into a masterful deception plan. Rosecrans demonstrated on the Confederate right with four brigades, drawing Bragg's attention away from four crossing sites below Chattanooga. On 29 August, he began to move his army across the Tennessee River unopposed.[4]

While Rosecrans moved his army across the river and divided it into three segments in order to advance on a wide front, Bragg remained confused and bewildered about the location and intentions of Rosecrans' army. Rosecrans planned to capture Chattanooga by threatening Bragg's lines of communication and thereby forcing him to evacuate Chattanooga. Bragg, lacking much needed intelligence from his cavalry forces, was unaware of Rosecrans' movements. Convinced that a Federal advance was inevitable, Bragg began to concentrate his army and began to take steps to organize it for a fight. Realizing he needed more men, he requested reinforcements from Richmond. On 21 August, the same day the Federal bombardment began on Chattanooga, General Joseph Johnston dispatched two divisions from Mississippi, under Major Generals Breckinridge and W. H. T. Walker.[5] Later Richmond would also send Lieutenant General Longstreet's Corps from the Army of Northern Virginia. These additions would eventually swell Bragg's army to almost 67,000 men.[6]

The actions taken by Bragg to restructure and prepare his army for battle would prove to be beneficial for Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell. In his *Record,* Liddell recalled a meeting

with Bragg, soon after the army arrived in Chattanooga, during which he expressed a desire to be transferred to the Trans-Mississippi Department. Liddell wished to make this transfer in order to be in a place where he could better take care of his family and plantation. Bragg refused to grant the transfer and requested that Liddell stay for one more campaign. Bragg promised Liddell that at the conclusion of the campaign he would reconsider his request. This action can be seen on Bragg's part as an attempt by him to keep reliable officers in his command. His action is understandable, given the discord in the command caused by his poor relationship with his senior commanders. Liddell had proven to be competent, aggressive, and trustworthy. His sustained performance and leadership skills added a sense of continuity and made him a valuable asset to Bragg's command. Bragg knew Liddell from their days at West Point and their relationship was a cordial one. Bragg thought highly of Liddell and, after he consented to stay with the army, promised him a division command and a possible promotion.[7]

On or about the same day that Chattanooga was being shelled by the Federal army, Bragg made his promise an official order. Special Order Number 224, Headquarters Army of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Tennessee dated 21 August 1863, stated: "Brigadier General Walthall will move immediately by rail and report to Brigadier General Liddell at Chickamauga."[8] With this order Liddell was given his division command. Liddell's Division was atypical for the Confederate forces. His division consisted of only two brigades: his brigade, commanded by Colonel Daniel C. Govan, and Walthall's Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Edward C. Walthall. In preparation for the ensuing fight, Liddell's order of battle was as follows:

Liddell's Division
Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell

Liddell's Brigade
Colonel Daniel C. Govan

2nd - 15th Arkansas (Consolidated)

5th - 13th Arkansas (Consolidated)

6th - 7th Arkansas (Consolidated)

8th Arkansas - 1st Louisiana (Regulars) (Consolidated)

Walthall's Brigade
Brigadier General Edward C. Walthall

24th Mississippi

27th Mississippi

29th Mississippi

30th Mississippi

34th Mississippi

Artillery
Captain Charles Swett

Fowler's (Alabama) Battery

Warren Light Artillery (Mississippi Battery)

Liddell's Brigade

Colonel Daniel C. Govan led Liddell's Brigade during the Battle of Chickamauga. Govan was born in Northhampton County, North Carolina, on July 4 1829. He was raised in Mississippi and later attended the University of South Carolina. In 1849, he joined the gold rush in California along with his relative Ben McCulloch, who would also become a Confederate general officer. In 1852, he returned to Mississippi. He moved to Arkansas in 1861 and he became a planter.[9]

When the war started, he helped raise a company of infantry which became part of the 2nd Arkansas Infantry Regiment. On 5 June 1861, he was elected Captain of Company F, 2nd Arkansas. Later that month he was elected lieutenant colonel and took over command of the 2nd

Arkansas. He served in this capacity throughout Liddell's time as brigade commander. On 6 January 1862, he was promoted to colonel. Govan served with the Army of Tennessee during all its campaigns except Shiloh, where sickness forced him to take leave. He led his regiment in successful assaults at Perryville and Stones River.[10]

When Liddell received division command, Govan, as the senior colonel, was his choice to assume command of the brigade. By the Chickamauga Campaign, Govan was a proven combat leader. He had distinguished himself as strong, brave, and reliable. Captain Edward T. Sykes, Walthall's assistant adjutant general, characterized Govan as "in every respect, capable, and competent, indeed, proved himself one of the most superb brigade commanders in Hardee's Corps; which is equivalent to saying, one of the best in the army."[11] Although it was his first experience as a brigade commander, Govan would again prove to be a valuable asset. After the battle, Liddell recognized his performance with an entry in his official report. Writing about his two brigade commanders, he stated:

> I am greatly indebted for their prompt cooperation in every movement and quick apprehension of the constantly recurring necessities that arise on a battlefield. I know of no more gallant soldiers, and feel honored by the command of such officers.[12]

One unique aspect of his career was his perseverance. As reflected by his lack of injuries, he possessed an uncommon endurance and ability to remain healthy on the battlefield. Call it luck or fate, this quality allowed him to fight in and survive some of the war's bloodiest battles.

Govan would also lead Liddell's old brigade at Chattanooga and through the Atlanta campaign. He was rewarded with the rank of brigadier general on 29 December 1863. He was captured at the Battle of Jonesboro and exchanged on 20 September 1864. After his exchange, he resumed command and led his men at Franklin and Nashville. At Nashville he was wounded in the throat. After recovering, he fought with his brigade under General Joseph E. Johnston in

the Carolinas Campaign.[13] After the war, he returned to Arkansas as a planter. In 1894, he accepted a position from President Cleveland as an Indian agent in the state of Washington. He spent his remaining years living with his children in Tennessee and Mississippi. He died from primary pulmonary edema, due to age, on 12 March 1911, in Memphis. He was buried in Holly Springs, Mississippi.[14]

At Chickamauga, the effective total strength of Liddell's Brigade was 1,378.[15] The regiments that comprised Liddell's-Govan's Brigade were experienced and battle tested. They had fought hard together and had known success in several battles and campaigns: Shiloh, Perryville, Stones River. The brigade was also well drilled and disciplined. Nathaniel C. Hughes, editor of *Liddell's Record*, considered Liddell's "Arkansas Brigade" as the finest in the Army of Tennessee.[16] In previous campaigns, the brigade had formed the nucleus of Cleburne's command and had won success after success under Cleburne and Liddell. However, its success had taken its toll. Each conflict had severely depleted its numbers. Prior to Chickamauga the regiments in the brigade were forced to consolidate with other depleted regiments in order to form combat effective units. Although they had suffered serious casualties, there were enough combat veterans in each unit, and in the brigade as a whole, to enhance its potential for effectiveness. Another factor that enhanced the brigade's capacity for effective performance was the consistency of its leadership. The units had been under the command of essentially the same senior leaders since the Kentucky Campaign. Liddell had been the brigade commander for more than fifteen months. For Govan, the Battle of Chickamauga would be his first experience as a brigade commander. This fact would not be a concern, however, since the brigade was comprised of combat veteran regiments and since the man who had organized, trained, disciplined and prepared them for battle was now their division commander.

2nd Arkansas/15th Arkansas. Lieutenant Colonel Reuben F. Harvey and Captain A.T. Meek

The 2nd Arkansas Infantry Regiment organized in the spring of 1861 drawing men from the counties of Hempstead, Washington, Sebastian, and Crawford. Colonel Thomas C. Hindman was elected its first commander. He was immediately followed by Daniel C. Govan. It was mustered into Confederate service by companies between 26 May and 26 June 1861. The regiment was ordered east of the Mississippi and fought as part of Hindman's Brigade, Hardee's Corps, Army of Mississippi during the battles of Shiloh and Corinth. During the Kentucky Campaign it became part of Liddell's Brigade. It participated in the many campaigns of the Army of Tennessee: Stones River, Chickamauga, Atlanta, Franklin, and Nashville. After Stones River, where it lost 15 killed, 94 wounded, and 9 missing, it was consolidated with the 15th Arkansas Infantry Regiment. At Chickamauga, the regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Reuben F. Harvey and then Captain A. T. Meek, after Harvey died of wounds and disease.[17]

The 15th Arkansas Infantry Regiment formed at Mound City, Arkansas in May of 1861. Originally formed as the 1st Infantry Regiment, State Troops it was redesignated the 1st (Cleburne's) Infantry Regiment on 23 July 1861. The War Department redesignated the regiment the 15th Arkansas on 31 December 1861. Colonel Patrick R. Cleburne was elected its first commander. The original unit consisted of 506 men, mostly from the counties of Jefferson and Monroe. During the winter of 1861-1862, the regiment was ordered to the Army of Mississippi. Thereafter, the regiment participated in the Battle of Shiloh and the Kentucky Campaign as part of Cleburne's Brigade. At Stones River it fought with Polk's Brigade, Cleburne's Division. In the summer of 1863, it was consolidated with the 2nd Arkansas and assigned to Liddell's Brigade. By December 1863, the 2nd/15th was further consolidated with the 24th Arkansas and totaled only 295 men and 202 weapons. The consolidated regiment spent the rest of the war

being further consolidated and reconsolidated and fighting with the Army of Tennessee. By 1865, it had been consolidated with no less than ten other regiments, the 1st, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 13th, 15th, 19th, 24th Arkansas Regiments and the 3rd Confederate Regiment and was fighting in the Carolinas Campaign. This consolidated regiment's losses and resulting consolidations are a testament to the number of battles it fought.[18]

5th Arkansas/13th Arkansas, Colonel Lucius Featherston and Lieutenant Colonel John E. Murray

On 28 June 1861, the 5th Arkansas Infantry Regiment assembled 722 men at Gainesville, Arkansas for one year of state service. Colonel David C. Cross was elected its first commander. The regiment was transferred to Confederate service on 27 July 1861, and soon after was ordered to Bowling Green, Kentucky. The unit was reorganized at Tupelo, Mississippi, on 12 May 1862, for two years service. In June, it became part of Liddell's Brigade and later saw action at Perryville and Stones River. As the result of the Battle of Stones River, where it lost 42 percent of the 336 men present, it was consolidated with the 13th Arkansas. At the Battle of Chickamauga, the regiment was commanded by Colonel Lucius Featherston, until he was killed, and then by Lieutenant Colonel John E. Murray.[19]

The 13th Arkansas Infantry Regiment was organized during the spring and summer of 1861. The men of the regiment came from the counties of Phillips, Arkansas, and Monroe. Colonel James C. Tappan was elected the first commander. It was mustered into Confederate service for twelve months service on 23 July 1861. Initially serving in the Western Department, it fought at the Battle of Belmont. The regiment was later ordered east to the Army of Mississippi, where it took part in the Battles of Shiloh and Corinth. It lost thirty-three percent of those engaged at Shiloh. During the Kentucky Campaign, it was assigned to Liddell's Brigade and would see action at Perryville and later Stones River. During the summer of 1863, the

regiment was consolidated with the 5th Arkansas. The consolidated 5th/13th regiment suffered 45 percent of its 450 men killed, wounded or missing at Chickamauga. By December 1863, the unit numbered 321 men and 222 arms. Like the 2nd/15th, it too spent the rest of the war campaigning with the Army of Tennessee and undergoing numerous consolidations.[20]

6th Arkansas/7th Arkansas, Colonel D.A. Gillespie and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Snyder

The 6th Arkansas Infantry Regiment formed in June 1861 at Little Rock, Arkansas. Its companies were recruited from Little Rock and the counties of Calhoun, Dallas, Ouachita, Arkansas, Lafayette, and Union. The regiment initially totaled 604 men. In late 1861 it was assigned to the Army of Mississippi and would see action at Shiloh and Corinth. By June 1862, the regiment was part of Liddell's Brigade and participated in the Kentucky Campaign. On 22 December 1862, just prior to the Battle of Stones River, it was consolidated with the 7th Arkansas. At Stones River, the 6th/7th lost 29 killed, 140 wounded, and 8 missing. Colonel D.A. Gillespie, originally from the 7th Arkansas, led the consolidated regiment at Chickamauga until he was wounded. He was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Peter Snyder, a field officer from the 6th Arkansas.[21]

On 16 June 1861, the 7th Arkansas Infantry Regiment was organized in Smithfield, Arkansas. Its members were recruited from the counties of White, Marion, Izard, Randolph, Fulton, Lawrence, Independence, and Arkansas. Like the other Arkansas regiments in the brigade, it fought at Shiloh and Corinth. During the Battle of Shiloh, General Hardee nicknamed the unit "The Bloody Seventh." Originally formed with 905 officers and men, after Shiloh there were only 380 present. This remainder was assigned to Liddell's Brigade and would see action in the Kentucky Campaign. In December 1862, it was consolidated with the 6th Arkansas. At Stones River, the 6th/7th would suffer the heaviest casualties in Liddell's Brigade. Like its sister

regiments in Liddell's Brigade, it underwent numerous consolidations as it fought in the many campaigns of the Army of Tennessee. The regiment was also part of the major consolidation of ten regiments during the Carolinas Campaign.[22]

8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana, Lieutenant Colonel George F. Baucum and Major Anderson Watkins

The 8th Arkansas Infantry Regiment formed at Jacksonport, Arkansas on 13 July 1861, with men from the central part of the state. In late 1861 it was ordered east of the Mississippi. At the Battle of Shiloh it suffered heavy casualties and on 26 April 1862, it totaled only 272 men. In May it was consolidated into five companies and united with the 7th and 9th Arkansas Infantry Battalions. Soon thereafter, it was assigned to Liddell's Brigade and participated in the Kentucky Campaign and the battles of Perryville and Stones River. At Stones River, its casualty totals were 29 killed and 124 wounded. In September 1863, it was consolidated with the 1st Louisiana Infantry Regiment (Regulars). At the Battle of Chickamauga, the consolidated regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George F. Baucum, who was originally from the 8th Arkansas. During the battle he was severely wounded carrying the regiment's colors at the head of the regiment and was replaced by Major Anderson Watkins, also from the 8th Arkansas. The 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana suffered 14 killed, 92 wounded, and 65 missing at Chickamauga. In November 1863, the regiment was consolidated with the 19th Arkansas (Dawson's) Infantry Regiment. It would spend the remainder of the war fighting in the many campaigns of the Army of Tennessee, as part of Liddell's-Govan's Brigade. The regiment would also undergo numerous consolidations like its sister regiments and would end the war fighting in North Carolina.[23]

The 1st Louisiana Infantry Regiment (Regulars) was organized into state service on 5 February 1861. It was mustered into Confederate service on 13 March 1861. Colonel Adley H.

Gladden was its first commander. From October 1861 to February 1861, the regiment was assigned to the Army of Pensacola. It was then transferred to the Army of Mississippi and fought with Gardner's Brigade, Wither's Division at Shiloh and Corinth. During the Kentucky Campaign, it served with Manigault's Brigade, Wither's Division. At the Battle of Stones River, the regiment was again part of Gardner's Brigade, Wither's Division. It functioned as the artillery reserve during the Tullahoma Campaign and was eventually consolidated with the 8th Arkansas and assigned to Liddell's Division prior the Chickamauga. The regiment spent 1864 campaigning with the Army of Tennessee and ended the war as part of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana.[24]

Walthall's Brigade

Brigadier General Edward Carey Walthall was born on 4 April 1831, in Richmond, Virginia. At the age of ten, he moved with his parents to Holly Springs, Mississippi. He was educated in the best schools in the area and later studied law. He was admitted to the bar in 1852 and four years later was elected district attorney. In 1859 he was reelected.[25] When the war began, he enlisted in Coffeeville, Mississippi, as a private in the Yalobusha Rifles, Company F, 15th Mississippi Regiment. Soon afterwards, he was elected first lieutenant and later on 31 July 1861, was elected lieutenant colonel. His first action of the war was at the Battle of Fishing Creek, Kentucky. During that conflict he gained the admiration of his fellow soldiers by enthusiastically urging them forward into battle by saying: "That's the crowd we are after, forward men!" When his one year term of enlistment expired, he received a commission to form his own regiment and organized the 29th Mississippi Infantry Regiment. On 11 April 1862, he was elected colonel and led the regiment at the battles of Shiloh, Corinth, and through the Kentucky Campaign as part of Chalmers' Brigade, Withers' Division.[26]

On 13 December 1862, he was promoted by General Braxton Bragg to brigadier general and given the command of a brigade that consisted of the following regiments: 24th Mississippi, 27th Mississippi, 30th Mississippi, 41st Mississippi, and the 45th Alabama. Missing his old regiment, he orchestrated, on 26 December 1862, a transfer of the 41st Mississippi to Chalmers' Brigade in exchange for the 29th Mississippi. Just prior to the Battle of Stones River he was taken dangerously ill and forced by Bragg to take sick leave. He returned to the home of his wife's parents in Richmond, Virginia, to recover. He did not return to the brigade until about two weeks after the battle.[27]

During the Battle of Stones River, his brigade, part of Withers'-Hindman's Division, Polk's Corps, was commanded by Brigadier General J. Patton Anderson. The brigade distinguished itself in the conflict by capturing two four-gun batteries and numerous prisoners. In doing so it suffered horrific losses. Of the almost 1,800 men in the brigade, 766 were lost; 119 killed, 584 wounded, and 63 missing. On the morning of the first day, the 30th Mississippi alone suffered 62 killed and 139 wounded. The commanding officer of the 27th Mississippi, Lieutenant Colonel James L. Autry, was killed by a mini ball through the head. As recognition for its distinguished services at the Battle of Stones River, Bragg ordered that four of the guns captured from the enemy be presented to Walthall's Brigade. Engraved on the cannons were the names of four officers that died during the battle, including Lieutenant Colonel Autry.[28]

After Stones River, the brigade wintered near Shelbyville, Tennessee. While in this location the 34th Mississippi Regiment was transferred to the brigade as a replacement for the 45th Alabama that had been transferred to Manigault's Brigade. Throughout this period of inactivity, the brigade rotated monthly with the other brigades of Polk's Corps in performing outpost duty along the principal avenues of approach for the enemy. Walthall used this opportunity to train his brigade. Described as a "perfect master of drill," Walthall raised the

proficiency of his brigade by conducting constant drill. According to Captain E. T. Sykes, his assistant adjutant general, the brigade received the praise and compliment of the superiors of the army, especially those of the "West Point School."[29]

Walthall possessed the complete confidence of his men. The soldiers of the brigade considered him a strict and just disciplinarian. His leadership skills were highlighted by a magnetic personality and conspicuous courage. These qualities resulted in unquestioned obedience to his orders. Walthall did not tolerate incompetence from his subordinate leaders. As evidence of this, he conscientiously and rigidly enforced General Order #39 from the War Department, which authorized and directed commanding generals to organize courts to rid the army of incapable or inefficient officers. Walthall forced one such officer, Colonel Thomas M. Jones, commander of the 27th Mississippi Regiment, out of the army after he cowardly feigned illness prior to the Battle of Stones River. Walthall's impartial leadership earned the respect of his men. As a tribute to their admiration, in the fall of 1863, the regimental and company officers presented him with the finest horse and equipment that could be purchased.[30]

Chickamauga would be Walthall's first opportunity to lead his brigade in battle. Like his fellow brigade commander, Govan, his combat experiences as a regimental commander would serve him well. He would prove to be a dependable, competent, and effective leader for Liddell. As he did for Govan, Liddell would show his appreciation in his official report:

> I am greatly indebted for their prompt cooperation in every movement and quick apprehension of the constantly recurring necessities that arise on a battlefield. I know of no more gallant soldiers, and feel honored by the command of such officers.[31]

After Chickamauga, Walthall would lead his brigade during the Battle of Chattanooga in the defense of Lookout Mountain. The next day, in the fight at Missionary Ridge, he would be severely wounded in the foot but would refuse to leave his command until his men were safely withdrawn. Unable to walk, he had to be lifted from his horse. Taking eight weeks to

recuperate, he later rejoined his command and lead the brigade during the Atlanta Campaign. He was promoted to major general on 6 July 1864. He commanded a division at the Battle of Franklin and covered Hood's retreat after the Battle of Nashville. Two horses were killed under him at Franklin and he was severely bruised, but he remained on the field. Toward the end of the war, he accompanied the remnants of the Army of Tennessee to the Carolinas. During the Carolinas Campaign he commanded a division and even the corps for a while.[32]

When the war ended he resumed his law practice and became a leader in the movement to overthrow the carpetbag regime in Mississippi. He was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1885, reelected, and served until 1894, when he resigned because of poor health. He resumed his seat in March 1895 and served continuously until his death in Washington on 21 April 1898. His cause of death was typhoid pneumonia. Like Govan, he too was buried in Holly Springs, Mississippi.[33]

The effective total strength of Walthall's Brigade at Chickamauga was 1,827.[34] Like Govan's Brigade, the unit was comprised of combat veterans. The regiments of the brigade had fought in the same conflicts as Govan's Brigade but their losses had not warranted consolidation. The brigade enjoyed the steady leadership of regimental commanders who had received combat experience from earlier campaigns. It was well disciplined and well trained. Although inexperienced at leading his brigade in combat, like Govan, Walthall's strong leadership abilities and previous combat experience served to enhance the brigade's potential for effective performance. All in all, Walthall's Brigade was ready to fight.

24th Mississippi. Lieutenant Colonel R. P. Mckelvaine. Major W. C. Staples. Captain B. F. Toomer. Captain J. D. Smith

The 24th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was organized at Meridian, Mississippi during the fall of 1861 drawing men from the counties of Hancock, Clay, Lowndes, Chickasaw,

Kemper, Choctaw, and Monroe. Colonel William F. Dowd was elected its first commander. The regiment was initially assigned to the Department of Middle and Eastern Florida. In April 1862, it returned to Mississippi and took part in the siege of Corinth. During the Kentucky Campaign, the regiment was in Powel's Brigade, Anderson's Division. In December 1862, the regiment was assigned to Walthall's Brigade. While serving with the Army of Tennessee, the regiment saw action in the many campaigns of the army: Stones River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Franklin and Nashville. At the Battle of Stones River it sustained 116 casualties. During the Battle of Chickamauga, the regiment was commanded by four successive officers. Each officer, except the last, relinquished command after wounds forced them to leave the field. The rest of the regiment did not fair any better, suffering 132 casualties; 10 killed, 103 wounded, and 19 missing. Each conflict that the regiment fought in gradually depleted its numbers. By December 1863, it was consolidated with the 27th Regiment and totaled 491 men and 354 arms. It ended the war consolidated with all the other regiments of Walthall's Brigade, designated as the 24th Infantry Regiment, and fighting in the Carolinas Campaign.[35]

27th Mississippi. Colonel James P. Campbell

The 27th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was assembled in November and December 1861. Its men were recruited from the counties of Oktibbeha, Leake, Covington, Jasper, and Simpson. After serving with the Department of Alabama and West Florida in Pensacola, Florida, the regiment was assigned to Jackson's Brigade, Withers' Division, Army of Mississippi and fought during the Kentucky Campaign and at the Battle of Perryville. At Stones River, it fought as part of Walthall's-Anderson's Brigade, Withers' Division, Polk's Corps and sustained 83 casualties. Colonel James P. Campbell commanded the regiment at Chickamauga, where the regiment suffered 117 casualties; 10 killed, 88 wounded, and 19 missing. Like its sister

regiments in Walthall's Brigade it would fight in the many campaigns of the Army of Tennessee and would end the war in the Carolinas as part of a consolidated regiment.[36]

29th Mississippi, Colonel William F. Brantly

The 29th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was formed by Colonel Edward C. Walthall on 11 April 1862, and contained men from Grenada, Lafayette, Panola, Yalobusha, Washington, and DeSoto counties. Walthall naturally became its first commander. The regiment's first action was during the Kentucky Campaign at the battles of Munfordville and Perryville. Later it joined the Army of Tennessee and was assigned to Walthall's Brigade. At the Battle of Stones River, it sustained 34 killed and 202 wounded. The regiment's casualties at Chickamauga were even worse. Fifty-three percent or 194 of the 368 present were killed or wounded. By December 1863, the regiment was forced to consolidate with the 30th and 34th Regiments and totaled 554 men and 339 weapons. The remainder of the war would be spent fighting with the Army of Tennessee like its sister regiments.[37]

30th Mississippi, Colonel Junius I. Scales, Major James M. Johnson

The 30th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was organized during early summer of 1862 at Grenada, Mississippi. Its members were raised in the counties of Lafayette, Choctaw, Montgomery, Grenada, Yazoo, and Carroll. The regiment's first action was at the Battle of Perryville in October 1862. By December 1862, it was assigned to Walthall's Brigade and participated in the Battle of Stones River. The regiment sustained 209 casualties at Stones River, 124 at Chickamauga, and 149 at Chattanooga. At Chickamauga, the regiment was initially commanded by Colonel Junius I. Scales until he was captured by the enemy. Major James M. Johnson, the only field officer remaining, replaced Scales as commander. In December 1863, it was consolidated with the 29th and 34th Regiments. Throughout the rest of the war, the

regiment campaigned with the Army of Tennessee and was eventually consolidated with the other regiments of the brigade into one regiment.[38]

34th Mississippi. Major William G. Pegram. Lieutenant Colonel Hugh A. Reynolds. Captain H. J. Bowen

The 34th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was organized at Holly Springs, Mississippi on 19 April 1862. Originally formed as the 37th Mississippi, the regiment was redesignated the 34th Mississippi on 5 March 1863. As the 37th, the regiment took part in the siege of Corinth, the Kentucky Campaign, and the battles of Perryville and Stones River. After Stones River, the regiment was assigned to Walthall's Brigade. At Chickamauga, the regiment was commanded by Major William G. Pegram until he was severely wounded. He was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Hugh A. Reynolds, of the 30th Mississippi, until he was mortally wounded. By the end of the conflict Captain H.J. Bowen was in command. The regiment's loss during the battle was 15 killed, 91 wounded, and 19 missing. After Chickamauga, the regiment continued to campaign with the Army of Tennessee and fought in its many battles. In December 1863, it was consolidated with the 29th and 30th Regiments and by the end of the war had been consolidated, along with the other regiments of the brigade, into one regiment.[39]

Artillery

Captain Charles Swett was the Chief of Artillery for Liddell's Division. Swett had entered the war as the commander of the Mississippi Warren Light Artillery Battery. He served with Liddell at Perryville, Stones River, and during the Tullahoma Campaign. When Liddell was advanced to division command, Swett was advanced as well to chief of the division's two artillery batteries. Swett's artillery had proven to be capable and efficient. Swett was known for the training of his artillery. Private John Magee recalled that as part of Swett's battery he:

"Drilled often and became accustomed to the various maneuvers of artillery drill."[40] During the Battle of Chickamauga, Swett's Battery was assigned to Liddell's-Govan's Brigade and was commanded by First Lieutenant H. Shannon. The other battery of the division was Fowler's Alabama Battery. This battery was assigned to Walthall's Brigade and was commanded by Captain William H. Fowler.

Mississippi Warren Light Artillery Battery, First Lieutenant H. Shannon

This battery was organized on 1 May 1861, at Vicksburg, Mississippi. The men came from the surrounding Warren county. The initial effective strength of the battery was 73. The unit fought at Shiloh, Perryville, Stones River and after Chickamauga at Chattanooga, Atlanta, and the Carolinas Campaign. The battery suffered eleven casualties at Chickamauga. On 6 April 1862, the battery was armed with four 6 pound. Smoothbores and two 12 pound. Howitzers. In May 1863, two of the 6 pound cannons were turned in for repair. By 29 March 1864, the unit consisted of three 12 pound Napoleons. The battery trained continuously in order to maintain its proficiency. Private Grammar recalled a gunnery exercise on 6 August 1863: "Swett's and Douglas' Batteries had target practice, distance 1200 yards, for the purpose of trying our guns. Neither hit the target though a few good line shots were made." The battery would see limited action at Chickamauga.[41]

Fowler's Alabama Battery, Captain William H. Fowler

Fowler's Battery was formed by the conversion of Company H, 5th Alabama Infantry Regiment, to artillery service at Davis Ford, Virginia, on 28 December 1861. The battery was initially organized with 130 officers and men. Captain William H. Fowler was the unit's first commander and would also command the battery at Chickamauga. After being mustered into Confederate service, the battery was stationed at Mobile, Alabama until May 1863 when it was

transferred to the Army of Tennessee. The battery was well trained and proficient. Private John Magee of Stanford's Battery noted its accuracy during a gunnery exercise on 7 August 1863: "Fowler's Battery fired today-very good shooting. Struck the target twice at 1400 yards." At Chickamauga the battery would suffer 10 killed and 18 wounded despite seeing limited action.[42]

Liddell's aforementioned order of battle took some time to put together. The receipt of Special Order Number 224, ordering Walthall to report to Liddell, did not guarantee quick compliance, for Walthall was not located in the immediate vicinity of the Army of Tennessee. On 26 July 1863, the brigade had been ordered to Atlanta to protect the area from possible raids by enemy cavalry. While on duty in Atlanta the brigade was soon given another mission. The Army of Tennessee, having suffered losses during the Tullahoma Campaign, was in much need of horses for its artillery, supply trains, and cavalry. Therefore, General Bragg ordered Walthall to impress a significant number of replacements. Walthall set about accomplishing his mission with the utmost secrecy. Walthall had instructions to the local citizenry printed in the form of a notice. The notice explained that all horses should be brought to the brigade for protection from the Federal cavalry. He then posted guards on the exits from the city in order to prevent any horses from leaving the area. For several days the brigade collected horses until the requisite number was met. While Walthall did his best to complete his task, the local horse owners, realizing what was happening, did their best to maintain their stock. Some went to great effort to hide their horses in cellars, basements, and rooms of homes. R.A. Jarman, Company K, 27th Mississippi Regiment, recalled: "I tell you we at the time, got fine carriage horses out of parlors, from sitting rooms, and in one instance from upstairs." Despite these efforts, the brigade completed the impressment of the horses and thereby greatly assisted the army in preparing for the Chickamauga Campaign.[43]

While in Atlanta, Walthall's Brigade took the opportunity to rest and refit. The regiments during this time were paid, and this allowed the men to be well fed. R. A. Jarman remembered that:

> We arrived there in the midst of the peach and watermelon season, and the country tributary to Atlanta raises fine peaches, at least it did when we were there in 1863. . . .we did enjoy investing in peaches, melons, pinetop whisky and many other luxuries that for some time had been unknown to the soldiers of our command. We had every day nearly, old fashioned peach pies baked in an oven, then we would go to the houses close to camp and engage dinner at times for a whole mess at once, which was generally vegetables, fried chicken or chicken pie, but always ended in peach pie. Then when we got a chance to go to town, which was quite often, we could get peach and honey, and all know its merits too well to discuss them here.[44]

Moreover, the stay in Atlanta greatly improved the brigade's morale and lifted spirits. By the time the brigade received the order to report to Liddell, the men were physically and mentally ready to fight.

On 23 August 1863, Walthall's Brigade began its movement by rail to Chickamuaga Station to unite with Liddell.[45] Liddell had been in this location protecting the railroad and the supply depot since soon after arriving in Chattanooga in July.[46] This location was the same place that Liddell had encamped prior to the Kentucky Campaign. Once Walthall arrived, Liddell focused on training his division. In his *Record,* Liddell explains that: "My camp was at Chickamauga Station, in the same spot I had encamped just before the Kentucky Campaign, and I drilled my temporary division in the same fields."[47] Further on he writes: "I busied myself with drilling and disciplining my command, and at the same time attending to the duty assigned me in looking after the preparation of the supply train for active operations."[48] Liddell's efforts allowed him to familiarize himself with the capabilities of Walthall's Brigade and the division as a whole. The training also allowed the men of the division to see Liddell's leadership abilities and tactical competence. This training and familiarization process was much needed given the ad hoc nature of the division.

The training also served to boost the confidence of the division. Soon after, W. B. Honnoll of the 24th Mississippi Infantry Regiment reported in a letter home to his family that:

> Our officers think we will be successful in this battel [sic]. . . . I dont now [sic] what our[sic] is at this time but I believe we have the best army we have ever had yet. . .our soldiers is very resolut [sic] and I hope we will gane [sic] the victory so it will not have to be fought agane[sic].[49]

J. W. Ward, also of the 24th Mississippi, echoed Honnoll's feelings and provided a premonition of the future in a letter to his mother:

> Judging from the circumstances the fight impending will be one of the bloodiest of the war, for the Yankees expect if they meet with success in this instance, to bring us shortly to terms of peace, but they do not know us. And we will put forth our utmost strength to prevent them from severing our center and thereby cutting off communications between our two armies. Our army seems very hopeful of victory more so than I expected to see them.[50]

Meanwhile, Bragg was still unsure of where Rosecrans was located. It was not until 30 August, that Bragg learned from a civilian that Rosecrans was crossing the river in force at Stevenson and Bridgeport, Alabama, and Shellmound, Tennessee.[51] By early September, Rosecrans had spread out over a forty-mile advance and was threatening Bragg's lines of communication. Fearing this threat, Bragg evacuated Chattanooga on 8 September, and began concentrating his forces near LaFayette, Georgia.[52]

While located near LaFayette, Bragg began receiving the reinforcements that he had requested. These additional forces required a reorganization in the higher echelons of the command. On 10 September, when Major General W. H. T. Walker arrived from Mississippi, he was assigned command of the reserve corps that included his own division and Liddell's newly formed division.[53]

William Henry Talbot Walker had been a classmate of Liddell's at West Point, class of 1837. After graduation he had made a name for himself through his distinguished service in the Seminole and Mexican wars. When the Civil War began he resigned his commission in the

Federal army and accepted a commission as a brigadier general in the Confederate army. He rose in rank quickly and served in brigade and division command. He fought with the Army of Northern Virginia, in the Department of the West with Joseph Johnston, and with the Army of Tennessee.[54] Known as a quarrelsome officer, he was not well thought of by Liddell. In his *Record,* Liddell remarked that:

> General Walker was well-known to be a crackbrained fire-eater, always captious and cavilling about something whimsical and changeable and hardly reliable. I was very much annoyed by such a man in business relations, though otherwise I regarded him as honorable and high-strung in all engagements. We were very friendly but constantly differed in our views. It was my duty to obey his orders, regardless of consequences and they were often destitute of common sense. The only satisfaction that I had was that our official relations would end with the next battle.[55]

Liddell's opinion of Walker would not prevent him from carrying out his orders when tasked. Liddell felt slighted by Bragg's decision to put him under command of Walker but regardless he pledged to "do my duty zealously and cheerfully without faltering."[56]

Liddell's anger was possibly due to his assignment to the reserve corps. Like most eager Confederate officers he did not wish to be part of the reserve, but rather, desired more challenging assignments. As future events would attest, this corps would not function as a traditional reserve force. Captain Edward T. Sykes, assistant adjutant general, Walthall's Brigade, called Walker's Reserve Corps a "decided misnomer."[57] The best description of the corps' role comes from R.A. Jarman, who wrote: "When we got to Chickamauga Station and were put in the reserve corps we thought that we would have a good time, but we learned that in army parlance reserve did not mean reserve at all, but it meant the first in and the last out when it came to a battle."[58]

As Rosecrans scattered army began passing through the mountain gaps southwest of Chattanooga, Bragg formulated a plan to destroy the separated corps in succession. Bragg's first attempt was against General Negley's division in McLemore's Cove on 10 and 11 September.

Major General Thomas C. Hindman was ordered to attack the Union force in the cove. Bragg would later send Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner's Corps to assist Hindman. In order to seal off the cove, Bragg ordered Lieutenant General Daniel H. Hill, now commanding Hardee's old corps, to close Dug Gap. Walker's Corps was ordered to support Hill and so Walker moved his corps from LaFayette closer to Pigeon Mountain and Dug Gap. Walker's Corps would wait patiently for hours on 11 September for the sound of guns and their opportunity to engage the enemy. But no sound was heard. Bragg had assembled an overwhelming advantage in manpower. However, Bragg's plan became a miserable failure as Hindman displayed a reluctance to follow Bragg's orders. As a result of his lack of initiative, Negley was allowed to escape back to Lookout Mountain.[59]

Bragg's next opportunity came on 12 September as General Thomas Crittenden's corps approached Lee and Gordon's Mill. Bragg ordered Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk to attack Crittenden before he had the chance to concentrate his forces at the road junction at Rock Spring Church. Bragg further ordered Buckner and Walker to support Polk. On the afternoon of the twelth, Walker began moving his corps along the eight-mile route from LaFayette to Rock Spring Church. Walker's Corps finally arrived at Polk's headquarters at approximately 8:00 P.M. Others were slower and as a result no attack occurred on the twelth. In fact there would be no attack at all. Again, lack of aggressiveness on Polk's part allowed Crittenden to retreat to safety. Polk, unsure of the size force he was facing, chose not to attack and remained in a defensive posture for most of the day on 13 September. Around 2:00P.M., Walker was at last ordered to advance on the Pea Vine Road. As his men prepared to move forward, scouts reported that there was no enemy to their front. Crittenden's soldiers had moved back across the Chickamauga to the vicinity of Lee and Gordon's Mill.[60]

Bragg retreated in disgust to his headquarters at LaFayette. Although remnants of the Army of the Cumberland were still separated among the mountains, Bragg had had enough of his subordinates' inability to act. He decided to concentrate his forces and await Rosecrans' developments. Rosecrans used the next five days to concentrate his forces along the west bank of Chickamauga Creek, with Crittenden holding the extreme left of the army at Lee and Gordon's Mill. Fearing that Bragg would attempt to cut his lines of communication to Chattanooga, Rosecrans ordered Major General George H. Thomas, on 18 September, to night march his corps northward and assume position to left of Crittenden.

Meanwhile Bragg had formulated a new plan of action. Bragg's plan was to move his forces northward on the east bank of Chickamauga Creek. Believing that Crittenden was the northernmost Federal unit, he planned to have his forces cross the creek downstream from the Federal army. After crossing, his units would sweep south, crushing the left of the Federal army and driving the entire force south away from Chattanooga.[61] Bragg would then have Rosecrans at his mercy and could win a devastating victory. On 18 September, Bragg issued his orders:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF TENNESSEE
In the Field, Leet's Tan-yard, September 18, 1863

1. Johnson's column (Hood's), on crossing at or near Reed's Bridge, will turn to the left by the most practicable route and sweep up the Chickamauga, toward Lee and Gordon's Mills.

2. Walker, crossing at Alexander's Bridge, will unite in this move and push vigorously on the enemy's flank and rear in the same direction.

3. Buckner, crossing at Thedford's Ford, will join in the movement to the left, and press the enemy up the stream from Polk's front at Lee and Gordon's Mills.

4. Polk will press his forces to the front of Lee and Gordon's Mills, and if met by too much resistance to cross at Dalton's Ford, or at Thedford's, as may be necessary, and join in the attack wherever the enemy may be.

5. Hill will cover our left flank from an advance of the enemy from the cove, and by pressing the cavalry in his front ascertain if the enemy is re-enforcing at Lee and Gordon's Mills, in which event he will attack them in the flank.

6. Wheeler's cavalry will hold the gaps in Pigeon Mountain and cover our rear and left and bring up stragglers.

7. All teams, &c., not with troops should go toward Ringgold and Dalton, beyond Taylor's Ridge. All cooking should be done at the trains. Rations, when cooked, will be forwarded to the troops.

8. The above movements will be executed with the utmost promptness, vigor, and persistence.

By command of General Bragg:

GEORGE WM. BRENT
Assistant Adjutant General[62]

Buoyed by reinforcements, Bragg was determined to fight. His plan was the best one that he had yet devised. His orders reflected lessons learned from his previous mistakes with Hindman and Polk. Although hasty, his orders were concise and comprehensible. As his army maneuvered in the thick wooded terrain bordering Chickamauga Creek, the men prepared themselves for battle. His men were in fairly good health and spirits. The men had grown tired of retreating and were ready to fight. For Bragg, it seemed that finally he had Rosecrans positioned so that he could destroy the Army of the Cumberland in grand Napoleonic fashion. How well his forces would carry out his orders would be determined in the days to come as the two armies grappled in the woods of north Georgia

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[4]Peter Cozzens, This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 41-47.

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[7]St. John R. Liddell, Liddell's Record, ed. Nathaniel C. Hughes (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, 1985), 131.

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[12]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 255.

[13]Sifakis, 257; Warner, 113; Boatner, 349; and Welsh, 85.

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[15]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 243.

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[17]Stewart Sifakis, Compendium of the Confederate Armies: Arkansas (New York: Facts on File , Inc., 1988), 71; and Joseph H. Crute, Jr., Units of the Confederate Army (Midlothian, VA: Derwent Books, 1987), 44.

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[20]Sifakis, 93; and Crute, 50.

[21]Sifakis, 81; and Crute, 46.

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[23]Sifakis, 85; and Crute, 47.

[24]Stewart Sifakis, Compendium of the Confederate Armies: Louisiana (New York: Facts

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[25]Sifakis, Who Was Who in the Civil War, 689; Warner, 325; Welsh, 229; Boatner, 888; and Sykes, 493-543.

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[32]Sifakis, Who Was Who in the Civil War, 689; Warner, 325; Welsh, 229; Boatner, 888; and Sykes, 493-543.

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[35]Stewart Sifakis, Compendium of the Confederate Armies: Mississippi (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995) 112; and Crute, 180.

[36]Sifakis, 115; and Crute, 181.

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[52]Horn, 248.

[53]Purdue, 212.

[54]Sifakis, Who Was Who in the Civil War, 686.

[55]Liddell, 137.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Sykes, 526.

[58]Jarman.

[59]Robertson, 51; and Horn, 252.

[60]Ibid., Horn, 255.

[61]Robertson, 52.

[62]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 31.

CHAPTER 5

THE BATTLE

When Major General W. H. T. Walker received his orders on 18 September he was still far to the south of his ordered crossing point. Walker was completely out of position for what Bragg wanted to accomplish. Walker was located, along with Major General Simon B. Buckner's Corps, near Pea Vine Church.[1] General Bragg's order did not specify when he should begin his move north to Alexander's Bridge, so when he began to move Buckner began his move as well. The result was that the two corps became entangled along the route and their movement was slowed. Walker would not reach his crossing point over the Chickamauga Creek until early afternoon.

In order for Bragg to cut Rosecrans off from Chattanooga, it was critical for him to cross the Chickamauga and seize the best road in the area, the LaFayette Road. The Chickamauga Creek meandered northward to the Tennessee River, paralleling the LaFayette Road. Although the creek was not a fast moving body of water and was not especially deep, it provided a significant barrier to east-west movement. The creek's banks were deep and rocky or low and swampy. Despite the drought of the summer of 1863, the creek was still a formidable barrier, one that would require Bragg's men to use one of five bridges or nine fords as crossing sites.[2] On either side of the creek the land was flat with an almost unbroken forest of scrub oak, cedar, and pine with hardwood stands of hickory and oak. For units trying to operate in this area the thick woods would cause tactical confusion as units found it difficult to maneuver. Occasionally the

terrain was broken by small farms.[3] Farm fields were laid out haphazardly and were poorly cleared. Tree stumps dotted most fields that were sometimes, but not always, surrounded by split-rail fences. West of LaFayette Road the land became rolling country that extended west to the base of Missionary Ridge.[4] It would be over this terrain that the battle would be fought on 19 and 20 September. However, for Liddell and his division, the conflict would begin earlier than expected.

As Walker and his corps moved to the vicinity of Alexander's Bridge he received word that the bridge was in the hands of the enemy. At about 1:00 P.M. on 18 September, Walker ordered Liddell to take the bridge.[5] Upon receiving the order, Liddell made a hasty reconnaissance forward and then ordered Brigadier General Walthall to advance and attack the enemy holding the bridge. Walthall, at the head of Walker's column, was less than one-half mile from Alexander's Bridge when he positioned his brigade to attack. Walthall formed his brigade in line of battle with his left on the Alexander's Bridge road. His plan was to move forward by guiding steadily to his left, keeping the road to his left. The line he formed was at almost a right angle to the road, and consisted of all his five Mississippi regiments; with the 34th on the left, the 24th on the right, and, from right to left, the 30th, 29th, 27th in the middle.[6]

After the sound of a bugle and with the order "forward, guide left", Walthall's Brigade stepped off.[7] Almost immediately the regiments on the right began to fall back as they struggled through thick undergrowth. Colonel James A. Campbell, commanding the 27th, recalled in his official report:

> The forward movement commenced, but owing to the fact that the woods were very dense and many fences to cross, and that the regiments on the right of the brigade had much farther to march than those on the left, the movement assumed more the nature of a left wheel than a forward movement, and my regiment was compelled to take the double-quick step, which caused some confusion.[8]

As the line swung to the left, the men on the right were forced to run to keep up. The 24th ran nearly a mile in an effort to stay with the brigade. Despite their efforts, the regiment became scattered and did not reach the creek in time to take part in the engagement. The 27th experienced a similar outing but the regiment at least made it to the creek's edge where the commander ordered the men to lie down and hold their position. As a result of the dense forest and the effect it had on his two right regiments, Walthall was compelled to attack the enemy at the bridge with less than his full strength.[9]

Walthall had pushed his skirmishers ahead about 200 yards, but because movement was so difficult through the woods, it became a challenge for the skirmishers to stay in front of the main line. Struggling hard to stay ahead, they quickly advanced approximately a quarter of a mile and in the process ran pell-mell into the enemy's skirmishers. Surprised, the enemy skirmishers bolted for the bridge with Walthall's men close behind. As the brigade approached the bridge, the command came upon an open field. The 34th and 30th advanced across the field under intense fire from the enemy. After almost 300 to 400 yards they were ordered to lie down behind a hill in the field and return fire. On the far side of the creek the enemy had fashioned hasty fortifications from the planks of the bridge and were laying down a withering fire onto Walthall's men. Just as deadly was the enemy's four-gun battery which was positioned on a knoll next to the Alexander house. With the 34th and 30th pinned down in the field, it became the task of the 29th to seize the bridge. The 29th had emerged from the undergrowth immediately opposite the bridge. Their efforts to push across the bridge were stiffly opposed and they began to take heavy casualties. Walthall found himself in an untenable situation. Two of his regiments were either lagging behind or scattered on his right. Two of his regiments were stuck in the middle of the field on his left and his one regiment in position to take the bridge was being torn apart by the overwhelming firepower of the enemy.[10]

Meanwhile, Liddell was busy trying to get Walthall some help. Liddell attempted to push Colonel Govan's Brigade forward to support Walthall's left, but a bend in the creek prevented the movement. At the same time Walthall's artillery battery, under the command of Captain W. H. Fowler, was having difficulty getting into a position to fire. Liddell ordered Fowler to move to a hill on the left of Walthall's line but he was not able to get into position before the engagement was over. In an effort to provide some kind of support, Liddell ordered Govan's battery, commanded by First Lieutenant Harvey Shannon, to take position on Walthall's right "in order to silence the Federal battery." As directed, the battery opened up on the Federal battery with rifled and Napoleon guns and continued firing until the enemy disengaged.[11]

Down at the creek, the 29th was making little progress. Undaunted, Colonel William F. Brantly, commander of the 29th, continued to press forward with his men. Brantly and the rest of the brigade had come up against Colonel John T. Wilder's Brigade of mounted infantry and their deadly Spencer repeating rifles. The firepower produced from these unknown weapons was devastating and Brantly's men were no match for it. Six of these fierce repeating rifles would later be captured, passed around among the soldiers, and examined with respectful curiosity.

At about 4:30 P.M., the firing from the enemy slowly died away and then the enemy was gone. Brantly had not pushed Wilder's men away from the bridge; rather it was Wilder's discovery that he had no support on his left that caused the enemy to retreat. Regardless, Brantly's regiment had suffered the brunt of the Federal firepower. His losses for the few hours were 56 men killed or wounded out of 368. The brigade's total losses during the fight were 105 men killed or wounded. Liddell would later remark, sadly, that the "disproportion [was] from the efficiency of the new weapon." What made the matter worse was that Liddell's men had nothing to show for their fighting. Alexander's Bridge was in ruins. Walker's assistant adjutant general,

Captain Joseph B. Cumming, recalled that "It was on fire, but, what was more serious, the flooring had been torn up and was floating down stream between high banks on both sides."[12]

Unable to cross at the bridge, Liddell moved his division, followed in trace by the corps, northward about one mile to Byram's Ford and at dusk began crossing to the west side of the Chickamauga.[13] It took Walker's Corps most of the night to finish crossing the creek. As the movement progressed, conditions at the ford deteriorated to the point where Captain Cumming remembered that "the banks on both sides of the stream were worn away by the artillery, the ammunition wagons and the ambulances of the corps, so that a canal was formed on both sides of the stream, leading to and from it, the width of a wagon track and many yards long." The result was that the men were soaking wet when they reached the other side. Once across the creek, Liddell moved his division about one mile south of the ford and then stopped to bivouac. The remainder of the corps bivouacked to his right along the creek. For Liddell's men, the night would be a miserable one. It turned cold that night and few fires were allowed for the men to dry their wet clothes and get warm. Shivering, the men lay next to their weapons and waited for the dawn.[14]

Throughout the night, as evidence of the Confederate activity on his left grew, Rosecrans began moving forces to reinforce the left of his line. Since Bragg's men had not been able to push on to the LaFayette Road, Bragg was unaware of the repositioning of the Federal troops. Rosecrans extended his left until, by morning, it overlapped the Confederate right. The next morning Bragg still envisioned sweeping down the creek and pushing the Federal force away from Chattanooga. Bragg's plan was first to strike the Federal left opposite Walker's Corps and then continue the action from right to left in an echelon attack. Bragg had intended to strike the Federals early, but they found him first.

The early morning of 19 September found General Walker having breakfast with Major General John B. Hood, whose division had marched during the night into position in front of Walker. As the two sat waiting for orders from Bragg to attack, they suddenly heard firing coming from their right rear. Unexpectedly, a column of Union infantry had attacked Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest's Cavalry Corps which was guarding the right of the Confederate line. An astonished Walker quickly mounted his horse and rode rapidly back to his corps. For the next few hours the fight moved back and forth as Walker sent Brigadier General Matthew D. Ector's and Colonel Claudius C. Wilson's Brigades to support Forrest. The result was a series of sporadic attacks in which units were pushed into the fray in a piecemeal fashion.[15]

When the sun rose on 19 September, Liddell and his men were huddled where they had slept, waiting for water and rations. At about daylight, Liddell moved the division about one mile further southwest and then stopped and waited for instructions. As the events of the morning progressed, the division waited and listened to the sounds of battle to their right. Sometime between 10:00 and 11:00 A.M., Liddell accompanied Walker on a reconnaissance to discover the status of the engagement to the right. The Generals soon found that the brigades of Wilson and Ector were being heavily pressed by the enemy and were falling back. Both agreed that a preemptive strike must be made on the enemy in order to prevent the corps from being pushed back to the Chickamauga Creek. Walker, having determined a course of action, sent word to Bragg that he must advance. Soon thereafter, Walker received an order from Bragg to attack.[16]

When Liddell received his orders to move, his division was positioned along Alexander's Bridge Road, approximately one-half mile from the creek and three-quarters of a mile south of the Brotherton Road. Although he was almost a mile from the nearest enemy line, Liddell put his two brigades in line of battle, with Govan on the left and Walthall on the right. At

approximately 11:00 A.M., Liddell gave the order to attack in a northerly direction. While doing so, Liddell cautioned Govan to maintain constant surveillance on his left flank because he suspected that Govan's left would come into contact with the enemy first. Govan in turn ordered Colonel D.A. Gillespie, commanding officer of the 6th/7th Arkansas, whose regiment was on the far left of the brigade, to protect his left by pushing skirmishers out on his left flank. To Gillespie's right, Govan had positioned, in succession, the 2nd/15th Arkansas, the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana, and the 5th/13th Arkansas. Walthall on the other hand positioned his Mississippi regiments in the same manner as they had been during the fight at Alexander's Bridge; with the 34th on the left, the 24th on the right, and the 30th, 29th, and 27th in the middle.[17]

Soon after beginning the movement, one of Walker's staff officers rode up to Walthall and urged him to move faster. Moments later Walker appeared and gave Walthall much needed information on the suspected location of the enemy. By now Liddell's men were advancing through the thick forest and dense undergrowth as fast as they could without losing control of their formations. Despite Walker's information, the brigades did not know exactly where the enemy was located because they could not see him through the thick undergrowth, a fact that certainly caused some anxiety. Nevertheless, this fact offered some consolation to the men, realized or not, because if Liddell's men could not see the enemy then the enemy also could not see Liddell's men. Explaining this situation Liddell wrote in his *Record,* "All or our fighting was done in thick oak and brush woodlands. We could not see each other until close at hand." Adding to the apprehension caused by the lack of visibility was a concern about ammunition. Walthall's Brigade in particular was having problems with its ammunition, some of which was of too large a caliber to fit in the rifles. As a result, the weapons were becoming clogged with the

larger rounds after only a few shots. Walthall's ordnance officer, First Lieutenant John C. Harrison, reported in his official report that:

> This brigade is mostly armed with Enfield rifles, using ammunition caliber Nos. .57 and .58; that the caliber No. .57 was loose and never choked the guns, while the No. .58, after the first few rounds, was found too large, and frequently choking the guns to that extent that they could not be forced down, thereby creating some uneasiness among the men using that number of ammunition.[18]

In and effort to ease the concern, Walthall ordered his men to hold their fire and advance at the double-quick to within a short distance from the enemy, at which time they would drop to the ground and stay until Walthall gave the command to rise and rush the enemy. Walthall's intention was to advance quickly upon the enemy, rest his men, then conduct a final assault at a time of his choosing. His method, although unorthodox for the period, would prove to be very successful.[19]

As Liddell's men moved northward, they came upon a cornfield known as the Winfrey Field. Govan, maneuvering in the cover of the forest, was to the left of the field . Walthall, guiding on Govan, was forced to attack across the field. Normally, an attack across an open field would be a murderous venture, but in this instance, Walthall, as well as Govan, surprised the enemy with the force of their attack. The enemy brigade, commanded by Colonel Benjamin F. Scribner, was part of Brigadier General Absalom Baird's division. The brigade had seen success earlier in the day against Wilson's Brigade but it was unprepared for what was about to happen. Warned by his skirmishers of the Confederate approach, Scribner changed the front of his brigade to the south. However, Govan, using the thick undergrowth to his advantage, was able to maneuver to within fifty yards of the Federals before they saw his men. By then there was little that the Federal soldiers could do to stop the onslaught. In an effort to protect his right flank, Scribner had positioned First Lieutenant Van Pelt's artillery battery on his right, with a line of infantry in front of the guns. When Van Pelt's men saw the rapidly approaching Confederates

they fired, but fired too high. The line of infantry fired as well, but they were not able to slow the Confederate advance. Govan's men, mostly from the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana and the 5th/13th Arkansas, passed through the Federal line and captured the battery, consisting of six 10 pounder Parrotts. Private August Bratnober, of the 10th Wisconsin Infantry supporting Van Pelt's battery, remembered Govan's assault:

> On they came three double lines deep, then they charged, after the front line fired the next line passed through them, the first line reloading as they came on, and so on. We had orders to wait for the command before firing and we did. Our fire fairly stunned them but we could not reload without raising up. . . .The artillery horses were mostly shot early in the attack. We had to retreat and lost our battery right there. On they came firing in ths same manner and we lost a lot of our men . . . and when we finally rallied what there was left, we found we had lost half of the regiment in killed and wounded.

In this charge, Colonel Lucius Featherston, commander of the 5th/13th, was mortally wounded when a minie ball struck his right hip. He would later die at a field hospital. During the assault, the 8th/1st would also lose its commander. Lieutenant Colonel George F. Baucum, while leading his regiment in the charge was severely wounded and forced to retire from the field. Despite losing two of his four regimental commanders, Govan's assault broke Scribner's right and sent it retreating in confusion. The assault had also killed all of the horses of the captured battery. Without horses it would become impossible for Govan to later take the cannon as spoils.[20]

While Govan overran Scribner's right, Walthall worked on his left. Walthall's tactical plan worked perfectly. As his regiments approached the Federal line they stopped and laid down about one hundred yards in front, as earlier ordered. Captain J.D. Smith, acting commander of the 24th Mississippi, recalled what happened next:

> Here we met the enemy's fire . . . and were ordered to lie down, and did not suffer much from the fire. In a few minutes the order came down the line, "rise up, forward," and immediately afterward we received the order to "charge." This we did, driving the enemy from their battery. [21]

The result was that Walthall's line seized the battery and captured 411 prisoners, of which 23 were commissioned officers. Just like Govan, Walthall was unable to take the guns as spoils because of the large number of artillery horses that had been killed or wounded. However, Lieutenant Colonel H.A. Reynolds of the 30th Mississippi was able to remove one Parrott gun from the field which was subsequently turned over to Walker's chief of artillery. Walthall's success was a tribute to strong leaders like Lieutenant Colonel R.P. McKelvaine, commanding officer of the 24th Mississippi, who was severely wounded leading his regiment. During the initial charge, McKelvaine dismounted, seized the regiments colors, and carried them to one of the enemy batteries and planted them in the ground. At that point he was shot with a minie ball in the right cheek and the ball passed out of his mouth. Despite his injury, he remained on the field and lead his regiment throughout the engagement.[22]

While Walthall was finishing off Scribner's line, Govan regrouped his brigade and continued on. Govan's next victim was Brigadier General John Starkweather's Brigade. Starkweather, hearing the firing from Scribner's position to the southeast, tried to change his front, but Govan, moving unseen through the undergrowth in the forest, was upon him before he could gain an advantage. Starkweather's line lay atop a small hill, facing due east. Starkweather had placed his brigade in two lines with two regiments in line of battle in the front and two regiments in the supporting line to the rear. Govan, continuing his movement to the north, slammed into Starkweather's right flank. Lieutenant John M. Johnston, of the 79th Pennsylvania Infantry, recalled what happened next:

> There is a fuss and confusion on the right of the regiment -- it wavers, it breaks. . . .Our left companies now break and follow the right in confusion. The Twenty-fourth Illinois and Twenty-first Wisconsin are in line, kneeling to the rear of us. We pass over them and try to form our companies in their rear. But the companies have melted into a panic stricken mob, and even brave men, seeing the whole throng doublequicking to the rear, have but poor encouragement to face, single-handed, the storm of lead that is hurtling after them. The rebels fiercely attack the second line in overwhelming numbers, and the old Twenty-fourth and Twenty-first, after a very few volleys, waver, break, run. The fight is ended, so far as

> our brigade is concerned. We are whipped, and move rapidly to the rear, disorganized, and demoralized.

In a matter of minutes the Federal right collapsed onto the regiments on the left and Govan's men swept the brigade off the field in confusion. In doing so, Govan captured Starkweather's battery but as before was unable to remove the guns from the field. Govan had also captured approximately four hundred prisoners. Captain A.T. Meek, of the 2d/15th Arkansas, recalled that the prisoners seemed astonished that their brigade had been defeated and many were "stating that it was the first time their line ever was broken." All of the action was beginning to take its toll on Govan's men, as units became disorganized and mixed and the men began to reach exhaustion.[23]

As Govan completed the rout of Starkweather, Walthall continued his push to the north. He quickly approached a second Federal brigade about one-half mile from where he had defeated Scribner. This unit was a brigade of United States Regular Army troops, commanded by Brigadier General John H. King. Similar to Starkweather, King attempted to swing his line around to meet Walthall's attack, but, like Govan, Walthall struck his line before he was ready. Walthall's men hit King's line in the middle of their movement, while they were disorganized and out of position. The result was that the attack was over almost before it began. King's Regular Army soldiers were no match for the Mississippians of Walthall's Brigade. Outflanked and confused, the Regulars surrendered by the score. For the Sixteenth United States Infantry only 62 out of 258 soldiers would escape. It was the same throughout the brigade. Those that were not captured ran. In the melee, Walthall's men captured King's artillery battery and then turned the guns on the retreating enemy. Many of Walthall's infantrymen were cross-trained as artillerymen and in this instance the training certainly paid dividends. R.A..Jarman of the 27th Mississippi later recalled:

> All of our regiment had been well drilled in artillery, and at that time it came into good use. Every regiment capturing artillery in battle was entitled to the crossed cannon and name of battle on their regimental flag, and that was a grand inducement to get men to charge batteries where it looked like instant death.[24]

Despite their success, Walthall's men, like Govan's, were beginning to run out of steam. Liddell's two brigades had been attacking the enemy for more than an hour and had pushed deep into the Federal line. However, their attack had been unsupported by attacks on their right and left flanks and the brigade was now in a dangerous position.

After engaging and defeating Baird's three brigades, Liddell's line continued northward. Having fought the Union brigades at different intervals and with varying degrees of resistance, Liddell's two brigades gradually became slightly separated and disorganized. On the right, Walthall was in hot pursuit of King's Brigade. In their haste to catch the retreating enemy, Walthall's men ran headlong into the brigades of Colonel John M. Connell and Colonel Ferdinand Van Derveer. The Federal line allowed their retreating comrades to pass through their line and then, when Walthall's Mississippians had closed to within forty yards, they delivered a volley into the Confederate ranks. This blast brought Walthall's men to a halt. Then the artillery batteries of the two brigades took their turn firing into Walthall's line. Stunned, Walthall's men gradually pulled back. As they were retreating, two Federal regiments took up the pursuit. One regiment was able to able to overlap Walthall's right while the other succeeded in flanking his left. Realizing that he was in a vulnerable position with exhausted men, Walthall ordered the men to retire. The retreat was somewhat confusing as the men raced back past the batteries and positions that they had captured in the earlier contests and across the Winfrey Field.[25]

Govan on the other hand had hardly begun to move off the ridge where he had defeated Starkweather when he began to receive fire from a ridge to the northwest. On that ridge was the brigade of Colonel John T. Croxton. The two lines traded volleys for several minutes before

Corxton's line conducted an assault into Govan's left flank, the same flank that General Liddell had been so concerned about earlier. Croxton's men were able to flank Govan's left and gain his rear. Although Govan tried to shift his regiments to meet Croxton's attack he was overwhelmed and forced to march his weary men rapidly by the right flank to avoid capture. Like Walthall's Brigade, Govan's men retreated past the batteries and positions that they had won earlier.[26]

During the morning assault one aspect of Liddell's Division was conspicuously absent. Because of the thick forest, Liddell's artillery batteries were not able to play a part in the Confederate attack. Regarding his inactivity, First Lieutenant Harvey Shannon, commanding Swett's Mississippi Battery in support of Walthall's Brigade, later wrote: "Owing to the nature of the ground, and the rapidity with which the brigade advanced, I found it impossible to get the battery into position to render assistance. The dense woods prevented me from checking a movement of the enemy in which he succeeded in taking our left in flank and rear, compelling us to fall back." Captain William H. Fowler, commanding his Alabama Battery in support of Govan, likewise noted that the service of his battery "was necessarily limited, because the character of the field where we operated was so badly adopted to the use of light artillery. We followed the brigade during the morning of the 19th and received the fire of its engagements, but had no chance to reply." No doubt, with no support on his left or right, Liddell could have certainly used the firepower of his artillery, especially when the enemy counterattacked.[27]

Liddell's Division now took up a position to the rear of Major General Benjamin F. Cheatham's Division which had been sent by Bragg to reinforce Walker. Liddell's men would spend the afternoon licking their wounds and reconstituting in the woods south of the Winfrey Field adjacent to the Youngblood Field. Around them the battle raged as Bragg continued to send divisions and brigades into the fight in unsupported attacks. Cheatham's Division attacked the Union line that had counterattacked Liddell and pushed the line back. Soon afterward, he in

turn was attacked by the enemy and was pushed back. Both army commanders continued to feed units to the north where the action was taking place. Bragg was determined to stay with his plan to flank the Union left. As the reinforcements rushed to the area the battlefield became crowded with units. As the morning's fight continued into the afternoon, Bragg sent Major General Alexander P. Stewart's Division to support Cheatham. Stewart, confused and unsure of exactly where he was to attack, on his own initiative marched to the left of Cheatham, wheeled, and drove his three brigades straight across the LaFayette Road and through the Union center. But Stewart could not hold and he too was eventually pushed back. As this was being done, Major General John B. Hood finally came up on Stewart's left in support. He too conducted an unsupported assault, was able to also reach the LaFayette Road, but like Stewart was counterattacked and forced to withdraw. This seesaw type action continued throughout the afternoon.[28]

At about 3:00 P.M., Liddell was ordered back into action on Cheatham's far right with orders to "move forward to the attack." Liddell formed his line of battle just east of the Winfrey Field, straddling the Brotherton Road. Facing his men west, he positioned Walthall on the left and Govan on the right. The two brigades formed their regiments in the same line of battle that had been used during the morning's assaults. Similar to the division's initial attack in the morning, during this engagement Govan's Brigade would maneuver through the forest while Walthall assaulted across an open field, the same open Winfrey Field that they had traversed earlier that day. Only this time in the field lay their wounded and dead comrades. As Walthall's Brigade entered the field the Federal line on the opposite side delivered a heavy fire of artillery and small arms. Almost immediately Major W. C. Staples, who had taken over for the wounded Lieutenant Colonel McKelvaine as commander of the 24th Mississippi, fell wounded with a minie ball in the back and was carried from the field. Command of the regiment devolved

immediately to Captain J. D. Smith. Unwilling to advance under this heavy fire, the 30th Mississippi lay down by a fence and exchanged fire with the enemy. To their left the 34th Mississippi attempted to advance but the movement came to an abrupt end after the commander, Major William C. Pegram, suffered a severe wound. The struggle lasted about ten or fifteen minutes until Walthall had enough and ordered his brigade to retire to its original position.

Walthall's attack had been doomed from the start. There was no sign of the enthusiasm seen during the brigade's earlier assaults. The dampened spirit of the men was most likely caused by the fact that they were attempting to move across a field littered with the morning's casualties that consisted of their fathers, brothers, and friends. Psychologically the men were not prepared for another fight. The result was an attack that lacked conviction.[29]

Meanwhile, Govan's assault moved steadily through the thick forest on the north side of Winfrey Field. Initially, Govan believed that there was a minimal threat to his front and felt that he would be able to flank the enemy unit pouring its fire into Walthall. However, as the brigade advanced, to his left front an enemy unit appeared and began exchanging fire with the 6th/7th Arkansas. The regiment held its ground for a few minutes then suddenly broke and retreated in confusion. As soon as Govan's left broke, the rest of the brigade followed suit and retired as well. In their official reports, several of Govan's regimental commanders wrote that they did not understand the reason for the collapse of their battle lines. Major Anderson Watkins, commander of the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana, recalled: "I could see no reason for this sudden panic. It is true that we were considerably annoyed by the artillery of the enemy, and we occasionally received a scattering fire of small-arms." Likewise, Lieutenant Colonel John Murray, commanding the 5th/13th Arkansas, noted: "I am still unable to acount for this panic (which was, it is true, of short duration), as during all this time nothing more than a few musket shots, with an occasional shell, were passing over my line, and I could not see any enemy." Nevertheless, the

answer for the panic can be found in the report of 6th/7th Arkansas commander, Lieutenant Colonel Peter Snyder. He wrote:

> At about 2 P.M. we again advanced. While moving to the front the regiment was thrown somewhat in confusion by a section of artillery, which had been unlimbered in the ranks , but recovered from this readily; moved about 100 paces to the front, where it was halted and received a very heavy fire from the enemy's artillery and infantry from the left oblique, where the enemy was in postion behind log breastworks, the troops on our left having been compelled to fall back on account of the murderous fire poured into them by the enemy. We were charged by him, coming almost directly down upon the left flank of the regiment when it gave way and took position in rear of the hill over which we had advanced.

Govan's left flank, unsupported by Walthall's men in the field, simply lacked the will to withstand the enemy fire and continue on. Despite little if any opposition, when they ran they set off a chain reaction that caused the entire line to retreat.[30]

After retreating, Liddell's men reformed at the location where they had formed for the attack. However, not all of Liddell's men were finished for the day. To add to the embarassment of the ill-fated assault, Liddell's men had left a cannon on the field that was in danger of being captured by the enemy. During the attack, First Lieutenant John Phelan, commanding a section of Fowler's Alabama Battery, was sent forward in support of Walthall. Phelan lost his way in the thick woods and mistook Govan's 6th/7th regiment as part of Walthall's men. When Govan's men retreated off the field, Phelan had no one to support his guns. Under the heavy enfilading fire of the enemy "all of the horses of one piece were killed, and all but one of the horses of the other piece were killed or wounded." Phelan also lost several men, killed or wounded, while attempting to protect the guns. Phelan was able to remove one of the guns using wounded horses but the other was captured. In an effort to retrieve the gun, the 24th Mississippi was ordered forward. The regiment was now under the command of its fourth commanding officer, Captain B. F. Toomer; Captain Smith, the previous acting commander, having been injured during the last assault. The regiment moved forward but experienced the same enfilading fire that Govan's

6th/7th Arkansas had experienced. Unable to move without suffering heavy casualties, the regiment retreated, abandoning the gun to the enemy.[31]

Liddell's Division bivouacked in the position to which it had withdrawn. The night did not bring any relief to the tired and weary men. The weather turned bitterly cold and the men, as they had done the night before, slept on the ground holding their weapons. No fires were allowed due to the closeness of the enemy. The sounds of the dying and the wounded that lay in the woods all around the division, added to the misery of the men. Under cover of darkness some of these men were helped but there were many others that could not be reached. Private John I. Freeman, of the 34th Mississippi, was able to provide assistance to one of his wounded comrades. In his diary he remembered:

> Brother Jacob wounded in arm flesh, T.H. Brown in wrist, Wilie Childress in the side. I got him in an outhouse, could not get litter back in time to carry him off. Had to leave him in the house till nite [sic], he become [sic] exposed to both fires, ours & the enemys & two balls or shells passed through the house & sett [sic] a fire the bed that was in the house. We got him off to Div Hospital at nite [sic].

Also hard on the morale of the men was the sound of axes and falling trees as the Federals prepared their defensive breastworks. There would be little sleep this night as the rumbling of repositioning artillery pieces and the sporadic fire of the two armies' skirmishers served to keep the men awake.[32]

The day had been one of mixed results. Reminiscent of their fight at Stones River, during the morning the men had repeatedly assaulted enemy positions and had successfully defeated three brigades. The success of their attacks could have been sustained or exploited if the division had included another brigade to commit to the fight or if the attacks had been supported by units to the left or right. Regardless, the division ended the morning with little to show for their efforts except one cannon and a large number of enemy prisoners. The result of the afternoon assault was nothing more than humiliation. Throughout the day, the division had

inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy but had suffered heavy casualties as well. At day's end, the division was seriously undermanned, a disadvantage compounded by the fact that there were no replacements available. For example, the 34th Mississippi began the day with one field and one staff officer, 21 company officers, and 260 enlisted men. The regiment ended the day with ten killed and 57 wounded. It would begin the fight on the twentieth with only one staff officer, 16 company officers, and 160 enlisted men.[33] The remaining 39 men were unaccounted for by the regimental commander in his official report. The story was the same throughout the division. Several regiments had lost their commanding officers and now were being commanded by company grade officers. There was little that Liddell could do for his division except to try to prepare it for the next day's fight.

Meanwhile, Bragg reorganized the army. Bragg's plan was for Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk to command the right wing of the army, consisting of Walker's and Lieutenant General Daniel H. Hill's Corps and Cheatham's Division. Lieutenant General James Longstreet, who was arriving by rail with his corps from the Army of Northern Virginia, would command the left wing consisting of Hood's and Buckner's Corps and Hindman's Division. Bragg's plan of attack was not much different from his previous scheme of maneuver. He planned to attack at dawn on the right. As the attack developed, it would proceed down the line from north to south with the objective to push the Federals from the LaFayette Road, cut their lines of communication from Chattanooga, turn the Federal left and push the enemy into McLemore's Cove.[34]

On the other side of the battlefield, Rosecrans developed his own course of action for the next day. Rosecrans decided to protect the LaFayette Road and ordered Major General George H. Thomas to command the bulk of the army which would be located on the left of the line. Rosecrans ordered Major General Alexander M. McCook to command the right of the line and

placed Major General Gordon Granger's corps in the reserve. Rosecrans placed Brigadier General Wood's and Van Cleve's divisions of Major General Thomas L. Crittenden's corps behind Thomas's line. The Federal line was formed in a crescent shape just east of the LaFayette Road, strongly protected by log breastworks, and bending back west toward the road at each end. To protect his flank, Rosecrans was determined to hold the LaFayette Road at all costs.[35]

On Sunday morning, the twentieth of September, Bragg's attack did not start at dawn as expected. General Hill, now under Polk's right wing, was supposed to begin the attack but a combination of miscommunication and poor staff work had prevented Hill from knowing that he was to start the battle. Additionally, Breckinridge's Division was still getting into position, having moved during the night from the far left to the far right. Finally, at about 9:30 A.M. the attack began some four hours late. When Breckinridge's Division of Hill's Corps advanced, the two brigades on his right, commanded by Brigadier Generals Daniel W. Adams and Marcellus A. Stovall, were able to skirt the Federal fortifications, seize the LaFayette Road, and turn south, flanking the Federal left. But, like much of the previous day's fighting, their attacks were not supported by any other units and as a result they were eventually pushed back. At the same time, Breckinridge's left brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Benjamin Helm, was being decimated as it repeatedly attacked the log fortifications to its front. As it fell back, a gap was created in the Confederate line. Hill immediately requested support from Polk. When Polk received the request he was riding along with Walker who was moving his corps behind Cleburne's Division. In response, Polk ordered Walker to continue north to Hill's aid.[36]

When Walker, accompanied by Polk, arrived at Hill's headquarters at about 11:00 A.M., Hill complained that he had not asked for two divisions but only a brigade. In fact he told Polk that he specifically wanted the brigade of Brigadier General States Rights Gist, who had just arrived on the battlefield from Mississippi. Walker attempted to convince Hill to take one of the

brigades that he had just brought up, but Hill was adamant and wanted only Gist's Brigade. Walker then tried to convince Hill to allow him to take his entire corps and attack toward the LaFayette Road, but, again, Hill repeated his request for Gist. Hill's refusal resulted in a heated dispute between Hill and Walker. Walker, concerned about sending his brigades into the line in a piecemeal fashion, argued that Breckinridge's success on the right should be exploited. Liddell, in his *Record,* recalled how Walker complained angrily about Hill's plan of attack and how Hill reacted in the same manner:

> The dispute still continued. Walker joined in and complained to Polk of Hill's dipostion of his command, that he now had no command. I rode up to General Hill and told him I regretted these diputes. Something must be done, and I was ready to obey his orders, no matter what they were. Hill, however, walked off toward the skirmish line, apparently angry at something said by Walker. Walker saw this and remarked, 'the man is mad, and in a mad fit will expose himself to sharpshooters and will get killed.' He then loudly called Hill to come back, apprarently much troubled. Hill shortly afterwards returned, reserved and tired of discussion.

Walker's protest was to no avail. Hill sent Gist directly into the gap left by Helm. The only officer present that could resolve the dispute was Polk. His solution to the breaking up of Walker's Corps was to break it up even further. Concerned about Cleburne, he ordered Liddell to send Walthall's Brigade forward in support of Brigadier General Lucius Polk's Brigade of Cleburne's Division.[37]

Reflecting the confusion taking place in the right wing of the army, Liddell's Division began the morning at about 6:00 A.M., with a move to the left of the position that they had occupied during the night. The division marched to the left for approximately one mile and formed a line of battle to the rear of Cheatham's Division. After about one hour, the division was ordered to the far right of the army and proceeded to a point in rear of Breckinridge's Division. In this location, Walthall received orders to move back to the left and support Polk's Brigade. At about 11:00 A.M., Walthall accompanied by one of Hill's staff officers, Major Ratchford, began

his move to the left. When Walthall neared the front line, Ratchford pointed out the spot where he was to attack. As Walthall moved forward, the enemy, entrenched behind fortifications on a ridge, began placing a heavy fire into the left of his line. Walthall's men immediately began returning fire as they pushed through dense undergrowth. After proceeding about two or three hundred yards, a call went down the line that the brigade was firing into friends to the front and an order was given to cease fire. This information, provided by stragglers, proved to be unfounded. However, the damage had been done; the momentum of Walthall's men had been disrupted. Unable to return fire on the enemy, the men milled about in confusion in the thick undergrowth. Walthall's left flank received the worst of the enemy fire; it wavered then collapsed and was driven back. Walthall's disconcerted movement had been costly. Not only had he lost more casualties, men that could not be replaced, but he also lost another regimental commander. Lieutenant Colonel Hugh A. Reynolds, of the 30th Mississippi, had been placed in command of the 34th Mississippi after Major Pegram had been wounded on the nineteenth. Reynolds, leading his regiment on Walthall's left flank, was mortally wounded when the left gave way under the heavy fire of the enemy. Thereafter, Captain H. J. Bowen assumed command of the 34th. Walthall, unsure of the location of Polk's Brigade and confused about the suspected fratricide, finally ordered his men to retreat. Walthall moved his men by the right flank and, on order from Liddell, reformed the brigade east of the field which lay southeast of the McDonald house. In this position he would wait until ordered back into action in the afternoon.[38]

At about the same time as Walthall's movement, Liddell was ordered by Hill to send Govan's Brigade in support of Gist's Brigade. Hill wanted Govan to attack to the right of Gist's Brigade, along the same axis of advance that Stovall had used earlier. With his brigade split up, Liddell decided to accompany Govan in the attack. Around noon the brigade stepped off and headed west toward the LaFayette Road. Govan's line of battle consisted of the 6th/7th Arkansas

on the left, followed by the 2nd/15th Arkansas, the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana, and the 5th/13th Arkansas. As the brigade crossed the field southeast of the McDonald house, the enemy began firing on them. Liddell ordered Govan to change direction to his left in order to meet the enemy that was in the woods along the southern edge of the field and adjacent to the LaFayette Road. This movement was quickly made despite heavy small arms fire from the enemy. The brigade advanced rapidly across the field and without much difficulty drove the enemy from the edge of the woods. The brigade then began a pursuit of the enemy south toward the Kelly Field.[39]

As the men moved south paralleling the LaFayette Road, the three regiments on the right moved across the road to the west side and began pushing the enemy back. On the left, the 6th/7th slowly chased the enemy through the woods and back to their log breastworks. In contrast to the other regiments, the 6th/7th was having a difficult time on the east side of the road, as the enemy, behind his breastworks, had established a stubborn defense. As the men of the 6th/7th trudged forward they had no support on their left and gradually fell behind their advancing counterparts on their right. When they reached a point about 100 yards from the enemy breastworks, the enemy moved a brigade in on the regiment's left in an attempt to cut it off and flank them. Govan's entire brigade was now threatened with being separated from the rest of the army. The 6th/7th pressed forward in a valiant attempt to continue but the firing on its front and the assault on its left flank forced the regiment to hastily retire by the right flank. The regiment's escape route went across the rear of the three regiments on the west side of LaFayette Road. In their haste to save themselves, the regiment had unwittingly assisted the enemy in isolating the rest of the brigade.[40]

Meanwhile, the three regiments on the right had succeeded in clearing the woods to their front of enemy and had essentially flanked the entire Federal line. Suddenly, the regiments realized that the 6th/7th had collapsed and their rear was threatened. The regimental

commanders stopped their units and for a few precious and nervous moments discussed an appropriate course of action. Major Anderson Watkins, acting commander of the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana, recalled their conversation:

> Here I met Lieutenant Colonels Harvey (2nd/15th Arkansas) and Murray (5th/13th Arkansas), and after a short consultation we determined not to advance any farther, but, if possible, to rejoin our division. Knowing the enemy to be in our rear, we were compelled to make a considerable circuit in order to get around them.

Govan would later give credit in his official report to his regimental commanders for their efforts to rescue the endangered brigade. It was the quick thinking of Lieutenant Colonel Murray that saved the brigade. Murray proposed that the brigade move to the right in a circuitous route back to friendly lines. In his official report, he wrote about how he came to this decision:

> As I had the enemy in my front so badly whipped as to render it improbable that they would attempt to follow me, I proposed to turn upon the enemy in the rear, but finding that the men were opposed to this, and somewhat demoralized on account of the enemy's being behind them, and thinking that if I attempted to cut my way through I might be fired on, after cutting through the enemy, by our friends, I concluded it was best to move by the right flank and endeavor to get out that way.

After agreeing to follow Murray's plan, the commanders reassured the men and then smartly moved the brigade off to the west. As they marched, the men came across a scout from General Forrest's command who gladly guided the brigade back to the east where it joined with Walthall's Brigade and waited to be ordered into battle again. Govan's men, with their division commander in tow, had narrowly escaped disaster. Walker's concerns had been realized, again. Lack of support and lack of a concerted effort had resulted in failure.[41]

In contrast to the confused and uncoordinated state of affairs on the Confederate right wing, the left wing would prove to be Bragg's strength. The right wing had not been able to accomplish the mission given it by Bragg. The numerous assaults did, however, convince Rosecrans that he needed to reinforce the Federal left. Throughout the day, General Thomas continued to request more and more men and with most of the action taking place on that end of

the field, Rosecrans was obliged to send the men to him. Thomas's persistence would lead to Federal defeat. During the morning, Rosecrans, in an effort to reinforce Thomas, ordered Brigadier General Thomas J. Wood's division to pull out of line and march north to bolster Thomas's line. When Wood moved, he produced a gap in the line that was not filled immediately by another unit. On the Confederate side of the line, Lieutenant General Longstreet had formed Hood's Corps of three divisions into a column of divisions. At about 11:00 A.M., almost simultaneously with Wood's departure, Longstreet's grand column and most of the left wing attacked into the gap. Longstreet's men pushed through the gap and were into the Federal rear before Rosecrans could react. As a result, Rosecrans and almost two corps were swept off the field and forced to retreat to Chattanooga. The units that were left on the field reformed their line on the most prominent terrain feature in the area, Snodgrass Hill. Separated from Thomas's men that were still fighting for Kelly Field, the units planned to defend Snodgrass Hill. Eventually Thomas would fall back and make a last stand on the hill as well, but this was not done until after Polk had mounted one final coordinated attack against Thomas at the Kelly Field.[42]

During the afternoon, Bragg ordered Polk to renew the assaults against the Federal breastworks at the Kelly Field. However, Polk did not attack immediately. He instead took his time formulating a plan of attack. Polk, along with Hill, decided to attack the Federal left with Walker's Corps and Breckinridge's and Cheatham's Divisions. Cleburne would demonstrate against the Federal center in order to prevent the Federals from reinforcing their left. Finally, at about 5:00 P.M. Liddell started the attack by advancing his division westward across the field that lay southeast of the McDonald house. Liddell's movement posed a significant threat to the Federal forces in Kelly Field as well as the men fighting on Snodgrass Hill. If Liddell moved

unopposed to the west he could block a Federal escape route along McFarland's Gap Road or could attack the Federal position on Snodgrass Hill from the rear.[43]

Liddell moved forward with Govan on the left and Walthall on the right. Prior to his advance, Liddell recognized the exposed position that he would be in and asked Hill to support him on his left. In his *Record* he wrote: "I said, 'General, support me, for I will be exposed front and flanks.' Hill assured me that he would do so." As Liddell's men moved across the LaFayette Road and into the McDonald Field they ran into enemy skirmishers firing from behind the McDonald house and its out buildings. Walthall's men, positioned on that end of the line, traded shots with the skirmishers and quickly forced them to flee. After proceeding about 200 yards, Liddell's line began receiving artillery fire, as he had expected, from both flanks and from the front. Liddell ordered Walthall's Brigade to lie down while he returned to the rear to find the division's batteries. Soon afterward, Liddell returned with the batteries and posted the seven guns to the right rear of Walthall and on a small hill in an orchard near the McDonald house. This was the artillery batteries' first chance to become decisively engaged with the enemy since the battle had begun and they were eager to prove themselves. The guns immediately engaged an enemy battery located 800 yards to the northwest, disabling two of the enemy guns. Their fire drew the attention of two additional enemy batteries, one about three hundred yards from Liddell's right flank and the other from a position on the left flank. Walthall's men, lying in the cornfield, endured a heavy fire from the artillery while they waited for the enemy guns to be silenced.[44]

On Walthall's left, Govan slowly moved with two regiments in the forest on the south end of the McDonald Field and two regiments in the field. His skirmishers, pushed out two to three hunded yards to the front, failed to develop the enemy. To Govan's left the support that Hill had promised never materialized. As Govan approached the LaFayette Road, Captain

Stringfellow, of the 1st Louisiana, commanding the skirmishers, reported to Govan that he had located on the left, at about 250 yards, a large formation of infantry supported by two enemy batteries. Realizing the vulnerability of his brigade, Govan rushed the men across the road, positioned them on line with Walthall's Brigade and ordered them to lie down. Why Govan chose this course of action is unknown; maybe he felt that there would be safety in numbers. Regardless, his efforts did nothing to improve the brigade's situation. As the men reached Walthall's line, the enemy struck the left flank. The enemy unit, consisting of Brigadier General John B. Turchin's brigade, slammed into the Confederates with such force that they were completely overwhelmed. The 6th/7th Arkansas again on the brigade's left, as it had been during the morning, received the brunt of the Federal onslaught. The regiment was able to fire one volley before it was forced to race back across the road. Men that could not run fast enough were captured. The enemy swept down Govan's line forcing the 2nd/15th Arkansas to run as well. On the far right of the brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Murray, commanding the 5th/13th Arkansas, the hero of the morning retreat, heard the commotion, looked to his left and to his amazement noticed only the 8th Arkansas/1st Louisiana still in line with his regiment. Murray immediately proceeded to Major Watkins, the acting regimental commander of the 8th/1st, and requested that Watkins turn his regiment to the left to meet the approaching enemy line. Watkins refused to accept the responsibility for the change of front unless Murray ordered him to do so. Murray declined to give the order since Watkins was a fellow commander and not a subordinate. Murray then proceeded to a member of Liddell's staff in an attempt to get the matter solved and the units redirected, but before he could return to his regiment the enemy had chased the remainder of the brigade from the field.[45]

Once Govan was driven off the field there was nothing Walthall could do to save his line. Walthall, suffering from the enfilading fire of the enemy artillery, was unable to change the

direction of his front to meet the enemy. Like Govan, he also was attacked from the flank and his men retreated in confusion back across the LaFayette Road. Those that were surprised by the enemy assault or were not quick enough in their retreat were taken prisoner. Colonel William F. Brantly, commanding the 29th Mississippi, remembered the sequence of events:

> I could see the troops on my left falling back, and soon the news ran along the whole line that the enemy were getting in our rear. Upon this I gave the command 'in retreat, march' to my regiment, and fell back to the woods, losing few in killed and wounded, but some 15 or 20, I suppose, in prisoners.

Colonel James Scales of the 30th Mississippi was one of the unlucky ones. He was captured along with approximately twenty of his soldiers.

Despite the rout, there were numerous demonstrations of heroism as soldiers struggled to save themselves and their comrades from destruction. During the retreat the division's artillery batteries were some of the last units to leave the field. As Shannon's Battery moved off the field it came too close to a line of enemy skirmishers. With the skirmishers firing at close range, one of the horses in the lead gun was killed and this caused the gun to upset breaking the pole. While the enemy reloaded their weapons, the rest of the battery rushed past the crippled gun and escaped. However, the enemy captured the gun and several members of its crew including First Lieutenant W. P. McDonald. In his official report, Shannon recalled what happened next:

> I immediately called upon the infantry, which call was responded to by Captain T. J. Fletcher, of the 13th Arkansas, who promptly seized the nearest stand of colors, and rallying a few men, gallantly charged the enemy, driving them before him, securing the piece and also one lost by Captain Fowler near the same spot, and recapturing our wounded.[46]

As his men flowed back across the LaFayette Road, Liddell undoubtedly felt a sense of bewilderment. Liddell would later describe this last engagement as "incomprehensible."[47] Liddell had tried to protect his men by focusing his efforts on the counter-battery fire of his artillery but this same focus had prevented him from seeing the battlefield and had left him unprepared for the enemy flank attack. Maybe it was the belief that Hill would protect his

exposed flank that caused Liddell to concentrate so intently on his front. Whatever the reason, Liddell had lost a fabulous opportunity to move into the enemy's rear and disrupt his retreat. Broken but not demoralized, Liddell's men reformed where they had started and prepared to attack again. However, there would be no further attacks this day. As Liddell's men prepared their bivouac site near the McDonald house they could rest easily because for them the Battle of Chickamauga was now over.

Fighting continued on the battlefield a bit longer as the Confederates attempted to storm Snodgrass Hill and as Polk finished off the Federals at Kelly Field. As darkness fell on the battlefield, the Federals disengaged and began streaming back to Chattanooga. The Confederates, exhausted and unaware of their enemy's departure, did not pursue. After two of the bloodiest days of fighting in the Civil War, the Battle of Chickamauga had finally ended.

The last Confederate victory in the Western Theater had been extremely hard on both armies. Rosecrans had lost 16,170 killed, wounded, and missing out of about 62,000 engaged, while Bragg had suffered a total of 18,454 casualties out of approximately 67,000 engaged. Liddell's Division had suffered as well. During the three day period and through five engagements, the division lost 162 killed, 963 wounded, and 277 missing for a total of 1,402 out of 3,175 engaged, a 44 percent casualty rate. From the strategic perspective the victory did little more than briefly prolong the life of the Confederacy. Nevertheless, for the Confederate soldiers that fought at Chickamauga there was reason to celebrate. Finally the Army of Tennessee had won a hard fought victory under General Bragg.[48]

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[1]Thomas L. Connelly, Autmn of Glory (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 197.

[2]Peter Cozzens, This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 92.

[3]Connelly, 194.

[4]Cozzens, 91.

[5]The War of The Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. 30, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 251.

[6]Cozzens, 109.

[7]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 277.

[8]Ibid., 279.

[9]Ibid., 277.

[10]Ibid., 281,283, 285.

[11]Ibid., 257,269, 286.

[12]Ibid, 251, 281; and Major Joseph B. Cumming, War Recollections, 1861-1865, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 44.

[13]St. John R. Liddell, Liddell's Record, ed. Nathaniel C. Hughes (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, 1985), 141.

[14]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 251, 281; Cumming, 44; and Calvin J. Collier, First In and Last Out: The Capitol Guards, Arkansas Brigade (Little Rock, AR: Pioneer Press, 1961), 80.

[15]Cumming, 45; and Connelly, 202.

[16]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 241, 251; and R. A. Jarman, "Recollections of R. A. Jarman, Company K, 27th Mississippi," Aberdeen Examiner (Aberdeen, TX), 21 February 1890, 14.

[17]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 252, 258, 273; and Cozzens, 141.

[18]Ibid., 277.

[19]Ibid., 273, 278, 280, 281.

[20]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 258, 261, 263, 267, 268; and Cozzens, 143; and Dr. W. G. Robertson, LTC E. P. Shanahan, LTC J. I. Boxberger, and MAJ G. E. Knapp, Staff Ride Handbook for the Battle of Chickamauga, 18-20 September 1863 (Ft Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and Staff College, 1992), 69.

[21]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 278.

[22]Ibid., 273, 278.

[23]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 258, 261; and Cozzens, 145; and Robertson, 67.

[24]Jarman, 15; and The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 273, 281, 283, 285; and Cozzens, 146.

[25]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 273, 281, 283, 285; and Cozzens, 147-148.

[26]Ibid., 252,258, 261, 263, 263, 267, 268; and Ibid, 149.

[27]Ibid, 270, 286; and Larry J. Daniel, Cannoneers in Gray: The Field Artillery of the Army of Tennessee. 1861-1865 (University, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1947), 95.

[28]Connelly, 205-206; and Stanley F. Horn, The Army of Tennessee (London: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), 258-259.

[29]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 252, 278, 285.

[30]Ibid., 259, 264, 267, 268.

[31]Ibid., 256, 278, 286.

[32]John H. Freeman, "Diary of John H. Freeman," Company I, 34th Mississippi, Walthall's Brigade; and Connelly, 207.

[33]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 285.

[34]Horn, 261; and Connelly, 220.

[35]Horn, 263; and Robertson, 53.

[36]Horn, 263; and Connelly, 222.

[37]Horn, 263; and Liddell, 145.

[38]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 253, 274, 278, 280, 281, 284, 285.
[39]Ibid., 259, 262, 264, 267, 268.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Horn, 264; and Connelly 225.

[43]Ibid.

[44]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 254, 275, 278, 280, 282, 284, 285.

[45]Ibid., 259, 262, 265, 267, 269.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Liddell, 146.

[48]Robertson, 55.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Battle of Chickamauga was a much needed victory for the Army of Tennessee. For Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell and his division the combat experience provided both success and failure. Although he commanded experienced troops, veterans of Perryville, Stones River, and Liberty Gap, the men did not distinguish themselves at Chickamauga. Their success was highlighted by the assault on 19 September in which the division routed three Federal brigades before exhaustion, lack of support, and an enemy counterattack forced them to retreat. Likewise, Govan's attack down the LaFayette Road on 20 September can be seen as a success until the left of his line gave way and the brigade was almost cut off from the rest of the army. These successes are tempered by the division's earlier failure on 18 September to take Alexander's Bridge, after slamming into the repeating rifles of John Wilder's brigade. Although Liddell was eventually able to capture the bridge, a bridge that was made impassable by Wilder's men, this feat was accomplished at the expense of a number of casualties. Similarly, the division's inability on 19 September to advance across the Winfrey Field, a field littered with the wounded and dead bodies of their comrades, can be seen as a failure. Lastly, the division's inability to advance on the afternoon of 20 September across the McDonald Field can also be seen as a failure because the engagement resulted in the division being badly outflanked and routed and because their defeat eliminated the opportunity to block the Federal escape route. How could one unit experience such a broad range of results in combat? Other than the obvious

reasons, what were some of the causes for the division's limited success and its failures? In order to conduct a proper analysis of the division's performance it is necessary to examine the unit using the concepts that had the greatest impact on Liddell's Division.

Clausewitz's concepts of "fog" and "friction" of war form the foundation for the causes of the division's performance at Chickamauga. Clausewitz considered fog as the uncertainty that wraps itself around every activity in war. He further defined fog as: "The general unreliability of all information in war leads to a unique situation, because all actions occur in a kind of twilight which, like fog or moonlight, frequently makes things appear grotesque and larger than they really are."[1] To Clausewitz, the fog of war was a condition in which a commander is unable to see the real situation or choose the proper course of action because of a lack of accurate information or the inability to determine the accuracy of the available information. There are several factors that contribute to the fog of war, these include: weather, terrain, communications, enemy information, leadership, technology, and luck.[2] In Liddell's case several of these factors, namely the terrain, communications, and lack of enemy information, served to adversely affect his division's performance.

Friction is the other concept which is useful in analyzing the performance of Liddell's Division. Clausewitz described friction as the "countless minor incidents . . . [which] combine to lower the general level of performance." Continuing on he explained:

> If one has never personally experienced war, one cannot understand in what the difficulties constantly mentioned really consist, nor why a commander should need any brilliance or exceptional ability. Everything looks simple; the knowledge required does not look remarkable, the options are obvious. . . . Everything in war is very simple, but in war the simplest thing is difficult.

For Clausewitz, friction was reality and perfection was utopia. He believed that friction could be thought of as those uncontrollable obstacles and unpredictable events that have an important effect on tactics and engagements. In short, Clausewitz linked friction to chance:

> This tremendous friction, which cannot, as in mechanics, be reduced to a few points, is everywhere in contact with chance, and brings about effects that cannot be measured, just because they are largely due to chance.[3]

Friction can be caused by a countless number of factors on the battlefield; in Liddell's situation it was the terrain, the organization of his division, his lack of enemy information, his lack of time for planning, his limited tactical maneuvers, and his battlefield focus that best exhibit this concept.

To say that the terrain affected Liddell's Division is understating the obvious. The thick woods and occasional dense undergrowth had a major effect on Liddell and his subordinate commanders' ability to maneuver and control their units. Adding to the problem was the tactical formations used in linear warfare. The line of battle envisioned in the tactical manuals of the day could be incredibly long. On a large open field the proper control of this line of battle would be difficult; in slightly rolling terrain covered with trees and occasional thick underbrush, as was experienced at Chickamauga, proper control was virtually impossible. Often commanders were unable to see the men they were responsible for controlling. As a result, command and control problems surfaced very early in the battle. These problems caused the control of movements to revert to brigade and regimental commanders. Throughout the battle, it was Govan and Walthall and their subordinate commanders that conducted the fight. Once an attack was begun, Liddell's role was relegated to providing support to his units as needed. This role, although similar to today's general officer's role, was uncommon for division commanders during the Civil War and can also be associated with Liddell's lack of experience at division command. Maneuvering was difficult as well, as units moved in closely packed lines of infantry across hills, gullies, and other obstacles. Liddell's problems with the terrain began early. During his attempt to take Alexander's Bridge on 18 September, complications with the terrain prevented Liddell from maneuvering Govan in support of Walthall. At the same time, Walthall experienced his own

problems with the terrain. The thick undergrowth caused some of Walthall's regiments to become "confused and scattered" which in turn caused him to attack with less than his full strength.[4] In short, the lack of visibility and maneuverability caused by the terrain created a foggy, disoriented condition, in which commanders were uncertain about the location of their troops and which made the simplest movements difficult.

The lack of communication and miscommunication can greatly affect the commander and cause uncertainty. For Liddell, communications were made extremely difficult by the terrain factors listed above. To overcome these factors, Liddell and his commanders used aural and visual methods to command and control their units on the battlefield. Verbal commands or bugle calls were used to signal the commander's intentions to his men. The primary method of controlling the troops was through the initial alignment or placement of the units on the regimental colors. These rudimentary methods of command and control could be, and were, adversely affected by trees, thick undergrowth, obstacles, and the noise of the battlefield. Regardless, once the battle was joined Liddell lacked the ability to convey information from himself to his subordinate commanders and they likewise lacked the same ability. These aspects of the battlefield detracted from the division's communication capabilities and resulted in unreliable information; factors that contributed to the fog of war and led to vagueness in orders and uncertainty in tactical decisions.

The difficulties of command, control, and communication at Chickamauga resulted in commanders becoming susceptible to the influences of chance and uncertainty. This phenomenon was exacerbated by the lack of a commander's intent in battlefield orders. Did Liddell have a commander's intent? Did his superior, Walker, have a commander's intent? Did Liddell's subordinate commanders issue orders that included a commander's intent? There is no evidence to indicate that any of these officers published a commander's intent with their orders, a

fact which was not uncommon for the Civil War. Instead, their orders were typical orders of the time, in that their orders simply stated "attack the enemy immediately," "move forward to support" or "move forward to the attack."[5] The obvious and most important thing missing in these brief orders was a commander's intent and an end state. The result was that orders were vague and, thanks to the fog of war, easily misunderstood. With no guidance concerning endstate or what to do if successful or if unexpectedly opposed, it was easy for subordinate commanders to disengage and fall back when posed with unanticipated situations. Govan and Walthall's retreat on the morning of 19 September, after overextending their pursuit and then being counterattacked, certainly falls into this category, as did Govan's attack south along the LaFayette Road on the morning of 20 September.

Further complicating the problems caused by the terrain and communications were the tactical limitations caused by the division's organizational structure. Liddell's Division was the only division in the army with just two brigades. The absence of a third brigade severely limited Liddell's capabilities, added to his uncertainty, and predetermined his level of success. Following the linear warfare tactics of the day, Liddell, when he had control of his brigades as on the morning of 19 September and the afternoon of 20 September, attacked in a single line of battle with two brigades abreast. For Liddell, the lack of a third brigade meant he had no reserve line to employ, no reserve line to relieve the first line, and thus no depth in the attack. Since he lacked a reserve force he was unable to penetrate or exploit a weakness in the enemy defensive line. This caused uncertainty by restricting his response options or courses of action and allowed Liddell and his commanders to fall victim to the influences of chance. The lack of a reserve also limited the level of success he could achieve. With only two brigades, his forces could attack only so far before running out of steam. In other words, Liddell's lack of a reserve created a man-made obstacle or element of friction that functioned as a negative force multiplier.

Another factor that contributed to the fog and the friction of war experienced by Liddell and his commanders is the concept of enemy information or the lack of information. Other than his skirmishers, Liddell lacked intelligence gathering assets. Skirmishers were used by civil war commanders to find and develop the enemy. If they were unsuccessful in their endeavors, as Liddell's skirmishers were on the afternoon of 20 September, when they failed to detect the enemy batteries preparing to place enfilading fire on the main body, or if the terrain masked the positions of the enemy, then the commander was left with very little information regarding the enemy. As a result, commanders frequently lacked information on enemy dispositions. They often did not know the location, size, composition, or the formations of the enemy. The result was that commanders like Liddell and his subordinates, many times, blindly attacked into a fog of uncertainty.

For Liddell and his commanders their situation was no different. However, the problems caused by a lack of information was compounded by the fact that, after receiving their orders, Liddell and his commanders were given very little time to conduct planning before their attacks commenced. The lack of enemy information and the lack of proper planning time prevented Liddell and his commanders from planning for the "what if" situations. As a result, Liddell's men lacked the flexibility that comes from planning for a variety of situations. Liddell's lack of information coupled with the lack of proper planning contributed to the fog of war, created friction, and prevented them from seeing the enemy and possibly predicting the enemy's intentions. As has been discussed before, the situation was worsened by the fact that Liddell and his commanders were not sure of what was happening to their own units, much less the enemy's.

Liddell and his commanders experienced their share of friction during the Battle of Chickamauga. As has been discussed previously, the terrain caused significant problems for Liddell and his commanders and as a result provided friction. However, it was the tactical

limitations placed on Liddell and his commanders through their use of linear warfare that created an obstacle or element of friction that was difficult, if not impossible, to overcome. As has been mentioned, the long battle lines were extremely susceptible to disruption caused by the different terrain features. The use of an extended line by Liddell and his commanders allowed coverage of a larger front with fewer men, but in turn caused significant command and control problems and decreased the penetrating power of the line. With very little penetrating power, the lines were more likely to suffer casualties and fail. The extended line also made the men vulnerable once a counterattack was launched. Essentially, the single line of battle did not give Liddell and his commanders an opportunity to adjust to changes on the battlefield. The result was that Liddell and his commanders lacked flexibility. Govan's inability to turn his brigade to face the flanking attack of Turchin is a perfect example of this lack of flexibility. Civil War commanders were devoted to the use of linear warfare because of its simplicity, ease of maneuver, and ability to enhance command and control. At Chickamauga, however, their reliance on these same tactics created an unexpected friction that made the apparently easy very difficult.

The focus of Liddell and his commanders during the battle also contributed to friction. Like their peers, Liddell and his commanders focused entirely on destroying the enemy and failed to take into account the tactical environment. Liddell and his commanders were so focused on destroying the enemy that they attacked across open fields, up hills, and through thick underbrush and trees. Their assaults resulted in high casualties. During their attacks, their intense focus on the enemy caused them to conduct unsupported, piecemeal attacks, attacks that led to deterioration in unit cohesion and, again, resulted in high casualty rates. When Liddell and his commanders were successful and broke the enemy line, they were so focused on destroying the enemy that they pursued without having support on their flanks. The result was that their flanks were eventually exposed and they were driven in retreat. On the afternoon of 20

September, Liddell was so focused on the enemy batteries to his front that he was unable to see Turchin's flank attack and prepare his division for it. In short, the narrow focus of Liddell and his commanders caused them to become fixated on the enemy and prevented them from using the tactical environment to their advantage. Unknowingly, their fixation created a force of friction that actually made their tasks more difficult.

Despite the problems and failures associated with Clausewitz's concepts of fog and friction, Liddell was able to overcome these factors and achieve limited success. Liddell and his commanders were able to accomplish their success through strong leadership, good training, experienced troops, and a little luck.

There is no evidence to prove that St. John Liddell distinguished himself as a leader during the Battle of Chickamauga. Despite this fact, there is no doubt that Liddell was a competent, if not strong, leader. Throughout his life and during his career as a soldier for the Confederacy, he displayed traits that enhanced his leadership abilities. Liddell was a strong-willed person who was willing to fight for his beliefs. He was loyal to his country, to its people, and to his men. He possessed an excellent reputation within the Army of Tennesee and was well known throughout the Confederacy by men of importance and position. He was a leader who demonstrated compassion, respect, and dignity. Although lacking formal training as a soldier, he was a leader who recognized the value of training and discipline. He knew that by focusing on training he could develop tactically sound, combat ready fighting units; units that were cohesive and instilled with confidence. In battle he was aggressive, tactically competent, spirited, and brave. His previous performances in battle, especially as a brigade commander, resulted in the praise of his superiors. After the Battle of Chickamauga, General Bragg would refer to him in his official report as ever-vigilant."[6] However, the best characterization of Ladle remains with Captain G. A. Williams, his assistant adjutant general, who remarked:

> Liddell was of striking appearance, dignified; of soft speech, gentle, winning manner, graceful in gesture; he was the type of the cultivated gentleman of his time and kind. He endeared himself to his staff by his considerate treatment; to his soldiers by his careful attention to their wants and comfort in camp, as well as by his gallant bearing in action, where he shone like Rupert in the charge. . . .His patriotism was pure; his motives disinterested; his service distinguished.[7]

No doubt the division was commanded by a capable and courageous man. If Liddell had a shortcoming it was his inexperience at division command, but even this was offset by the strength of his subordinate leaders.

Although commanding a newly formed ad hoc division, Liddell enjoyed the benefit of strong subordinate leaders. Their leadership abilities and combat experience contributed to Liddell's success. Their performance is also proof that in combat there is no substitute for strong leadership. Department of the Army Field Manual, FM 100-5, Operations, discusses the importance of leadership in combat:

> The most necessary dynamic of combat power is competent and confident leadership. Leaders inspire soldiers with the will to win. They provide purpose, direction, and motivation. Once a force is engaged, superior combat power derives from the courage and competence of soldiers, the excellence of their training, the capability of their equipment, the soundness of their combined arms doctrine, and, above all, the quality of their leadership.[8]

This modern description is an adequate representation of the experienced leaders in Liddell's brigades and regiments. This description also is an accurate portrayal of Liddell's leadership abilities. During the Battle of Chickamauga, Liddell and his subordinate commanders lived up to their previous performances at Perryville, Stones River, and Liberty Gap. Their performances can be characterized in terms of bravery, discipline, intelligence, and efficiency. The presence of leaders like Liddell, Govan and Walthall added stability and order to the fight. Their presence on the field created confidence in their men in the face of danger. Their competent leadership served to create order out of confusion and allowed their forces to overcome the uncertainty, insecurity, and unpredictable difficulties brought about by the fog and friction of war. It was strong

leadership that encouraged Walthall's men to advance against the overwhelming firepower of Wilder's Lightning Brigade and continue to fight for an impassable bridge; it was this same leadership that led the division in the rout of three Federal brigades on the morning of 19 September; it was this leadership that allowed Liddell's two brigades, on 20 September, to act independently in support of Gist (Govan) and Polk (Walthall); and it was this same strong leadership that would take over in the 24th Mississippi Regiment after three previous commanders had been wounded and carried from the field. For Liddell's Division, strong leadership was the most reliable solution to the fog and friction of war.

Good training also helped Liddell overcome the fog and friction of war. It was Liddell's responsibility to ensure that his men were adequately trained and prepared for combat. Given the ad hoc nature of the division, Liddell took this responsibility seriously. Liddell understood the importance of training as reflected in FM 100-5, "On the day of battle, soldiers and units will fight as well or as poorly as they are trained."[9] Therefore, Liddell focused on training prior to the battle and his efforts contributed directly to the division's success. The training allowed his commanders and their staffs to work together and to develop a familiarity with each other's capabilities. The training allowed for the development of standard operating procedures, procedures to fall back on when battle was engaged. Training also provided confidence to the men both in their own capabilities and those of their commanders. However, the best training grounds for the men were the previous battlefields. For Liddell's men there proved to be no substitute for the high stress and real demands of the battlefield. Luckily for Liddell, his unit was full of combat trained soldiers, soldiers who had gained their experience and knowledge from the battlefields of earlier campaigns. As a result of Liddell's focus on training and the previous combat experiences of his men, the division was able to overcome the difficulties and uncertainty created by its ad hoc nature and was able to maintain a high state of readiness.

The concept of luck was a countermeasure for fog and friction that occasionally worked well for Liddell and his commanders. Even though Liddell and his subordinate commanders maintained a strict adherence to linear tactics during the assaults, it was luck in the form of surprise that allowed Liddell's Division to defeat the three Federal brigades on 19 September. In this instance, Liddell's formation was successful because he caught the Federal brigades out of position and was able to overlap and flank similarly sized formations. In this case, Liddell's extended line of battle gave him somewhat of an advantage over his opponents. By placing his brigades in a single line of battle, he created an extremely long formation. Using this tactic, while fighting in the terrain of Chickamauga, gave him an advantage because it meant that he could attack across a wider front with fewer men, while the Union needed more men to defend their line. Sadly, Liddell and his commanders did not have enough of these lucky opportunities during the battle and as a result their failures outweighed their successes.

It has been said that the Battle of Chickamauga was the greatest might-have-been battle of the Civil War.[10] In Brigadier St. John Liddell's case this premise definitely holds true. Liddell might have been able to take Alexander's Bridge intact if he had been able to move Govan forward to support Walthall. Liddell might have been able to continue his pursuit on the morning of 19 September if he had had in his division another brigade. Liddell and his commanders might have been more successful in all of their many assaults if they had been given more complete orders, or if they had better intelligence and communication assets, or more time for planning, or if they had used different tactics. This litany of might-have-beens could go on indefinitely, but it does not excuse the fact that Liddell saw only limited success at Chickamauga. However, the most important conclusion to draw from Liddell's performance is the fact that he was able to overcome the forces of fog and friction of war by concentrating his efforts on training, capitalizing on the opportunities that luck provided, and by providing competent

leadership to his men. Furthermore, Liddell and the division can take satisfaction in the fact that their success was theirs alone. It was the division's fighting ability alone that provided for their limited success. From a strictly tactical viewpoint, it is difficult to see how the division's attacks on the morning of 19 September and Govan's attack on the morning of 20 September can be seen as successes. At the end of the engagements, the men of Liddell's Division did not control the terrain that they fought on, they did not completely destroy the units that they were fighting, and their attacks did not alter the course of the battle. However, it is easier to consider these attacks successful once the ad hoc nature of the division, as well as other factors that have been discussed in this chapter, are considered. Conversely, their failures were not solely their responsibility. Senior leaders, like Hill and Polk, who ordered the fateful, unsupported and piecemeal assaults, share the blame for the division's failure. Given the proper support and given missions commensurate with its capabilities, Liddell's Division would likely have had more success. Although the division did not distinguish itself, Liddell's description of the performance of his men provides an excellent summary of the division's qualified success:

> Officers and men of both brigades behaved with unusual gallantry, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that they did their duty to their country side by side against greater odds than they have ever hitherto met. Although no brilliant results were directly accomplished, the record for hard fighting cannot be well surpassed. In my humble opinion, it is the best evidence of good soldiers when overpowered by immense numbers on all sides to be able to rally promptly and return again and again to the contest undaunted.[11]

Since the division did not distinguish itself, what happened to the division and to General Liddell after the battle? The answer lies in Headquarters Army of Tennessee Field Circular dated 22 September, 1863. This circular stated: "VIII. The brigades of Generals Liddell, Walthall, and Johnson will immediately rejoin their proper divisions."[12] After receiving this circular, Liddell reported to Bragg to inquire as to why his command had been taken away from him. Bragg explained to Liddell that Polk complained so badly about the loss of Walthall's

Brigade and Walker annoyed him so, that he had no other course but to send the brigades back to their original commands. In response, Liddell requested that Bragg approve his transfer to the Trans-Mississippi Department. To Liddell's surprise, Bragg declined again and promised Liddell promotion and a larger division. Liddell would have none of this and presented his case to President Jefferson Davis. Despite Liddell's protestations, Davis refused to override Bragg's decision.

For weeks following Davis's decision, Liddell milled about the Headquarters of the Army of Tennessee waiting for another opportunity to request his transfer. His brigade, per his recommendation, had been given permanently to Govan to command. During this time, Bragg employed him as a special staff officer and sent him on reconnaissance operations related to the Battle of Chattanooga. After the army was defeated at Missionary Ridge, Liddell again asked Bragg to grant his request to be transferred. Finally, on 2 December 1863, Bragg, in conjunction with his own relief of command, issued Special Order No. 60 which stated: "I. Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell, by permission of the President, is relieved from duty in this army, and is permitted to report to the commanding general Trans-Mississippi Department."[13] At last Liddell was going home to Louisiana.

For the remainder of the war Liddell would see service as a brigade commander in the subdistrict of Northern Louisiana and would participate in the Red River Campaign. In July 1864 he was ordered to Mobile and in October was given command of the Eastern Division of the Department of the Gulf. In this capacity, Liddell would assist in the defense of Mobile. He was captured on 9 April, 1865, and held prisoner on Dauphin Island, Alabama until 16 May, 1865.[14]

After the war Liddell would fall on hard times. Liddell, like most in the South, would have great difficulty operating his plantation. Liddell suffered through a depressed economy, a

severe flood and a shortage of farm hands. By 1868, Liddell declared bankruptcy. In court documents he listed the total of his indebtedness as $86,808.31. The culmination of his hopelessness and despair came on 17 February 1869, when his wife, Mary, died. Thereafter, his world quickly came to an end.[15]

On 8 January 1870, his plantation was sold at auction to a man who intended to resell the property to Charles Jones, Liddell's mortal enemy. In response, Liddell warned Jones in a letter "that it would not be healthy for the Colonel to purchase the graves of his family." On 14 February 1870, almost a year after Mary's death, Liddell, deeply depressed and humiliated, began a business trip down the Black River aboard the river boat *St. Mary*. At Garrett's Landing, one mile above Jones's plantation, two of Jones's sons boarded the boat, saw Liddell, immediately disembarked and rode to their home to inform their father. The next stop for the boat was at Jones' Landing. Upon arriving at the landing, Jones, accompanied by his sons, boarded the steamer and proceeded to the cabin where Liddell was having dinner. Seated at the table with Liddell was Colonel Charles H. Morrison. When Morrison saw Jones enter the cabin he exclaimed to Liddell, "General, the Joneses are going to kill you!" In response, Liddell stood up and drew his pistol, but before he could get off a shot, Jones fired two shots which hit Liddell in the chest and knocked him down to the floor. As he fell, Liddell fired one shot that missed Jones. While he lay on the floor, Jones's sons fired more shots into Liddell. Later, when Liddell's body was examined, the doctor found seven gunshot wounds, three of which could have been fatal. The feud and the story does not end with Liddell's death. In reprisal, Liddell's sons tracked down Jones and his sons at the home of the local sheriff. On 27 February 1870, the sons, accompanied by a small mob, killed Jones and one of his sons, while the other saved himself by hanging onto the ledge of a second story window. Finally, the Liddell-Jones feud was ended and with it the life of Brigadier General St. John Richardson Liddell.[16]

It is fitting that this thesis ends with the story of the death of General Liddell because this thesis has attempted to analyze Liddell and his division's performance at the Battle of Chickamauga without overlooking the human perspective. It is important to examine Liddell and his division from the tactical and theoretical standpoint, but it is even more important to realize that the American Civil War was a human tragedy. There were hundreds of thousands of men who fought and died during the Civil War. The story of Liddell and his men is but one of the many stories that came out of the war. Liddell's story, like the others, is unique in its own way. He was a southern gentlemen, a soldier, a fighter; a fighter who died fighting; a violent man who died violently. He was a man who lived the meaning of sacrifice. As a leader he recognized the sacrifice of his soldiers. In his *Record* he wrote:

> Of all the men in this great Civil War, the greatest honor and consideration are due to the brave private. He had to endure all the hardships, all the digging, all the labor, without favor or affection. He served, for the greatest part of the time, without even the slightest allowance of pay.[17]

It is this lesson that today's military leaders can take away from this thesis, the lesson that despite all of the high-technological gadgetry it is the individual soldier who must fight, sacrifice, and endure in battle. General Liddell understood this and led his men accordingly.

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[1]International Military and Defense Encyclopedia, "Fog" and "Friction." Vol.2, C-F, (Washington: Brassey's Inc., 1993), 963.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Clayton R. Newell, "Fog and Friction: Challenges of Command and Control" Military Review: Professional Journal of the US Army 67, no. 8 (1987): 20.

[4]The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Series I, Vol 30, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 277.

[5]Ibid., 251, 253.

[6]Ibid., 34.

[7]St. John R. Liddell, Liddell's Record, ed. Nathaniel C. Hughes (Dayton, OH: Morningside House, 1985), 101.

[8]FM 100-5, (Washington: Department of the Army, 1986), 2-12.

[9]Ibid., 1-5.

[10]J. D. Morelock, The Army Times Book of Great Land Battles: From the Civil War to the Gulf War (New York: Berkeley Books, 1994), 27.

[11]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 30, 254.

[12]Ibid., 689.

[13]The War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 31, 775.

[14]Liddell, 164-198.

[15]Ibid., 199-205.

[16]Ibid., 205-206.

[17]Ibid., 162.

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