Hooker lampaige On the 27th of leficel, after more Miter fine mouter of maching the Mean bedy of injunty companies Len Homes, frank Anny consecued to morement near preferations had been made, to army in the world was even better armed dorhail a Egreiffed. The force consisted of 120,000 here with not less theero, Lugineer, Balleten, andretance Trains magares and pack mules were in the greatest aboutonce tel the vast resurer of the notion-intellect money skill lend Every time which could be suggested to make an arney shony send confident. weel lovished without dint, sel theigh the windle drills, reviews, Sohools and Siteling Boards had been Kept of The discipline of the horfes & their general become mus excellent. No one can defute The plan Einterell, was to mothe a shing feint on the Energy's left & how to allock on their centre and right. The por 6th & place of the sol Cups renained to make the frint 12 th Il all Cufir a a very large fine of caraly moved up the sines to how at Bunks Fard, writed flates Fat & Kelle's tand

#### Hooker's Campaign

On the 27th of April, after more than five months of inaction, the main body of infantry comprising Gen. Hooker's<sup>1</sup> Grand Army commenced its movement. Great preparations had been made. No army in the world was better armed, clothed or equipped. The force consisted of 150,000 men with not less than 300 pieces of artillery, Pontoon trains; Engineers, Battalion ambulance trains, wagons and pack mules were in the greatest abundance. All the vast resources of the nation -- intellect, money, skill and everything which could be suggested to make an army strong, and confident, was lavished without stint. All through the winter drills, reviews, Schools and Military Boards had been kept up. The discipline of the troops & their general bearing was excellent. No one can dispute this.

The plan, evidently, was to make a strong feint on the enemy's left, & then to attack on the centre and right. The 1st 6th<sup>2d</sup> & a part of the 2d Corps remained to make the feint and centre attack while the 5th, 11th 12th 2d<sup>3d</sup> & 2d Corps & a very large force of cavalry moved up the river to cross at Banks Ford, United States Ford & Kelly Ford .

-----

 $<sup>^{1}\</sup>mbox{Major}$  General Joseph Hooker, then commander of the Army of the Potomac. Kelly's Ford.

The Il Cerps, with the Exception of Earl Fibburs Division- muched out of cury 2 th - the houses affecting in fine Spirit. I am twee the sund Rost was neven in ballie fighting condition of hegar, copper bread & tall, in his Knows wit there days full rations in hever acks. The weights of the Krafisacks averaged about 23 Mundo. 60 munds of ammunter mer carried by Each man, No magnes or tends were laken y Regu About 4 miles from the Come the Cups halled. I mer sent ent with my own Rgit & the 81 xt Ma to picked thuses and wat to unted Stelles fort, in order to prevent infer. motion giving a the meny In this way, me Kept uf a Constant Communation from Jobones Dinken to Unich States tut about & miles. My Comment aflice a Severe much in rune fin " ished its position. My Ry To occupied 24 Bucking lineser bot Mi Remi My o 1d houses & home water. We of Smothered rebellion, but tough Civil, The not, 11th & 12th Cufe in the modeline pushed on The Id Cerps dent ont heavy delicits to open and reficie wat. I remained nich my commend senter the aplement of the

The 2d Corps, with the exception of Gen Gibbons <sup>1</sup> Division -- marched out of camp about sunrise on the morning of the 29<sup>8th</sup>th -- the troops appearing in fine spirits. I am sure that the 5th Reg't was never in better fighting condition. Each man carried five day's rations of sugar, coffee bread & salt, in his knapsack, and three days full rations in haversacks. The weight of the knapsacks averaged about 23 pounds. 60 rounds of ammunition was carried by each man. No wagons or tents were taken by Regts.

About 4 miles from the camp the Corps halted. I was sent out with my own Regt & the 81st Pa to picket houses and roads to United States ford, in order to prevent information going to the enemy. In this way, we kept up a constant communication from Gibbons Division to United States Ford -- about 8 miles. My command after a severe march in the rain, finished its position. My Reg't occupied 27 dwelling houses, Col McKean's Reg't 14 houses & some roads. We found the people very generally full of smothered rebellion, but very quite Civil. The 5th, 11th, & 12th Corps in the meantime pushed on. The 2d Corps sent out heavy details to open and repair roads.

I remained with my command until the afternoon of the

-----

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>John Gibbon (1827-1896), once commander the Iron Brigade, rose to command of the Second Division of First Corps. After recovering from wounds received at Fredericksburg, he was transferred to command of the Second Division of Hancock's Second Corps. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 171-172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Henry Boyd McKeen was colonel of the 81st Pennsylvania. Walker, *History of the II Corps*, 144, 172.

300to when I received adeci to more in after the Direction which had around the Never and quand the corps stepply hour wed unbelower. The deep before The men came into my lines saying thing were thees of The Hooken, They Heled that they had part come from the other Lode of the revery- heat the Energ were fully informed of are marement, & The Hooken muced find hinerely in a "light felice" - hat no fight mired de made rentil me ver fine er six miles from the sever, send then theon would by a cut ul off. These Meternest stoned true I reached the weegen him in the Evening & weel joined by the I totale from Juk - a partino of the drish migale. I frend the Coops had moved on acron the reven so my commund Devenaskel, At 9 oderk mert dug may made the deit of the hay to the front. The was new bad-mostly though About the clock fighting Commend of increased renter 3 where it start Stadand. My Commend arrived in the ground about & o'clerk- pert atilley to more back and cover Banks fird. pe frend Hancook's pentien Mes in the front line & were at me muched to join him. After Con-

30th when I received orders to move on after the Division which had crossed the rivers, and guard the corps supply trains and ambulances. The day before, two men came into my lines, saying they were spies of Gen Hooker. They stated that they had just come from the other side of the river -- that the enemy were fully informed of our movements, & prepared for us; they also stated that Gen Hooker would find himself in a "tight place" -- that no fight would be made until we were five or six miles from the river, and then Stuart would try to cut us off. These statements proved true.

I reached the wagon in the evening & was joined by the 88th 66th New York -- a portion of the Irish Brigade. I found the corps had moved on across the river, so my command bivouacked. At 9 o'clock next day, May 1 I started, crossed the river and made the best of the way to the front. The road was very bad -- mostly through woods, & blocked by trains and artillery. About 4 12 o'clock fighting commenced, & increased until 3 when it stack slackened. My command arrived on the ground about 4 o'clock -- just as orders were given to the reserve artillery to move back and cover Banks ford. We found Hancock's position was in the front line, & were at once marched to join him. After contilesable usersking me halled a get ref to a road leading from Zen Horking headquatees to Fredericksling & plant in order of butte. Insual Edery's Suiden on my light had just repulses a strong actuell of the snewy I formed my live with the SIt it on my right & 1st in the ceretie & sith is A on the lift. The meny Som opened a complete infilation Tim on us, but fined too high, About I o'clock in the morning when cand to more, we muched about for your to the light with an open field fronting a piece of fruit & again formed line of balle - this time the state is A on my right. On line there wer wer fellerer till occupied by the many mode Woods morts Edyp og the moods open field, undulating Sen laldwell State | Sico | site |
Sen Suncech onlied me to him &

siderable marching we halted to get supper & instantly after marched up to a road leading from Gen Hooker's headquarters to Fredericksburg, & placed in order of battle. General Geary's Division on my right had just repulsed a strong attack of the enemy.

I formed my line with the 88th on my right 81st in the centre & 5th NH on the left. The enemy soon opened a complete enfilading fire on us, but fired too high. About 2 o'clock in the morning orders came to move, we marched about 800 yards to the right into an open field fronting a piece of forest, & again formed line of battle -- this time the 5th NH on my right. Our line then was as follows

[Hooker diagram one]

Gen Hancock ordered me to throw

of a riple pit I sent me sig Therees To picks & me dozen ares - for about Men to with with. Honover we ment to work in susuest and conbleted our fulification in first 40 minutes by the walth he were surrely done when the rebil kullies opened, theen Shell, Saled Shor-in medges, and bundles of rash! Iswiel bull possed therego en brown with and two mero were but menter. The day har any wiete occasional shalling, until about 3 colock when Williams Duckier of Slocions backs prend into the now the good style bet wer form diever out in deserbers. Sen blecrew lat in his home news where I was standing I as some of the 9 mis hory same out, broken & Scared Moran humed to an air & said - for Todi lake Lend in love the your hoofs " to the 7th this & 25 in The vols of Lecen's Command mus The voli of Leavy Command mit dered act, The while followed but were ohered by on artilley allack was made on the 11th cufer (germeny Liegels) of Commended by My Sen Howard, Now occurred and of the most disquareful beener of the war, The 11th corps made only a fishe rendence - broke west

up a rifle pit and sent me 89 shovels and 50 picks and one dozen axes -- for about 1000 600 men to work with. However, we went to work in earnest and completed our fortification in just 40 minutes by the watch! We were scarcely done when the rebel batteries opened, throwing shell, solid shot, iron wedges, and bundles of rasps! Several balls passed through our breastworks and two men were badly wounded.

The door wore away with occasional shelling, until about 3 o'clock when Williams Division of Slocums Corps pressed into the woods in good style, but was soon driven out in disorder. Gen Slocum sat on his horse near where I was standing and as some of the green troops came out, broken & scared, Slocum turned to an aid & said -- "for Gods' sake send in some three year troops!" ..So the 7th Ohio & 28th Pa vols of Geary's command was sent in. They remained until ordered out. The rebels followed but were checked by our artillery.

About five o'clock a furious attack was made on the 11th Corps (formerly Siegels) by commenced by Maj Gen Howard. Now occurred one of the most disgraceful scenes of the war. The 11th Corps made only a feeble resistance -- broke, and officers and men ran shamefully.

A perfect parice horo place und therewards of fregibie, come back upon my lines, I when my mente fix day outs and drive thou back, & me did stok & here block more them love offices & men. Still a veit manches iscaped into the woods. The shells of the muny at this time came in from front and recen. At this moment the money allasted my pickely very suskly but were driven off, to I had the rebels on my fore and the whele & our shagglees on my now The Concerdice of the Sernen hoofs mes budiences The hed in the west fit. he fact, they seemed half leans I have me hecilation in laying that had or line boke at that time! the army much have been recined! The Jell they with you " said he. I tied my red siek wendrorches awend my hend & neut along my lines, Experting Every now to shand firm, I the race answered wiet loud theer, which bet the Expect to Shame denie of the frigities, a hora a thing hueles, fickles leafe- the ol Checked the rober & held their therego they dereral times adveked ficuly during the might, which

A perfect panic took place and thousands of fugitives came back on my lines. I ordered my men to fix bayonets and drive them back, & we did stop & turn back more than 1000 officers, & men. Still, a vast number escaped into the woods. The shells of the enemy at this time came in from front and rear. At this moment the enemy attacked my pickets very briskly, but were driven off. So I had the rebels on my front and the rebels and our stragglers on my rear. The cowardice of the German troops was ludicrous. They hid in the woods -- forced their way into our rifle pit. In fact, they seemed half scared to death.

I have no hesitation in saying that had our line broke at that time the army would have been ruined! The commander of Knapps battery came to me and said "what are you going to do?" "Stay here, Sir," said I. told him. "Then I'll stay with you," said he. I tied my red silk handkerchief around my head & went along my lines, exhorting every man to stand firm, & the men answered with loud cheers, which had the effect to shame some of the fugitives & then & they halted. Sickles Corps -- the 3rd checked the rebels & held them though they several times attacked fiercely during the night, which

the night Rymed, corps evenu wh I occupied to position to hold on right & precent the surry him my on right fleet lang hunday hum my the robels allecked frencedy funt fluck I recen - for about hu house the fighting mes despende Sure they finally drone on men slowly book French's Sinsien of the 2d Corps, & baldnielles Brighte \* Brooks faight nobly driving book the retils in disuders, restel the lathe came or in overwhelming mon. dert while the balls in on war mes going on we had constant Willicoles in our front & flench. Touend times me were taken into on tyle pet to winfree week points me our line & marches over the field under fire, The Phylode mas Respectly Cool and Steady Ou fine, nere now falling block along the whole line x to rebels came on shouling forricesly. My Commend Wel again ordent pour its partien, we faced by the rear rout, and muched book Some Low your to the crest of a little hell, Leavy's Sinker mas now in my tright flench, Engaged with the snewy & in my front was bally of bu for Pariotis

was one of constant alarms. During the night Reynolds Corps came up & occupied a position to hold our right & prevent the enemy turning our right flank.

Early Sunday morning the rebels attacked fiercely front flank & rear -- for about two hours the fighting was desperate but they slowly drove our men slowly back. French's Division of the 2d Corps & Caldwells Brigade & Brooke fought nobly, driving back the rebels in disorder, until the latter came on in overwhelming numbers. While the battle in the rear was going on we had constant attacks on our front & flank. Several times we were taken out of our rifle pit to reinforce weak points in our line, & marched over the field under fire. The Brigade was perfectly cool and steady.

Our forces were now falling back along the whole line, & the rebels came on shouting furiously. My command was again ordered from its position; We faced by the rear rank, and marched back some 200 yards to the crest of a little hill. Geary's Division was now on my left right flank, engaged with the enemy, & in my front was two. brass batteries & Petits [illegible] battery of ten pd Parrotts

all finny rapidly Except are Bran helly Much mes sery heally officeed, The rebils depluyed from the work in a live of double Coliennes dered in mais, They halled fruited & comment to diffy but were dienen back by a severe five of grape & shell. I sighted one grew oplie helping show it to the brine, he a few moments the enemy got a splendid rifle ballery into position which fined with hundiepel accuracy. To heavy mes the five that Cafet Relit mus compelled for the first time dearing the har to lincher up & have - het was mutually orched back. For about 310 minteles my comment has under the housest fire it soen Expension Every insteart time one in sook Ryo nas hit, The air Reamesfule of bushing shell, I me on rear from the left from the front come a storm of missiles, There times I dent Lieut Frey to tell In Hun-Cook that our lift was defeated Jeny's Sintim Deing Whiffeel out was reliebling in desarten, All the others had give, and on sitaway, leved no realif a heavy has as t came on was within 300 yours of my fleuch & always engazed with the sitt Bo diel.

all firing rapidly except on Brass battery which was badly officered. The rebels deployed from the woods in a line of double columns closed in mass. They halted, fronted & commenced to deploy but were driven back by a severe fire of grape & shell. I sighted one gun after helping shove it to the front. In a few moments the enemy got a splendid rifle battery into position, which fired with wonderful accuracy. So heavy was the fire that Capt Petit was compelled for the first time during the war to limber up & leave -- but was instantly ordered back. For about 40 minutes my command was under the heaviest fire it ever experienced. Every instant some one in each Regt was hit. The air seemed full of bursting shell. From our rear from the left from the front came a storm of missiles. Three times I sent Lieut Fay to tell Gen Hancock that our left was defeated. Geary's Division, being whipped out, was retreating in disorder. All the others had gone, and our situation was perilous in the extreme. The artillery limbered up & ran away, and not until a heavy line of the enemy, cheering and firing as it came on was within 300 yards of my flank and already engaged with the 5th Reg't did

where come to fall back, he faced to the right & marked off-but the fue of the Enny from three directions made a shift confusion, but my for an instant. me muched stadely ofte reaching the most, though on ruches mere Thimsel and shattered by grape, Cumater & sifle bells. Hud me obluged five minutes more me should have been taken prisences or cut to pieces. I do not renderstand they Zeany nes un heffuled a reinfuced. The day mus now lost I fresh hoofs & actilly had been a relie as mus where. While bying under hat anguel five my belief miss that a fresh Suesian & some artilly hadd som be up to air us I so Heliel to on men. The Energy might have been qually myined of hor Sulicely observed by a little vig-The fundat of hier sen of leouch mes splended, Both he and I Justancosh remained until the ballenes limber I ry, un lend hus shiftly munded and Len Hen-Cook's horse Killed. of mien have fallen back on the Fred erickskey was & conned with Ledguich. The 2d out formet the frent line to cover the reluct !

orders come to fall back. We faced to the right & marched off -- but the fire of the enemy from three directions made a slight confusion, but only for an instant. We marched steadily after reaching the woods, though our ranks thinned and shattered by grape, canister & rifle balls. Had we delayed <u>five</u> minutes more we should have been taken prisoners or cut to pieces.

I do not understand why
Geary was not supported or reinforced. The day was not lost
if fresh troops & artillery and been
thrown in. I had no idea that
a retreat had been ordered. While lying
under that awful fire my belief was
that a fresh division & some artillery
would soon be sent to aid us, &
I so stated to our men. The enemy
might have been greatly injured if
not entirely checked by a little vigorous action.

The conduct of Maj Gen Couch was splendid. Both he and Gen Hancock remained until the batteries limbered up. Gen Couch was slightly wounded and Gen Hancock's horse killed.

We might, in my opinion have fallen back on the Fredericksburg road and connected with Sedgwick. The 2d Corps formed near the front line to cover the retreat

of the army, & only fell back about half a nide, the other Carps were premied he perties showing that a relieat had been ordered Early in the day-perhaps during the might. On perhaps now as follows; ge acht 3d creps

The weeks

The first Beautisted Finderschy such was the position but non So for dure the river, he my held purto al fud to Bunks - I have made the Cricle herege to show the position of the proops. The had harry from opened upon us heaving shell of Shrapuel. doing great duninge Min Sent for water nece voucked oner, & the hees shiffed of this timbs over on heads. Cour position was to shing honever to be weekfully lessieled by treferry. The instant the Thelling Crased me Commend to throw uf field works along the Entire line I by duck when well setuated. Imme this time unter adecs Clime to full bor we were in Con-

of the army, & only fell back about half a mile. The other corps were previously in position -- showing that a retreat had been ordered early in the day -- perhaps during the night. Our position was now as follows:

#### [Hooker diagram two]

Such was the position but not so far down the river. We only held from to US ford to Banks [Ford] -- I have made the circle large to show the position of the troops. We had barely formed line when the artillery of the enemy opened upon us -- throwing shell or shrapnel -- doing great damage. Men sent for water were knocked over, & the trees stripped of their limbs over our heads. Our position was too strong, however to be successfully assailed by infantry. The instant the shelling ceased, we commenced to throw up field works along the entire line, & by dark we were well situated.

From this time until orders came to fall back we were in con-

Start alcerns - picket firing and Shelling Every there. for hours, the Enny had Excellent range, but fined to high for the front line, The resemen hinenen in the most back where goodly injund. Teveral thong allates were made at disperent points but in Each case take off. About midnight on the let ordier come to mone. The died not get lenley will I o clock, but when mee in on The more pushed rapidly along, The mid was half lig deep most of the lucy All along the firest which Extended about 4 miles to the Rivers were Colcement of hours looking deity fatigued & cent-La me here recerd dear in the Shelling Brig Tere I & Meaghen lay a suring to miles les of any of my Ryic - Sideriel ladly scaned de som as the firing assed he sand rean where he had a private fordeficulier Construction Therecande of hogs here mussed at the Bridges ober to Ruffolemock. he norsel and muched the lance might to an old cump- meany tad and

stant alarms -- picket firing and shelling every short few hours. The enemy had excellent range, but fired to high for the front line. The reserves, however, in the woods back were greatly injured. Several strong attacks were made at different points but in each case beaten off. About midnight of the 6th orders came to move. We did not get away until 4 oclock, but where once in on the move pushed rapidly along. The mud was half leg deep most of the way. All along the forest which extended about 4 miles to the river were columns of troops looking dirty, fatigued and anxious.

Let me here record that on the afternoon of the 6th, during a furious shelling Brig Gen T. F. Meagher lay among the enlisted men of Company G of my regiment -- evidently badly scared. As soon as the firing ceased, he <u>ran</u> as fast as possible to the left and rear where he had a private fortification constructed.

Thousands of troops were massed at the bridges over the Rappahannock. We crossed and marched the same night to our old camp -- weary, sad and almost [illegible]. Our guard

had failed. Ten Hooker mut completel net generalled - his magnificent army badly here thed his welitting now massed - no half of it reser & and mi he in accession of the moods. The I mos & two years hooks where line dren near a clear Could not de made to sland fine, They market broken in Some cases there havy then arms, in all cases the straggles Cut to Sieces! The amount of Thought nas faceful, Especially in the 11th 2/2the Certis My vien Ry't lost 24 in all, My from hus badly waterded -My Phyade lest about doe Horsen heed no the amount of brains necessary to manage a rast army, he meralship me fall for whind the rebels & since Me Calles left the anny of the Minace its onquenquetin has been Extremely defective, Horker popularity lay they their the Soft bread, porates & mins he thuel. The army: never believed him to be a great Commander - never, Dis failuel Wes predicted by thresands of offi-Cos & Soldiers - from the frist day he Started I have hideand in the blove nacitive to state only facts. With at few of chains at portiale loss settle 171

had failed. Gen Hooker was completely outgeneralled -- his magnificent army badly handled -- his artillery not massed -- not half of it used and could not be, on account of the woods. The 9 mos & two years troops whose time drew near a close could not be made to stand fire. They wavered, broke -- in some cases threw away their arms, in all cases the stragglers told the old stories -- that they were "all cut to pieces!. The amount of straggling was fearful, especially in the 11th & 12th Corps.

My own Reg't lost 27 in all, Maj Cross was badly wounded -- My Brigade lost about 200.

Hooker has not the amount of <u>brains</u> necessary to manage a vast army. In generalship we fall far behind the rebels, & since McClellan left the Army of the Potomac, its organization has been extremely defective. Hookers popularity lay chiefly in the soft bread, potatoes & onions he issued. The army never believed him to be a great commander -- never. His failure was predicted by thousands of officers & soldiers -- from the first day he started.

I have endeavored in the above narrative to state only <u>facts</u>, with as few opinions as possible.

E. E. Cross Col 5th NHV