The Pennsylvania State University

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Civil War In and About Pendleton County, (West) Virginia

A Thesis in

History

by

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INTRODUCTION

Most narratives pertaining to the American Civil War quite naturally emphasize its momentous and decisive campaigns, battles, and personalities. Since the conflict was a precursor of modern total war, however, it profoundly affected the lives and fortunes of people in regions not directly involved in the major military events. One such locality was Pendleton County, occupying the parallel ridges and valleys at the headwaters of the Potomac's South Branch, and lying immediately west of the Shenandoah Valley[1] in what constituted north central Virginia prior to the wartime division of that state.

No large scale engagement was fought within the bounds of this mountainous, sparsely peopled, and decidedly isolated county. But virtually throughout the four year span of hostilities, the people of Pendleton inhabited a borderland between the lines of the contending belligerents, possibly the most precarious and unenviable position imaginable in civil war. Pendletonians daily experienced the nerve-wracking insecurity of life and property in a no-man's-land, not only between the upper and nether millstones of the Union and the Confederacy, and the conflicting orbits of eastern and western Virginia, but also amid the divided political and military loyalties of their neighbors and acquaintances.

The county was sandwiched between the Federally controlled Tygart Valley to the west and the Valley of Virginia to the east, the latter usually dominated by Southern forces. Highland County, abutting

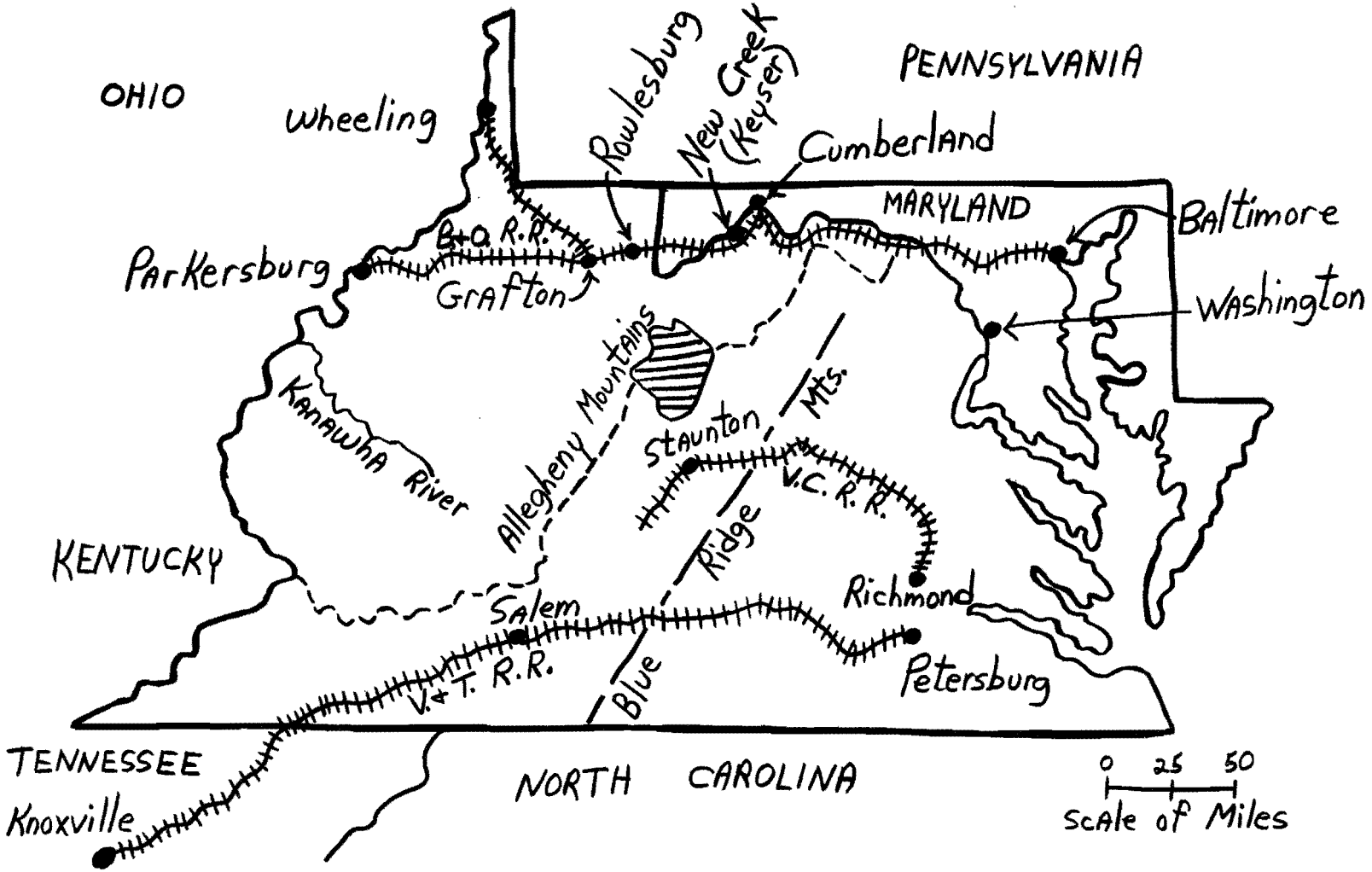

Plate 1. Pendleton's Geographic Relationship in 1860

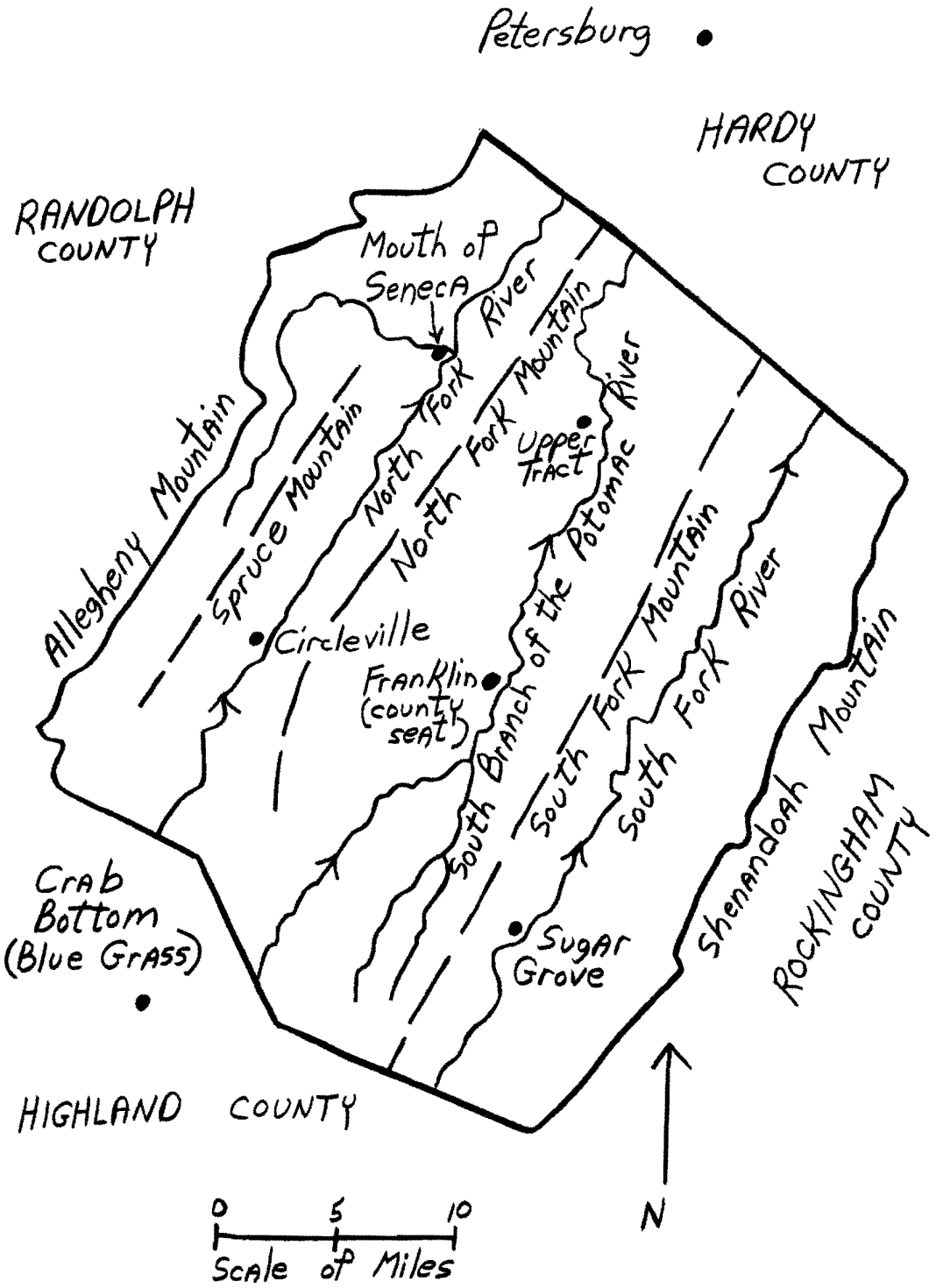

Plate No. 2. Pendleton County

Pendleton on the south comprised Confederate territory except for occasional Federal raids and a Union command stationed there in the spring of 1862. To the north, Petersburg in Hardy (now Grant) County[2] was often occupied by an outpost of blueclad troops. Symbolic of the county's borderland status was the fact of her entering the rebellion as a part of Virginia, and emerging from the Southern defeat as a subdivision of the new state of West Virginia, but still adjoining on two sides counties of the Old Dominion.

Pendleton furnished over 700 soldiers to the Confederacy and was predominately Southern in sentiment. A minority of citizens concentrated in the county's northwest corner remained loyal to the Union, banding together in military companies to protect their homes and farms from Confederate guerrillas and regulars. As was not uncommon on the border, neighborhoods were frequently divided in allegiance and members of immediate families were sometimes aligned on opposite sides. In Pendleton this tragic aspect of civil war was dramatically illustrated by two brothers who numbered among the most prominent county leaders of their respective causes. The breakdown of civil order gave license for indiscriminate plunder, violent acts of personal vindictiveness, and guerrilla warfare of a particularly virulent variety. In these respects, Pendleton's story certainly embodied elements representative of the experiences of other borderlands, not only in western Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri during the early 1860's, but in any civil war.

Arguably, life and warfare on the border possessed a human dimension of tragedy, anxiety, and tension greater than that of even the

rebellion's most sanguinary battles, where huge armies were engaged and the loss of life was of a magnitude incomparably larger. For in those contests thousands died and were maimed as if expendable cogs in enormous machines, in the adrenalin-charged excitement of battle where an anonymous foe could usually be seen, and where the risks, although terrifying, were roughly calculable and largely intermittent, limited to the duration of each engagement. In the mountains of western Virginia, in contrast, the conflict was often personal and hence immensely more bitter. Moreover, it was a war of stealth and surprise. Civilians toiling on their farms and soldiers patrolling lonely mountain trails all shared the constant dread of bushwhackers lurking in ambush, whose furtive bullets could snuff out unsuspecting lives at any moment and without warning. Worst of all, until Appomattox county inhabitants could expect little respite from their interminable peril.

Pendleton's geographic relationships ensured that occurrences and conditions within the county would play a role that was significant, albeit peripheral, in helping to shape the larger scene. Especially important were her position between the warring forces and her proximity to the Shenandoah Valley and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In large measure, organized military activities in the South Branch counties were dependent upon and subordinate to the maneuvers of armies in the Valley, or involved attacks upon or the protection of objectives in that region, one of the most important theaters of the entire war.

In conjunction with neighboring counties, Pendleton served as a staging area for Southern incursions against the vital Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. These raids assisted in tying down considerable numbers

of Union soldiers in that railroad's defense, and consequently prevented their deployment for offensive operations in the Valley or elsewhere. Federal troops repeatedly traversed the South Branch in the course of their demonstrations and forays against two railroads critical to the Southern war effort, the Virginia Central and the Virginia and Tennessee. These rail lines were most exposed to Northern attack at Staunton and Salem, both of which are points in the Valley of Virginia. When the movements of large armies in the Valley denuded that region of food and forage, the Confederates sought these supplies, as well as recruits, in the fertile valleys of the South Branch and its tributaries.

But several of Pendleton's systematic wartime activities were not particularly associated with events in the Valley of Virginia. Nitrates mined from cavern passageways beneath her mountains contributed to the gunpowder supply of a Confederacy cut off from outside sources. Although to some degree its exertions were undermined by the chaos inherent in border conflict, the county court, in a manner typical of the home front responsibilities of Virginia counties, labored to furnish relief to indigents and the families of Confederate soldiers impoverished by the war. The court also attempted to ensure an adequate supply of food, salt, clothing, and essential services for the local population as a whole.

Federal cavalry scouts were continually ordered into the county's triple valleys and intervening uplands to succor Unionist communities threatened by Rebel guerrillas, destroy the saltpetre works, disrupt forays against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, impede Confederate

conscription efforts, frustrate the administration of the county court, as well as hinder the Southern collection of food and provender for their usually hard-pressed and ill-supplied force. Grayclad patrols likewise combed the region to discover and parry Union thrusts against their railroads and the Valley of Virginia.

The chain of events within Pendleton having the most farreaching implications for the progress of the war nationally were those accompanying the aftermath of the Battle of McDowell. The initial maneuvers of Stonewall Jackson's famed Valley Campaign of 1862, these developments aided the defense of Richmond and disrupted the strategies of the Federals in one of the darkest moments of the Confederacy in the early stages of the war, certainly prolonging the struggle many months if not several years.

In attempting a comprehensive treatment of such a small entity as a single borderland county and its immediate environs, this writer believes that perspectives gained in depth compensate for those lost in breadth. Whether involving regular troops or partisans, hostilities within Pendleton consisted predominately of small unit actions. Doubtless numerous such incidents were never recorded. Many of those described in this narrative are admittedly episodic, repetitive, and sketchy in detail, deficiencies frequently dictated by the fragmentary nature of the sources. But taken together they convey the pattern of tension and tragedy embodied in life and warfare on the border.

NOTES

[1]Occasionally the designations "Shenandoah Valley" and "Valley of Virginia" are employed in a broad sense to encompass all the terrain between the Allegheny Mountain and the Blue Ridge, a usage that includes Pendleton. But in this study these expressions are used narrowly and interchangeably to refer to that area between the Shenandoah Mountain on the west and the Blue Ridge on the east. All points in the Valley southwest of the watershed of the Shenandoah River will be denominated only as the "Valley of Virginia." References herein to "the Valley" mean always the Valley of Virginia when the term is capitalized, and never the South Branch or other valley.

[2]In 1866 Grant County was formed from the western, Unionist half of Hardy.

I. THE SECESSION MOVEMENT

The Background of Secession

Pendleton County, Virginia did not seem predestined to embrace the secession cause in 1860. Within its mountainous confines dwelled 6,164 inhabitants; among them were merely 244 slaves who were distributed among fifty odd slaveholders, none possessing more than nineteen slaves and many only one or two. Similar to the experience of the Shenandoah Valley and northwestern Virginia over the preceding decade, the "peculiar institution" in Pendleton had subsided from the 1850 enumeration of 322 slaves. In a mountainous region where livestock raising and subsistence agriculture constituted the prevailing means of livelihood, slavery could never develop more than marginal economic importance.[1]

As a reflection of the secession issue, the outcome of the 1860 presidential election in Virginia was nebulous at best. John Bell, the Constitutional Union candidate and opponent of disunion, received 74,681 votes and won the state by the tiny plurality of 358 over Southern Democrat John C. Breckinridge. Breckinridge was generally considered the extreme candidate in defense of his section's institutions and prerogatives and was therefore most favored by secessionists. Yet he also appealed to western Virginians as a states rights' Union man and in fact carried what comprises present-day West Virginia, receiving 21,908 votes from these counties compared to 20,997 for Bell.

Paradoxically, Breckinridge actually obtained a slightly higher proportion of the total votes cast in northwestern Virginia than east of the Blue Ridge, where Bell polled more votes than any other candidate. The consideration of other issues by the voters and the strong tendency toward party loyalty further blurred the election results as a gauge of popular sentiment on the issue of Union versus secession. Bell tended to carry former Whig strongholds while Democratic counties inclined toward Breckinridge. Obviously, many voters failed to perceive Breckinridge as the secessionist candidate or Bell as an advocate of Union.

Notwithstanding these complexities, Pendleton's vote in 1860 can be reasonably interpreted as an expression of moderate Unionism. Bell easily prevailed, his 400 votes surpassing the total of the three other candidates combined. Breckinridge polled 217 ballots while Unionist and Northern Democrat Stephen A. Douglas was the recipient of 133 votes. No ballots were cast for Abraham Lincoln, whose Republican candidacy opposed the extension of slavery into areas where it did not already exist.[2]

Thus, Pendleton's meager slave population and the temperate stance of her voters in the election of 1860, in conjunction with the county's rough and forbidding terrain supposedly hostile to Southern institutions, would appear to militate against her citizens' support of secession. However, on April 17, 1861, the Virginia convention in Richmond adopted an ordinance of secession by a vote of 88 to 55, and although Pendleton's delegate, Henry H. Masters, voted against secession on April 4 and again on April 17, subsequent events

demonstrated that most countians acquiesced in this expression of the will of the convention's majority.[3] Just one indication of evolving sentiment within Pendleton was the popular referendum of May 23 in which her people ratified the secession ordinance by a wide margin.[4]

Prior to April 17 the northern and central parts of the Valley of Virginia, including that stratum of counties lying immediately west of the Valley proper, generally opposed secession and espoused a qualified Unionist position. This region encompassed those counties with which Pendleton enjoyed the greatest geographical propinquity, commercial intercourse, and social rapport. Included in this group were the counties of Rockingham, Augusta, Rockbridge, Highland, Bath, Allegheny, Pocahontas, and Greenbrier. Either Bell or Douglas had carried all but two of these counties in 1860. Except for Rockingham and Rockbridge, the multiple delegates of both counties having divided on the question, all clearly opposed secession even on the April 17 convention ballot which occurred after Fort Sumter, Lincoln's call for volunteers to suppress the rebellion, and the appearance of state "coercion" as an issue.[5] However, following passage of the ordinance these same counties, as did Pendleton, acceded to the course which many of the delegates from the eastern and southwestern parts of the state had advocated from the convention's beginning. Like Pendleton, all were to become stalwarts of the Confederate cause despite their initial Unionist inclinations.

The issue of coercion was a powerful inducement for moderates to swing to the support of secession and doubtless offered a partial explanation for the decisive victory of the disunionists in

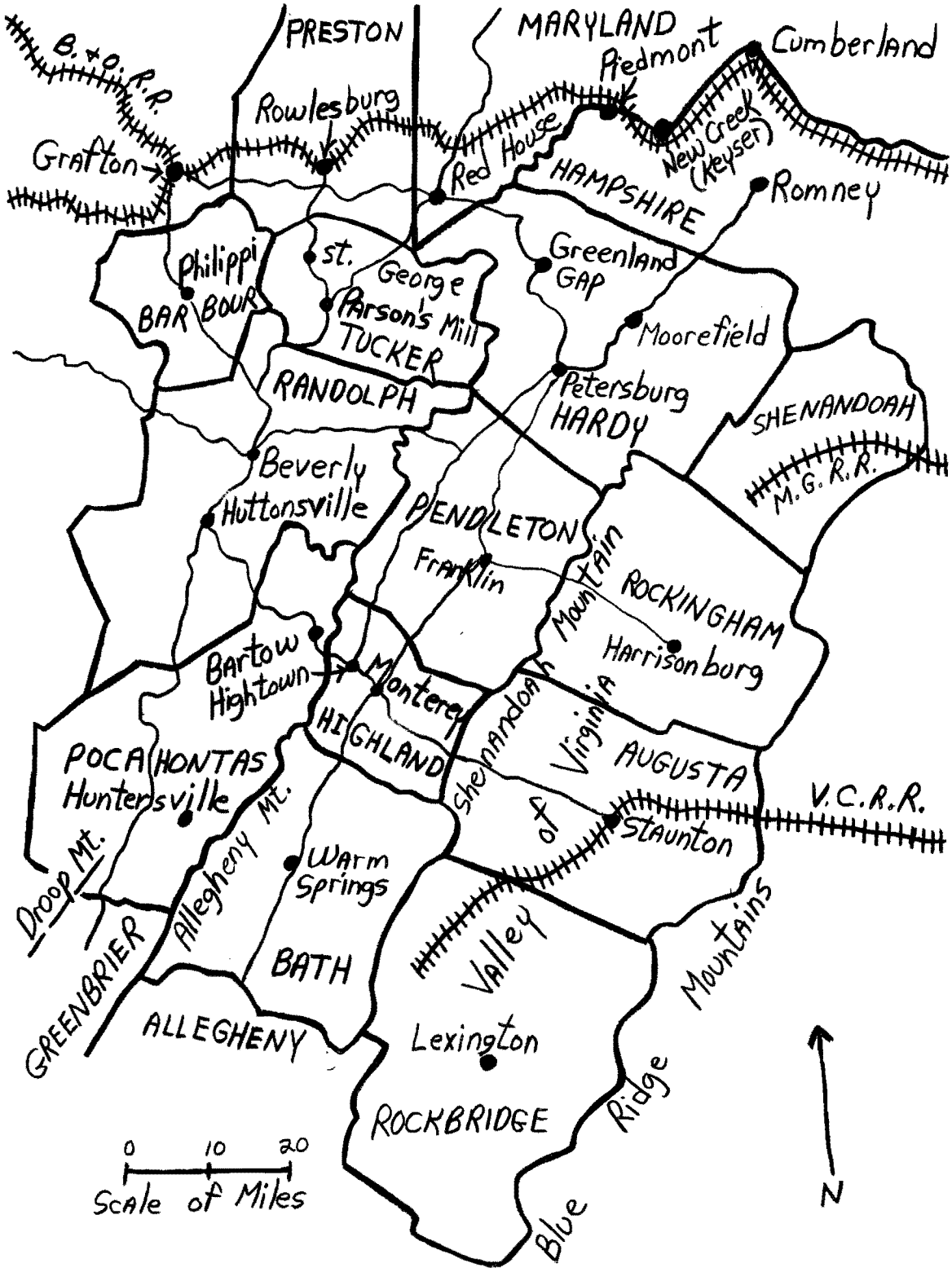

Plate No. 3. The Surrounding Counties

Pendleton's May 23 referendum. Even the Unionists of western Virginia who rejected the right of secession also usually denied the constitutional power of the Federal government to coerce a state.[6] But a more compelling reason for Pendleton's gravitation into the orbit of the Confederacy was simply her people's attachment to the Old Dominion. One study of the May 23 referendum vote concludes that there existed little correlation between the number of slaves as a proportion of total county populations and the votes cast for secession. The eastern counties of present-day West Virginia, including Pendleton, were more rural, sparsely peopled, and hence traditional. They lacked industry, economic contacts with the North or a significant foreign element, nor were they hinterlands to cities or towns possessing such characteristics in contrast to those northwestern counties satellite to Wheeling and Parkersburg.[7] Despite the intervening massiveness of Shenandoah Mountain, Pendleton had closer social and economic ties with the Valley of Virginia than with the northwestern counties, against which the Allegheny ranges erected an even more formidable barrier. Moreover, the county's rivers and therefore a portion of her commerce flowed not to the Ohio but to the lower Potomac. This characteristic, which would eventually bind the county to the new state of West Virginia, helped effect in 1861 an intimate bond with Old Virginia.

The County Court Acts in Support of the Confederacy

If the people of Pendleton were violently agitated over the secession issue, that turmoil is not reflected in the records of the county court which make no reference to the crisis prior to May 9, 1861.[8] The storm clouds of secession and war had gone unheeded and occasioned little preparation unless one counts a regimental muster in the fall of 1860 which featured three days of drill at the county seat.[9] However, after the crisis had crystallized, numerous Virginia counties inaugurated vigorous measures for defense well in advance of the May 23 referendum. Pendleton was no exception, for on May 10, 1861, the county court met to consider what steps it should take to deal with the emergency, the first session where the court's agenda addressed itself to the possibility of war. The first order of business was the appointment of a committee comprised of justices Benjamin Hiner, John E. Wilson, H. F. Temple, Cyrus Hopkins, and Solomon Hedrick who reported recommendations unanimously adopted by the court.

It was first ordered that interest bearing bonds not exceeding 6,500 dollars in aggregate value be issued on the faith and credit of the county in denominations not less than twenty-five dollars. The bonds were not to be sold at less than their par value, were to pay interest semi-annually, and the entire principal was to be redeemable in six equal yearly installments. Jacob F. Johnson, William McCoy, and Samuel Johnson were appointed commissioners for the sale of the bonds and the disbursement of the proceeds realized by the sale. These

funds were to be deposited with Henry H. Masters to the credit of the county until required to be drawn upon. That same session the court ordered that military companies of at least sixty men be raised, uniformed, equipped, and armed. No more than thirty dollars per man was to be spent for that purpose. It was required that the captain of each company and one or more sureties give bond for the proper expenditure of these sums. The amount disbursed for uniforms and equipment for the "Franklin Guard" or other companies was not to exceed 6,000 dollars. David G. McClung was appointed treasurer of this fund. It was also ordered that the justices of the court ascertain the economic needs of the families of soldiers within their respective magisterial districts and to supply these necessities. The justices were to report each month to the commissioners, and their vouchers for such supplies were to be honored up to the amount of 500 dollars.[10]

For the defense of the county in the absence of the other companies, the court ordered the organization of a home guard to consist of men between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five. J. F. Johnson was appointed "Chief of the home guard of Pendleton County." Captains, with the authority to muster their companies once a month, were appointed for each magisterial district. Commissioned as captains were Samuel Johnson in District No. 1 (presently Franklin District), Benjamin Hiner in District No. 2 (Sugar Grove), Harry F. Temple in District No. 3 (Bethel), Cyrus Hopkins in District No. 4 (Mill Run), John Boggs in District No. 5 (Union), and Jesse Waybright in District No. 6 (Circleville).[11]

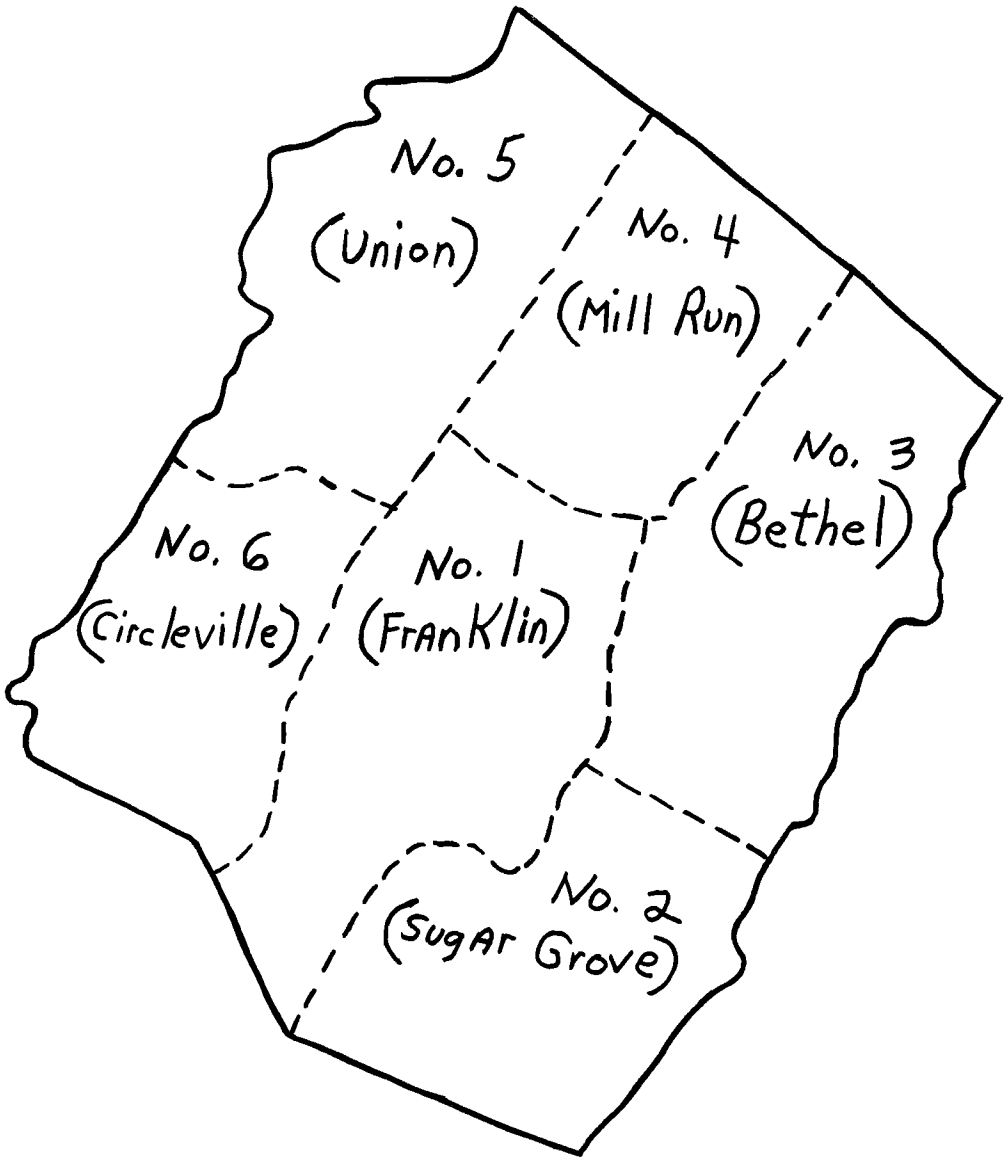

Plate No. 4. Pendleton Magisterial Districts

The first Pendleton volunteer company to enter the Confederate service was the Franklin Guards, enlisted May 14, 1861 for one year, and mustered May 26. This company, captained by John B. Moomau, was well trained and equipped, having been formed in the spring of 1859 as a volunteer company of militia. Described as "a picked body of men" 110 strong, the Guards presented a smart appearance in their dark blue uniforms with black hats and plumes. A second company, known as the Pendleton Minute Men and commanded by Captain David C. Anderson, enlisted May 18, 1861 for a year's service. This was also a choice company, although not so elite as the Franklin Guards.[12]

On May 14 Captain Moomau's company left Franklin for Monterey, followed four days later by the Minute Men.[13] Confederate companies were then assembling in Highland County preparatory to a march to Grafton for the defense of northwestern Virginia.[14] A letter from Colonel B. Christian to Major Harman, written at Franklin on May 17, describes the organization of Anderson's company and the activities of military preparation in Pendleton.

> Captain Mooman [Moomau] sent his company on their march to Monterey and he came with us to this place, and last night sent expresses all over the county to collect the men with their rifles and ammunition here ready to march by ten o'clock Saturday morning. The militia have just been drawing here, and we ordered in one-half the draft, and promised to receive them as volunteers, provided they bring their own rifles, etc. In this way, to escape a draft, we expect to raise from 100 to 200 riflemen tomorrow and others to follow afterward; splendid soldiers for skirmishing and scouting duty . . . We purchased, at the Baltimore cost, of Mr. Anderson, merchant here, 5 kegs of rifle powder, F.F.G., Beatty & DuPonts; 200 Ely's military caps for percussion-muskets and minie rifles, 300 (about) flints . . . Mooman [Moomau] is a graduate of the Virginia

> Military Institute, knows this country and people, and would make a good commander.[15]

Following passage of the secession ordinance, Unionist counties in the northwestern portion of the state held conventions at Wheeling in May and June 1861, establishing the loyal "Reorganized Government of Virginia." Pendleton was not represented in either convention as her citizens ratified the secession ordinance on May 23 by a substantial margin. The referendum balloting was viva-voce and it is generally conceded that both sides practiced various degrees of intimidation in western Virginia.[16] A letter of May 17, composed at Monterey by Colonel R. Turk, shows the menacing atmosphere surrounding the plebiscite.

> Highland is all enthusiasm, and our appearance, with the efforts of ordinance men here, I think will have a good effect on the wavering and those who had determined to vote against it.[17]

Pendleton's Southern sympathies, as well as concern over a few pockets of Unionist sentiment, are reflected in Captain Anderson's description of the referendum in a May 25 letter to J. B. Moomau.

> Our election passed off quietly. And Pendleton has again immortalized herself. The maj [ority] for the ordinance is about 550 — which taken with the vote of our boys will reach 750. There were but two places in the county that gave a Union vote. Mallons [Mallow] & Seneca, 57 to 43 against Secession —, Seneca, 47 to 92 against — We will look after them soon.[18]

In its last sentence this message offers a presentiment of the bitter and vengeful course that the war would take in Pendleton. The election results also reveal the approximate relative strengths of the

secessionist and Unionist factions within the county. Alternative sets of returns were reported from Pendleton, 913 to 163 and 713 to 163 in favor of disunion.[19] The former figures appear to be the correct ones as they include the ballots of about 200 Confederate soldiers in the county's two volunteer companies. These men were in service outside the county and were thus unable to participate in the May 23 plebiscite within Pendleton, but their votes for secession were a foregone conclusion.

In the wake of the strong secessionist majority exhibited in the referendum returns, the county court of Pendleton was called into session on June 6, 1861. After the disposal of certain routine matters pertaining to deeds and estates, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

> Whereas the Convention of Virginia by the Ordinance of Secefsion [sic], having disolved [sic] all connection between the United States of America and the State of Virginia, and said Ordinance having been ratified by an overwhelming Majority of the voters of the State, and thus exempting all officers of Virginia from Their Obligation to Support the said Constitution of the United States _____.
>
> Be it therefore resolved by this Court that if any Member or Members of the Court have any scruples or doubts upon the Subject it is hereby declared to be their duty to resign Their Offices forthwith _____.[20]

All the "Gentlemen Justices" in attendance then swore allegiance to the constitution of the Confederate States of America. Present and taking the oath were James Boggs as presiding justice, Benjamin Hiner, James A. Harding, Sampson Day, Johnson Sites, Solomon Hedrick, Jesse Waybright, William H. Lough, William Dyer, Saulsberry Trumbo, Jacob

Trumbo, John Kiser, Samuel Puffenbarger, Daniel Harold, Isaac Teter, John W. Dolly, Harry F. Temple, Jacob Dove, and John E. Wilson.[21]

At the same session it was ordered that the sheriff collect eight cents per 100 dollars value on land and taxable property to raise the 1,158 dollars levied at this same meeting of the court, the funds to be applied for the benefit of the volunteer companies of the county.[22]

A third military company from the county enlisted June 9, 1861 for service of one year and mustered June 11 at Hightown, Highland County. Named the Pendleton Rifles, it was composed wholly of farmers without military experience, except for the scanty knowledge gleaned from the annual militia musters. George H. Smith, a Gilmer County lawyer and later colonel of the Twenty-fifth Virginia Infantry and Sixty-second Virginia Mounted Infantry, was elected captain by unanimous vote. Each soldier of the Pendleton Rifles was supplied with a pair of pants, a cap, a linsey-woolsey shirt, an old-fashioned (by 1861 standards) flintlock musket, and a half dozen rounds of ammunition. Immediately after its formation, this company marched westward over the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike to join Confederate forces which had already retreated from Philippi to the vicinity of Rich Mountain, Randolph County.[23]

In the spring of 1861, the government and a preponderance of the people of Pendleton committed their treasure and their sons in a vigorous endorsement of Virginia's support for the Confederacy. In the rush and confusion of events, the sentiments and doubts of the minority who had voted against the secession ordinance were eclipsed by the enthusiasm — and perhaps intimidation — of their neighbors. But this

element, though muted and unorganized for the moment, could not permit the county's secessionists to remain unchallenged indefinitely. The discontent and disruptive potential of the Unionists, only temporarily held in abeyance, portended the harsh tragedies of the fratricidal strife that would inevitably develop.

Notes

[1]Oren F. Morton, A History of Pendleton County, West Virginia (Franklin, W. Va.: The Author, 1910) pp. 103, 352-53, hereinafter referred to as Pendleton County.

[2]Elizabeth Cometti and Festus P. Summers, The Thirty-fifth State: A Documentary History of West Virginia (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Company, 1966), pp. 285-86, hereinafter referred to as Thirty-fifth State; Henry T. Shanks, The Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847-1861 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), pp. 115-19, hereinafter cited as Secession Movement.

[3]Shanks, Secession Movement, p. 204; William H. Gaines, Jr., Biographical Register of Members, Virginia State Convention of 1861, First Session (Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1969), p. 58. Although Morton on p. 255 of Pendleton County recognizes that Masters voted against secession, in the text on p. 107 he incorrectly states that Masters voted "with the majority," i.e., the secessionists. A few delegates who had first opposed secession subsequently signed the ordinance after the will of the convention became clear. Masters was not one of these.

[4]Richard O. Curry, A House Divided, A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), p. 145, hereinafter referred to as House Divided.

[5]Shanks, Secession Movement, pp. 116, 206, 209.

[6]Charles H. Ambler and Festus P. Summers, West Virginia, the Mountain State (2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1958), p. 186, hereinafter cited as West Virginia.

[7]Joseph F. Rishel, "West Virginia: Analysis of the Secession Ordinance Referendum, May 23, 1861," West Virginia History, XXXII (October, 1970), pp. 52-53.

[8]Record Book A, Pendleton County Court, 1856-73, hereinafter cited as County Court.

[9]Elsie Byrd Boggs, The Hammers and Allied Families (Harrisonburg, Va.: Joseph K. Ruebush Company, 1950), p. 61, hereinafter referred to as Hammers.

[10]County Court, pp. 235-36.

[11]Ibid., pp. 237, 318.

[12]Lee A. Wallace, Jr., compiler, A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations, 1861-1865 (Richmond: Virginia Civil War Commission, 1964), pp. 140-41, hereinafter cited as Military Organizations; Morton, Pendleton County, p. 406.

[13]Boggs, Hammers, p. 84.

[14]United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 70 vols. in 128 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881-1901), Series I, Vol. II, p. 848, hereinafter cited as Official Records.

[15]Ibid., Vol. LI, Pt. II, pp. 93-94.

[16]Shanks, Secession Movement, p. 213.

[17]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 94.

[18]Curry, House Divided, p. 53.

[19]Ibid., p. 145.

[20]County Court, p. 238.

[21]Ibid. Morton erroneously attributes this action of the court to May 10.

[22]Ibid., p. 240.

[23]H. M. Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South (Franklin, W. Va.: McCoy Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 7-8; Wallace, Military Organizations, p. 140.

II. HOSTILITIES IN ADJACENT COUNTIES

The civilian population of Pendleton did not immediately experience first-hand the violence and depredations of war. The mails continued to be carried between Franklin and Petersburg for a time after the initial outbreaks of armed conflict between Federal and Confederate forces elsewhere.[1] The county court transacted the public business as usual, engaged with such routine matters as the maintenance of roads, the administration of estates, the licensing of businesses, and the adjudication of criminal and civil actions under the laws of Virginia. Indeed, the exigencies of war seemed sufficiently remote that after the initial flurries of activity at the time of the formation of military companies and the ratification of secession, the sole reference in the court records of 1861 to the existence of war was an order for the election of an overseer of the poor, the vacancy occasioned by the inability of D. C. Anderson to perform his duties on account of his membership in a volunteer company.[2]

Philippi, Rich Mountain, and Corricks Ford

In May of 1861 both the Federals and Confederates took steps to secure northwestern Virginia for their respective governments. A small force of Southern troops under Colonel George A. Porterfield occupied Grafton on May 24. The town was an important point on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and junction of the roads to Wheeling and Parkersburg.[3] Pendleton's two companies marched from Monterey to Grafton to join

Porterfield, and participated in the Confederate withdrawal from Grafton to Philippi, prompted by the much larger approaching Federal forces and the latter town's greater sympathies for secession.[4] During the retreat to Philippi, while the troops were marching along a railroad track, a false rumor spread to the effect that the arrival of cars carrying large numbers of Union troops was imminent. Great confusion developed among the untrained and unseasoned Confederate soldiers. Charles Campbell of Highland County noted, and later recorded in his diary, that amidst the chaos in other units "Captain Moomau forms his guards ready to fire. There is pluck in the captain that I like."[5]

On June 1, the Virginia Advisory Council urged Governor Letcher to order the militia of Pendleton and neighboring counties to Philippi to reinforce the Confederate command there. However, before this troop movement could be put into effect, Porterfield had been driven from the town.[6] In the early morning of June 3, a force of 3,400 Federals, commanded by Colonel Benjamin F. Kelley, attacked the 800 Confederates at Philippi. The surprise was complete as the Union troops had marched all night in a driving rain and the undisciplined Southern pickets, who had abandoned their posts to remain dry, did not expect an attack. The Confederate soldiers were generally thrown into pandemonium as the reports of the several Federal cannon broke the morning calm. So hastily did the Rebels retreat toward Beverly, Randolph County, that their withdrawal came to be known as the "Philippi races." The only Federal to receive a serious wound was Colonel Kelley.[7] While the dubious honor of inflicting Kelley's wound

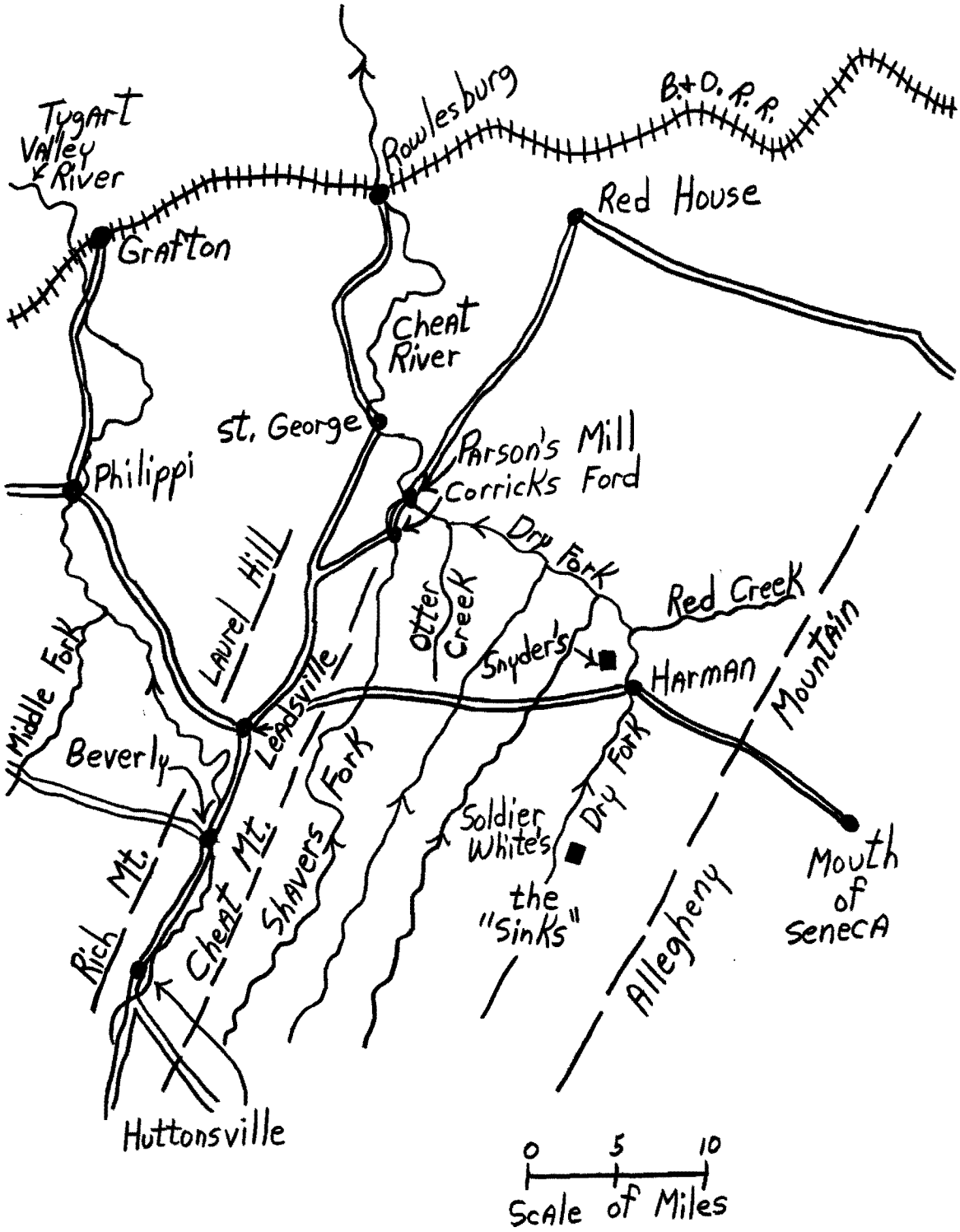

Plate No. 5. The Tygart and Cheat Valleys

had numerous claimants, one account states that in the tumult Captain "Muma" was able to keep some of his men together and fire on the attacking Federals, wounding Kelley in the process.[8] Despite the fact that many seemed unable to spell the captain's surname correctly, the courage and bearing of Moomau and the Franklin Guards excited much admiration.

Following the Confederate rout from Philippi to Beverly, Captain Moomau marched the Franklin Guards and some Highland troops across the Alleghenies directly from Beverly to Pendleton,[9] arriving in Franklin on June 6. Accompanied by the newly organized Pendleton Rifles, the Guards three days later again left Franklin with their destination the juncture with Confederate forces at Huttonsville, Randolph County.[10] There, on July 1, twenty-four companies of western Virginians were organized into the Twenty-fifth and Thirty-first Virginia infantry regiments, commanded by Colonels J. M. Heck and William L. Jackson, respectively. Governor Letcher had called out the militia of Highland, Pendleton, and Bath, but Colonel Heck took only about 300 men from the three counties so that the majority could remain on their farms and tend their crops.[11] The Guards and Rifles became Companies B and E of the Twenty-fifth Regiment while the Minute Men became Company B of the Thirty-first.[12]

On June 14, 1861, Brigadier General Robert S. Garnett arrived in Huttonsville to assume command of the Confederate army in the Tygart Valley. This force, soon to be augmented to almost 8,000 men, probably never exceeded half the size of the opposing body of Union troops under Major General George B. McClellan. Garnett fortified the strategic

highway passes at Rich Mountain and Laurel Hill in an attempt to defend the territory east of the passes and at the same time threaten the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. But on July 11 a force of 2,000 Federals under the immediate command of General William S. Rosecrans gained control of Rich Mountain Pass by flanking five companies of Confederates and their single artillery piece. Rosecrans was aided in this maneuver by young David Hart, who guided the Northern troops along a little known mountain path to the enemy rear. Lieutenant Colonel John Pegram, commanding the Confederates at Rich Mountain, decided that his men were too demoralized to counter-attack the numerically superior Federal forces. Moreover, Pegram erroneously believed that Union troops had already occupied Beverly and thus thwarted his withdrawal southward toward Huttonsville, near where a portion of the Confederate command — the Twentieth and Forty-fourth Virginia Regiments — was in rapid retreat. After encountering slight resistance to his feeble attempt to unite with Garnett's larger force at Laurel Hill to the north, Pegram felt compelled to surrender his 555 men, most of whom were exhausted and had not eaten in two days.[13]

Most of his officers concurred with Pegram's view that all avenues of escape were cut off and that, considering the famished state of their soldiers, surrender remained as the only possible course of action. Lieutenant Colonel Heck and Captain Moomau alone opposed capitulation. Following the Philippi affair, Moomau had marched his men via the Seneca road over the Cheat and Allegheny Mountains to Pendleton. He believed that Pegram's entire force, consisting of most of the Twenty-fifth Virginia, could escape by this same road which was

close at hand. But Pegram, his men already exceedingly hungry, presumed that trail too rough and the region too thinly peopled to sustain his command. While Pegram prepared to surrender his troops to McClellan at Beverly on July 13, without his superior's permission Captain Moomau slipped away in the night of July 12, leading forty of his men over the mountains to Seneca and then to Monterey. Possibly all of the force could have thus escaped if Moomau's bold suggestion had been acted upon.[14]

The Pendleton Rifles and fifty-two members of the Franklin Guards surrendered at Beverly. These men were paroled and later exchanged. The Pendleton casualties at Rich Mountain were sustained by Company E of the Twenty-fifth Virginia Infantry. Morgan Moyers was killed and Frederick Crummett wounded on Rich Mountain. On July 6, John C. Dahmer and David A. Van Meter suffered wounds in the skirmish at Middle Fork Bridge. The first county soldier to be killed in the war was Washington Phares of the Minute Men. He died at Laurel Hill where his company served as part of the Thirty-first Virginia which, along with the First Georgia and Twenty-third Virginia, comprised the bulk of the 3,400 troops under General Garnett.[15]

When Garnett learned that Pegram had been dislodged from Rich Mountain Pass, he immediately began to retreat southward from Laurel Hill to avoid being cut off. Five miles from Beverly on the morning of July 12, Garnett discovered that Federal troops had already entered that town. Since it was to be several hours before McClellan occupied Beverly in strength, Garnett could have forced his way through the town. But falling into essentially the same error as Pegram, he

considered the southern avenue of retreat to be effectively barred. Eschewing an attempted escape over the Seneca road for the same reasons as Pegram, this left only a withdrawal northeastward through Parson's Mill to the Northwestern Virginia Turnpike at Red House, Maryland. Pursued by General Thomas Morris, Garnett was killed at Corricks Ford as his rear guard skirmished with the Federals. The Southern troops, now totally disorganized, nevertheless continued to Red House, and then trudged south again via Greenland Gap, Petersburg, and Franklin to Monterey.[16] On July 17 the remnants of Garnett's force passed through Upper Tract, Pendleton County. Many citizens of this place provided foodstuffs for the weary, half-starved troops.[17] In Franklin this scene was repeated as a great crowd of friendly people brought wagonloads of provisions for the soldiers. Described as "nearly perished and certainly not very polite," the men finally climbed into each wagon and began tossing out "meat and bread and pies and cakes, like a farmer throws corn to his hogs."[18]

The Pendleton Minute Men of course shared in the 135 mile trek from Laurel Hill to Franklin. So many of its members suffered from illness as a result of the march that the entire company received an eight day furlough upon arrival in its home county. As a consequence of widespread sickness and demoralization, a company muster and payroll dated October 31, 1861 reveals that the company had not yet reformed as a functioning unit, although some members were serving in a detached capacity. Of ninety-one men listed, twenty-nine were sick and nineteen had deserted.[19]

A smaller residue of Garnett's army retreated across Pendleton via a different route. As Garnett withdrew toward Corricks Ford, about 200 Georgia troops concealed themselves behind a fence along the line of march, with the object of ambushing their pursuers as they approached. Inexplicably, the Confederates failed to open fire, the Federals passed them by, and they found themselves severed from the main body of the Southern force. Taking flight to the woods, the Georgians encountered James Parsons, a local inhabitant who guided them across the Alleghenies to Pendleton by way of Otter Creek. Navigating this trackless wilderness by compass and peeling bark from the birch trees for food, the Rebel band reached and crossed Pendleton County, finally arriving at the Confederate lines in Highland County.[20] According to Morton, a portion of Garnett's army marched up the North Fork. If so, it must have been the Georgians.[21]

After the debacle, Brigadier General Henry R. Jackson assumed command at Monterey and was confronted with the task of transforming the bedraggled and demoralized "debris" into an effective military force. On July 20 he described a sizable portion of his men at Monterey as "pitiable" and

> . . . absolutely stripped of everything — tents, clothing, cooking utensils, shoes — and I am sorry to believe that many have thrown away their arms. Men and horses, jaded, dispirited, halt, and limping are wholly unfit for duty. . . .[22]

In addition to problems of organization, supply, and morale, illness continued to plague the Confederates in Highland. Leonard Harper Hammer, a Pendleton soldier, wrote home on August 18 that

"We have about seven hundred sick men between here [Camp Bartow] and McDowell. When we were in Monterey they died very fast."[23]

It must be remembered that these were essentially the same troops who several months later would repulse the Federals at Greenbrier River and Allegheny Mountain. But at the time Jackson feared that with such material to pit against McClellan, the prospects for defending Staunton and the Virginia Central Railroad appeared bleak. Exaggerated reports of McClellan's strength compounded the gloom.[24] Garnett's defeat and the subsequent retreat of his force also precipitated a panic in Pocahontas and Greenbrier counties where it was generally believed that the Federals would probably pursue the disorganized Confederates and open the Greenbrier Valley to attack.[25] However, these threats did not materialize.

The military events in western Virginia in the summer of 1861 possessed national as well as local implications. In the wake of the Federal disaster at Bull Run, McClellan's success was seized upon by a nation desperate for a victory, and the "Napoleon of the West" was catapulted to the command of the Army of the Potomac. Fortunately for the Confederates at Monterey, McClellan removed many of his units from western Virginia to bolster his force at Washington. The Federal control of the Tygart Valley was achieved, a fact which the South was unable to successfully challenge for the duration of the war despite several spectacular Rebel incursions. Most important, Federal dominance in the Tygart Valley assured the ultimate success of the Restored Government of Virginia and the creation of the new state of West Virginia, of which Pendleton County was destined to become a part.[26]

Cheat Mountain, Greenbrier River, and Camp Allegheny

Pendleton was spared invasion in 1861. On the northwest and southeast the county was protected by the towering Allegheny and Shenandoah ranges. The county was most susceptible to attack from the northeast along the axes of its parallel valleys, but this particular vulnerability was not exploited. However, just south of the county line lay the strategically important Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike, which followed the approximate path of present-day U.S. Route 250. Most of the nearby conflict remaining in 1861 occurred along this roadway. In the absence of effective resistance, the Federals would be able to march over this thoroughfare across the mountains directly to Staunton and the Virginia Central Railroad. In the opposite direction, to the west, this highway led to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Grafton, junction of the rail lines to both Wheeling and Parkersburg.

On July 15 General Jackson reported the force at Monterey to consist of approximately 2,500 effective troops.[27] The town became a depot of supplies transported from Staunton. Jackson worried that Monterey, while suitable as a depot, could not be defended without fortifying the passes on Cheat or Allegheny mountains to the west.[28] Also realizing the possibility of a Federal advance through Pendleton, he ordered scouting patrols to continually probe the valleys of the Potomac's tributaries to Petersburg and beyond.[29] The general complained that the troops engaged in scouting were most inefficient. Consisting of volunteers and militia from surrounding

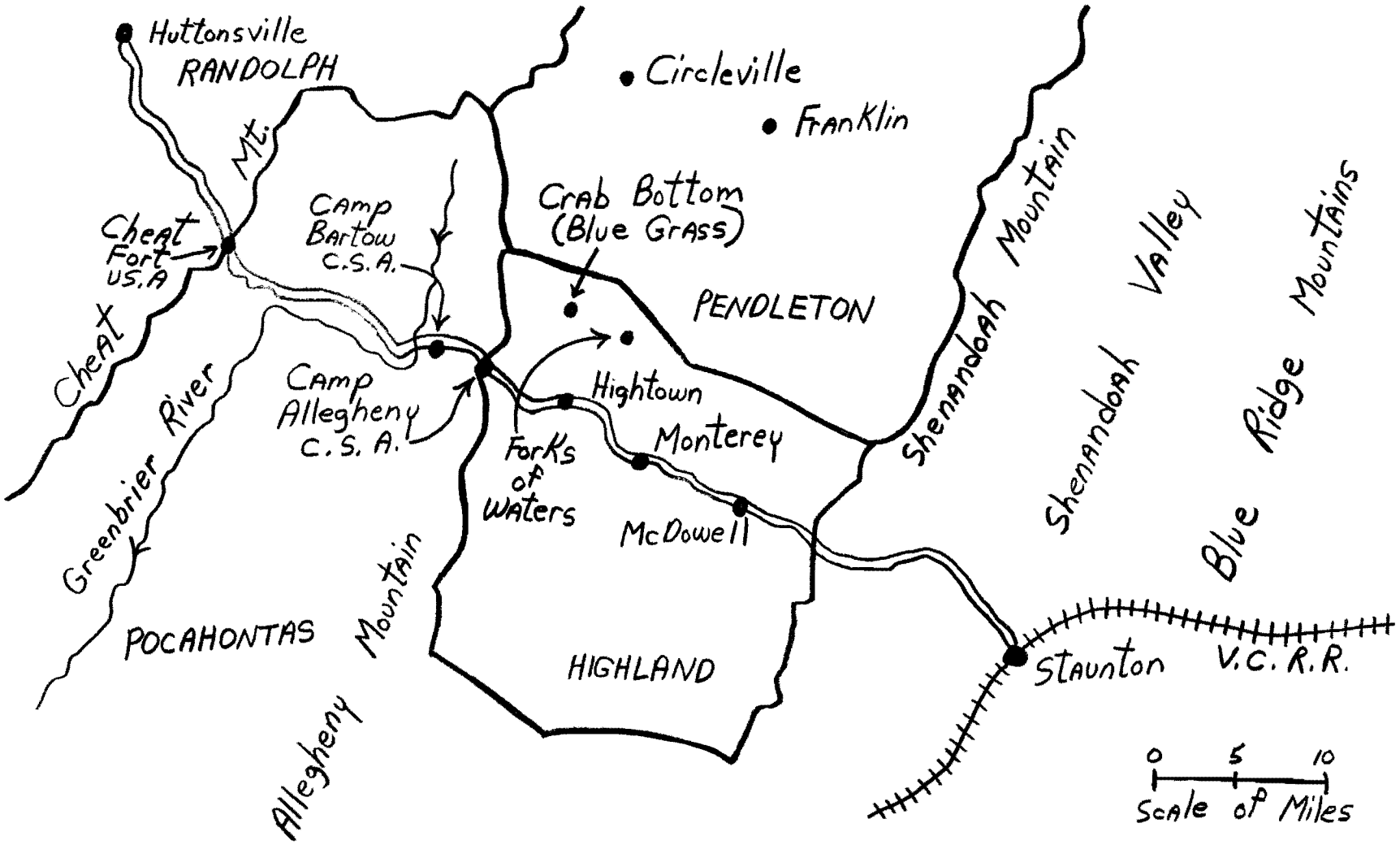

Plate No. 6. The Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike

counties, these soldiers continually applied for furloughs, not only as individuals but as "entire commands." Apparently, numerous men visited their homes and families without permission, for Jackson expressed the hope that his force would be strengthened by the "return to duty of the absent."[30] His censure probably included portions of the Minute Men and Guards, who were then performing detached scouting service in Pendleton and Hardy under the command of Lieutenant W. McCoy. The former company was particularly riddled with absenteeism from sickness and desertion. In early September parts of the two companies were occupying an advanced post at Petersburg. On the seventh of that month, the force was defeated and compelled to retire to a position within Pendleton.[31]

As the new Federal commander in western Virginia following McClellan's departure, Rosecrans fortified Cheat Mountain Pass on the turnpike east of Huttonsville. On July 24 Brigadier General William W. Loring arrived in Monterey to take command of the Confederate troops in Highland and Pocahontas counties, about 8,500 effective men, half of whom were situated at Huntersville.[32] Early in August General Robert E. Lee appeared on the scene to undertake an assault against the Federal fortification on Cheat Mountain, for which preparations were completed a month later. However, these attacks — which were executed from September 12 to 15 — were repulsed by Union troops commanded by General J. J. Reynolds. Several weeks later on October 3, Reynolds with 5,000 Ohio and Indiana infantry attacked 2,000 Confederates under H. R. Jackson at Camp Bartow, where the turnpike crossed the east fork of the Greenbrier River. Reynolds

withdrew after a seven and one-half hour engagement in which the defenders suffered a loss of thirty-nine casualties and the Federals, forty-three.[33] Pendleton soldiers may have fought in this battle as members of the Thirty-first Virginia Regiment.[34]

From Romney on October 28, General Benjamin F. Kelley issued a proclamation to the people of the upper Potomac, urging their loyalty to the United States, and promising protection of all their rights with minimal interference in their customary activities or livelihoods. Those who had borne arms against the government were exhorted to lay them aside and swear the oath of allegiance. At the same time, Kelley pledged that those engaging in guerrilla warfare against his forces would be dealt with harshly. He predicted that Pendleton and other South Branch counties would be Unionist if adequately protected by Federal troops, and in a November 6 communication to McClellan advocated Federal occupation of the valley.[35] Kelley would not be the last Union commander to underestimate Pendleton's attachment to Virginia and the South.

So critical did the Confederates consider the defense of the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike that, despite the shortages of supplies and rations by autumn, they prepared to maintain a fortified position on it for the winter. In mid-November, the Southern troops withdrew eastward from Camp Bartow to Camp Allegheny (also known as Allegheny Summit and Camp Baldwin), situated at the summit and astride the turnpike a mile west of the Highland — Pocahontas line. At an elevation of 4,250 feet, this was the loftiest winter campground to be occupied by Southern troops during the course of the war.

Colonel Edward Johnson of the Twelfth Georgia was placed in charge of 1,200 Confederates on Allegheny Summit, including his own regiment and portions of the Twenty-fifth, Thirty-first, and Fifty-second Virginia regiments, Hansbrough's battalion, Flournoy's cavalry company and the eight-six-pounders of the Lee and Rockbridge batteries. Also included under Johnson's command were the Forty-fourth Virginia and a section of Rice's battery at a post on the road to Monterey, plus a small force at Crab Bottom (since renamed Blue Grass). Cavalry had been left at Camp Bartow to scout in the direction of the Federal position on Cheat Mountain.[36] During this interval frequent skirmishes occurred between Union scouts operating from their camp on Cheat and Confederate patrols from Allegheny Summit and Bartow.[37]

A second disposition ordered by General H. R. Jackson for the Army of the Northwest involved Colonel W. B. Taliaferro, who was assigned to the command of a force composed of the First Georgia, Third Arkansas, Twenty-third Virginia, Thirty-seventh Virginia, and cavalry stationed at Monterey. Posted at Forks of Waters were the Fifty-eighth Virginia and a section of Rice's battery. Taliaferro's cavalry was engaged in scouting the countryside northward through Pendleton toward Petersburg. On November 26 Taliaferro reported the capture of a number of Union men who had fired upon and killed some of his soldiers, a preview to the vicious bushwhacker's warfare that would soon afflict western Virginia.[38] In December, the colonel and four regiments were transferred to Manassas, leaving the defense of Highland solely to Johnson's force. The removal of Taliaferro's regiments to another theater of the war, and rumors predicting the

withdrawal of Johnson's command from atop Allegheny, occasioned great excitement among and numerous petitions from the inhabitants of nearby counties, who now feared that they would be accorded no protection from "the ravages of the notorious Yankees."[39]

On December 4, William Harrison Hammer of the Franklin Guards wrote his father from Allegheny Summit that he found the

> . . . weather very cold. We have four regiments, three of which have already built huts with fire-places and the other will be finished by next week. I never saw work done so fast in my life. A trench is being dug around the batteries and this takes four hundred hands. The Yankees are still on Cheat Mountain. We are ready for them, but I doubt if they attack us here.[40]

This prophesy was a faulty one. Six days later Brigadier General Robert H. Milroy relieved Reynolds of the command of the Cheat Mountain District and on December 12 initiated the Federal advance against Camp Allegheny. That same day Johnson had dispatched a Confederate scouting party of 106 men, which ambushed the front of Milroy's column near the eastern summit of Cheat Mountain. This incident, in which Johnson reported "some 8 or 10" Federals killed, alerted the Confederates to the approach of the enemy force. Before daybreak on the morning of December 13, 1861, the Southern pickets exchanged musket fire with one of two separate Union columns totaling 1,760 men, but which the Confederates estimated at 5,000 Federals. Several guides, believed by Johnson to be deserters, piloted one of the columns to the Confederate position by a steep, rocky trail leading to the right and slightly to the rear of the defending force.

The Confederate right was assaulted by the Twenty-fifth Ohio and portions of the Thirteenth Indiana and Thirty-second Ohio, about thirty minutes before the Ninth Indiana and the Second (West) Virginia struck the Southern left. It was intended that both bodies would attack at the same time, but the one column prematurely encountered Rebel pickets and then had no alternative but to open the contest before the other units could place themselves in position. The left of the field was fortified by entrenchments and artillery, but no defenses had been constructed on the mountain crest to the right, where Pendleton soldiers in the Twenty-fifth and Thirty-first Virginia fought. Also on this part of the battlefield were companies of the Ninth Virginia and Twelfth Georgia, which helped to battle the enemy through the fields of stumps and fallen timber ascending to the summit ridge. After both sides had rallied several times, the bluecoats were finally driven from their cover and down the slope. The engagement of the two armies in force began about 7:15 a.m. and raged until 1:45 p.m., at which time the Federals withdrew in defeat, perhaps because their two arms had failed to strike simultaneously.

Each side sustained twenty fatalities in the struggle; the Southern wounded totaled ninety-eight and the Northern, 107.[41] Pendleton casualties at Allegheny Mountain were all members of Company E of the Twenty-fifth Virginia. Zebulon Dyer was killed; Charles E. Dyer and Abel Mitchell were wounded. Sergeant E. W. Boggs, who commanded a detachment of county soldiers during the battle, lost an arm.[42]

For having repulsed the Federals, Johnson was promoted to brigadier general, commended by the Confederate Congress, and received the sobriquet "Allegheny" Johnson. His force continued the occupation of Camp Allegheny through the winter until the following April.[43]

Confederate Military Organizations

Prior to the engagement at Rich Mountain in July of 1861, the Pendleton Minute Men became Company B, Thirty-first Virginia Infantry Regiment, and the Franklin Guards and Pendleton Rifles were renamed Companies B and E respectively, Twenty-fifth Virginia Infantry. The Minute Men originally enlisted May 18, 1861 for one year. Having suffered illness and demoralization as a consequence of its retreat with Garnett's army, this company was reorganized on May 1, 1862, as Company K, Twenty-fifth Regiment, Virginia Volunteers. Captains of this company in the order of their service were David C. Anderson, Wilson Harper, and John J. Dunkle. Captain Anderson resigned his commission on August 20, 1861, and Wilson Harper was promoted to that position almost two weeks later on September 2. Harper was destined to rise to the rank of major, assuming command of the Twenty-fifth Virginia in mid-1864, and constituting Pendleton's highest-ranking officer in the regular service at the conclusion of hostilities in April 1865.

The Pendleton Rifles enlisted on June 9, 1861, and were commanded only by Captain George H. Smith before being captured at Beverly on July 13, little more than a month later. Members not captured were assigned to other companies in the Twenty-fifth Regiment.

After the prisoners were exchanged, the company was reorganized November 19, 1862, and on January 28, 1863, was transferred to the Sixty-second Virginia Infantry, becoming Company I. Some members were assigned to a second Company E, Twenty-fifth Regiment, apparently formed by Captain Smith before members of his old company had been exchanged. This new company,which was created from "members of various other companies of the 12 months' organization of the regiment, and recruits from the Virginia Militia," was reorganized, along with the entire regiment, on May 1, 1862. Smith was succeeded as captain by E. W. Boggs and later J. H. Johnson, both Pendleton men.

The Franklin Guards had enlisted May 14, 1861, for a year's service. A portion of the company surrendered at Beverly two months later and was paroled. Denominated as Company B, Twenty-fifth Regiment and commanded by John B. Moomau prior to its capture, the company following its exchange was reorganized November 19, 1862, under Captain Charles D. Boggs, and on January 28, 1863, became Company F, Sixty-second Virginia. Some of the men not captured in July 1861 were subsequently assigned to other companies of the Twenty-fifth Regiment.[44]

Pendleton's Forty-sixth Regiment of Virginia Militia was commanded at the outbreak of the war by Colonel Jehu F. Johnson and included in a brigade under Brigadier General James Boggs. Morton states that this regiment was summoned into service in the spring of 1861 and served briefly under Thomas J. Jackson "in the lower extremity of the South Branch Valley."[45] This possibly refers to the seizure of the U. S. arsenal at Harper's Ferry by troops of the

Virginia Militia on April 16, 1861.[46] Again on November 14, Major General Jackson ordered this regiment into service for six months. It was disbanded April 5, 1862. Company A was captained by Emanuel H. Mitchell. After this company's dissolution, some of its members were assigned to Company E, Twenty-fifth Regiment. Captain Jonathan Hiser commanded Company B which contributed soldiers to Company E of the Twenty-fifth and to Colonel Imboden's Partisan Rangers. William S. Arbogast served as the captain of Company C. Also, a company was led by Captain Joseph H. Lantz. Part of this unit was captured on March 4, 1862, at their camp at Mouth of Seneca while guarding the pass through the Allegheny Mountains. A few members subsequently belonged to the Eighteenth Virginia Cavalry.[47]

In addition to the Guards and Rifles, which were attached to the Sixty-second Regiment in late January of 1863, other companies of the regiment were composed of and commanded by Pendleton soldiers. This command had its beginnings as the First Regiment Virginia Partisan Rangers. In March of 1862, Governor Letcher, in hopes of hindering Union pacification of western Virginia and thwarting the separate statehood movement, issued a proclamation urging trans-Allegheny Virginians to adopt the tactics of guerrilla warfare. Commissions were issued for the recruitment of such irregular units, of which Colonel John D. Imboden's Partisan Rangers became one of the best known.[48]

On June 23, 1862, Imboden informed the Secretary of War that he planned to visit Pendleton and neighboring counties that week to muster several companies into his Partisan Rangers.[49] One such unit

was mustered in June of 1862 on the old militia drill field at the confluence of North Fork and Dry Run. Captain Absalom H. Nelson was elected to lead the company, which was composed of men from the Upper North Fork, Smith Creek, the South Branch upstream from Franklin, and East Dry Run. On September 4, 1862, Nelson's company was reorganized (from Company E of the Partisan Rangers) as Company C, Sixty-second Virginia Regiment. John B. Moomau succeeded Nelson as captain. Recruited at about the same time was Company K (formerly Company B, Partisan Rangers), which was enlisted near McCoy Mill and consisted of recruits from the South Fork Valley. As was the case with Company C, these included former members of disbanded militia companies or of the other volunteer companies formed prior to Rich Mountain. Captain James H. Carrickhoff of Rockingham County commanded the company, which was organized on July 29, 1862. Company D (once Company K of the Partisan Rangers) consisted mostly of Highland men but was headed by Captain Soloman Fleisher, whom Morton lists as a Pendleton soldier. This company was organized on September 27, 1862, for the duration of the war. County men also served in the Eighteenth Cavalry, especially in Company A.[50]

On September 9, 1862, the Sixty-second Regiment completed its organization at Warm Springs, Virginia. It was composed of both cavalry and infantry until December of 1862, when the regiment's cavalry companies were combined with other mounted units in the creation of the Eighteenth Virginia Cavalry. Sometime in 1863 the regiment was mounted, becoming the Sixty-second Virginia Mounted Infantry Regiment. Organized to fight either as cavalry or infantry

depending on the circumstances, its soldiers were armed with carbines and sabers. When required to engage the enemy as infantry, every fourth man held his own and three other horses while his comrades went into action. Colonel John D. Imboden served as the regiment's commander until he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in January of 1863. At that time Colonel George H. Smith of the Twenty-fifth Regiment was transferred to the command of the Sixty-second.[51]

The Eighteenth and Sixty-second regiments of Imboden's Northwestern Virginia Brigade were often engaged in operations in trans-Allegheny Virginia (West Virginia after June of 1863) and in defense of the Shenandoah and South Branch valleys. But when the Confederacy became hard-pressed for soldiers, the Sixty-second was obliged to participate in the campaigns of Gettysburg and Cold Harbor, among others. Aside from Gettysburg, the Eighteenth Cavalry mainly saw action in the Valley of Virginia. In contrast to the sometimes local activities of the Sixty-second especially, the Twenty-fifth Infantry generally performed its service far beyond the county's borders, including participation in many of the major engagements of the war. However, the Twenty-fifth did cross the Alleghenies with Imboden on his raid in April of 1863.[52]

In addition to service in regular Confederate army units which operated in regions distant from Pendleton, many county men remained at home as members of various irregular companies that were responsible for much of the local strife. The Dixie Boys constituted one of the first of these Rebel bands. Commanded by Captain Sampson Elza of Randolph County, it consisted of men from the Dry Fork area of

Randolph and the North Fork Valley of Pendleton. At some point subsequent to the initial formation of this group, its Pendleton constituents organized themselves as a separate contingent but retained the original title of Dixie Boys. Although not the rank and file, the leaders of this company were in the regular Confederate service, Amos B. Warner in Company C, Sixty-second Infantry, and Steward D. Bland, Company A, Eighteenth Cavalry.

Later Captain Harmon Hiner commanded another Rebel company composed of men from the South Branch and South Fork Valleys. These were known as the Pendleton Reserves or "Pizarinktums." Attached to this organization of younger men was a contingent of those too old for duty in the regular army. The latter, a remnant of the antebellum militia, was facetiously referred to as the Groundhog Battery because it was seldom called out except in periods of dire emergency.[53] Some county men fought in regularly constituted units that applied guerrilla methods. Examples include Imboden's semi-irregular but well-disciplined First Regiment Virginia Partisan Rangers and McNeill's Rangers, this last company at various times incorporated into the Sixty-second Mounted Infantry or Eighteenth Cavalry of Imboden's brigade.[54]

No command in the regular Federal service was ever organized from predominantly Pendleton men, although later in the war the county's few Unionist communities contributed their own companies, at first irregular, then designated as State Troops of West Virginia. But in the earlier years the Confederate element, very much in the majority, expressed devotion to its principles more overtly and vigorously.

Of 732 county men listed by Morton as having served the Confederate cause, eighty-two were killed in battle or from ambush, fifty-three died from other causes, and twenty-one more perished in Federal prisons. The death toll of 156 amounts to a mortality rate in excess of twenty-one percent. The total of those wounded would naturally be much greater.[55]

The important zones of conflict in western Virginia in 1861 — the Tygart Valley just to the west, and the length of the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike immediately to the south — did not directly touch Pendleton. The eventual exchange of county soldiers following their surrender at Beverly, as well as the rehabilitation of the remnants of Garnett's force, began the first of several major reorganizations of units containing Pendleton men. These initial reorganizations were naturally intended to enhance the efficiency of the Southern troops in preparation for the great struggle yet to come. In large measure, however, the important question of Pendleton's future alignment with the embryonic state of West Virginia had already been decided by the Tygart Valley campaign of 1861.

Notes

[1]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 109.

[2]County Court, p. 242.

[3]Robert White, "West Virginia," Confederate Military History, ed. by Clement A. Evans, Vol. II (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, copyright 1962 by A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc.), p. 14, hereinafter cited as Confederate Military History, Vol. II.

[4]George Ellis Moore, A Banner in the Hills: West Virginia's Statehood (New York: Appleton — Century — Crofts, 1963), p. 71, hereinafter referred to as Banner in the Hills.

[5]Diary of Charles Lewis Campbell, in William T. Price, On to Grafton: An Account of One of the First Campaigns of the Civil War, May 1861 (Marlinton: 1901, reprinted Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, Inc. [1960]), p. 51, hereinafter cited as On to Grafton.

[6]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 124; Roland Lee Sevy, "John Letcher and West Virginia," West Virginia History, XXVII (October, 1965), p. 45.

[7]Moore, Banner in the Hills, pp. 72-74.

[8]David Poe, Personal Reminiscences of the Civil War (Buckhannon: Upshur Republican Print, 1911), p. 6.

[9]Diary of Osborne Wilson, On to Grafton, p. 40.

[10]Boggs, Hammers, p. 84.

[11]Confederate Military History, Vol. II, p. 17.

[12]Wallace, Military Organizations, pp. 140-41.

[13]Moore, Banner in the Hills, pp. 89, 91-95; Jed Hotchkiss, "Virginia," Confederate Military History, ed. by Clement A. Evans, Vol. III (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, copyright 1962 by A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc.), pp. 47-53, hereinafter referred to as Confederate Military History, Vol. III.

[14]Confederate Military History, Vol. III, pp. 53-54.

[15]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 261-62, 266, 275; Confederate Military History, Vol. II, p. 19 and Vol. III, p. 54; Morton, Pendleton County, p. 422. On p. 406 Morton incorrectly states that the Rifles were at Laurel Hill under Captain Anderson. In fact

the Rifles were at Rich Mountain under George H. Smith. Morton was totally unaware of the existence of one of Pendleton's three volunteer companies, the Minute Men, which Anderson commanded.

[16]Moore, Banner in the Hills, pp. 96-98. Historians have traditionally referred to the site of Garnett's death as Carrick's Ford. However, Fansler notes that the correct spelling is Corricks, not Carrick's. Homer Floyd Fansler, History of Tucker County, West Virginia (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Company, 1962), p. 162, hereinafter cited as Tucker County.

[17]Diary of Osborne Wilson, On to Grafton, p. 45.

[18]John Henry Cammack, Personal Recollections (Huntington: Paragon Printing and Publishing Co., [1923]), p. 33.

[19]Roy Bird Cook, "Roster of Company D, 31st Regiment of Virginia Volunteers," Pendleton Times, December 11, 1936, p. 2 and January 8, 1937, p. 4, hereinafter referred to as "Company D." The title of this article should probably read Company B, not D.

[20]Hu Maxwell, "Retreat of General Robert S. Garnett," Trans-allegheny Historical Magazine, I (April, 1902), p. 229.

[21]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 109.

[22]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 181.

[23]Boggs, Hammers, p. 69.

[24]Official Records, I, Vol. II, p. 984.

[25]Ibid., Vol. LI, Pt. II, pp. 178-79.

[26]Moore, Banner in the Hills, p. 98.

[27]Ibid., pp. 111-12.

[28]Official Records, I, Vol. II, pp. 985, 997-98.

[29]Ibid., p. 249; Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 228.

[30]Official Records, I, Vol. II, pp. 997-98.

[31]Cook, "Company D."

[32]Confederate Military History, Vol. II, pp. 31-33.

[33]Ibid., pp. 40, 42-44.

[34]Official Records, I, Vol. V, p. 228.

[35]Ibid., pp. 638-39, 644.

[36]Ibid., Vol. LI, Pt. II, pp. 382, 388,394; Confederate Military History, Vol. II, pp. 44-45, and Vol. III, pp. 171-73; Stan Cohen, "Top of Allegheny," West Virginia History, Vol. XXVIII (April, 1967), p. 318.

[37]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. I, p. 51.

[38]Ibid., Pt. II, pp. 382, 388, 390.

[39]Ibid., pp. 397, 407, 414.

[40]Boggs, Hammers, p. 73.

[41]Official Records, I, Vol. V, pp. 456-68; Confederate Military History, Vol. II, pp. 44-45, and Vol. III, pp. 171-77.

[42]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 267, 270.

[43]Oren F. Morton, A History of Highland County, Virginia (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1969), p. 122, hereinafter referred to as Highland County.

[44]Wallace, Military Organizations, pp. 139-41; Cook, "Company D."

[45]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 406.

[46]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, p. 193.

[47]Wallace, Military Organizations, p. 280.

[48]Richard O. Curry and F. Gerald Ham, "The Bushwhacker's War: Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in West Virginia," Civil War History X (1964), p. 423, hereinafter cited as "Bushwhacker's War."

[49]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 578.

[50]Wallace, Military Organizations, pp. 75, 139, 191-92; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 9-10; Morton, Pendleton County, p. 416. Calhoun asserts that in June 1862 Company F of the same regiment was recruited in Franklin and was comprised of men from the county seat and the South Branch Valley north of that point. In fact there were two Company F's according to Wallace. The second was the Franklin Guards which constituted Company F (also called B as a battalion) of the Twenty-fifth Regiment until January 28, 1863, at which time the Guards became Company F, Sixty-second Regiment. The first Company F organized initially as a unit of the Partisan Rangers and was commanded by Captains Granville Carlin and later Mortimer C. Johnson. After the Rangers reorganized as the Sixty-second Virginia, this

company became Company H. Of the more than 700 Pendleton Confederates listed by Morton on pp. 412-29, only five are designated as having served in Company H. However, this was a cavalry company, part of which was transferred to the Eighteenth Cavalry, Company A, which contained a high proportion of Pendleton men. It is therefore possible that the transfer included most of the county soldiers who could have been recruited in the early summer of 1862. But it seems more likely that Calhoun's sources were confused over the company designations and dates of organization. Only a painstaking analysis of the various company rosters would seem able to resolve this question, a task which is beyond the scope of this paper.

[51]Wallace, Military Organizations, p. 191; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 10.

[52]Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 406-08. Ibid., pp. 412-29. The high frequency of involvement of the Sixty-second Regiment in raids, scouts, and skirmishes west of Shenandoah Mountain is suggested by an examination of the county's Confederate soldiers killed in Pendleton or nearby areas. A large proportion of these were members of the Sixty-second. Excluding the actions at McDowell and Rich and Allegheny mountains, Morton's list, although far from complete, includes the following: Stewart Cassel, unattached, killed near Riverton; William Freeland, Company F, Sixty-second, at Beverly; William Harper, unattached, on the Upper North Fork; Harness Judy, Company C, Sixty-second, near Moorefield; Obidiah Lambert, Company C, Sixty-second, near Franklin; Henry Mowrey, Company A, Pendleton Reserves, near Macksville; Peyton Moyers, Company F, Sixty-second, at Beverly; Joseph Propst, Company K, Sixty-second, at Beverly; William Shottiger, McNeill's Rangers, at Beverly; William Siple, Militia, at Greenland Gap; Michael Ketterman, Company K, Sixty-second, at McDowell; Henry W. Swadley, Company A, Pendleton Reserves, near Macksville; Wilson Summerfield, Company C, Sixty-second, near Macksville; Hamilton Vint, Company K, Sixty-second, near McDowell; and Jesse Waybright, Forty-Sixth Regiment, Virginia Militia, shot and killed from ambush while at his home.

[53]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 14-15.

[54]Wallace, Military Organizations, p. 192.

[55]Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 402-03, 409.

III. THE WAR COMES TO PENDLETON

The County Court Combats Inflation and Scarcities in 1862

Among the Confederate states, Virginia was unique in that problems of relief occasioned by wartime conditions remained primarily the responsibility of the various municipalities or county courts throughout the war. The increasingly severe scarcity of goods accompanied by rampant inflation made imperative the rendition of aid to certain elements in the population. The high incidence of desertion could in many cases be attributed to the desperate economic situation on the home front, and the natural inclination of Southern soldiers to leave their units in order to assure the survival of their families. Poor relief had traditionally been a concern of the county court. Early in the war Virginia specifically delegated the matter of succor for the destitute to the county courts and retroactively legalized actions already taken.[1]

During the March 6, 1862 session of the county court of Pendleton, Benjamin Hiner was elected presiding justice in the stead of James Boggs who had died in January. At this meeting the court ordered that the fund of 200 dollars appropriated at the January session for the relief of the families of militiamen in the service of Virginia be increased to 300 dollars, this sum to be taken from the monies previously provided for the benefit of the families of the

volunteer companies. A magistrate from each of the county's six districts was appointed to administer the distribution of this fund.[2]

By 1862, inflation and scarcities were beginning to assume serious proportions in Virginia, compounding the difficulties of prosecuting the war. Joseph Waddell of Staunton, seat of contiguous Augusta County, noted in his diary that by July brown sugar sold for seventy-five cents a pound. Coffee, totally unavailable in Staunton, sold elsewhere in Virginia for two dollars a pound. By mid-October Waddell wrote that supplies of all types had become exceedingly scarce. Flour sold for fourteen dollars per barrel, and butter for seventy-five cents per pound. On October 22, he wrote that "We have more to fear from the scarcity of subsistence and clothing than from the Federal armies," a statement pertaining to conditions in Staunton but certainly applicable to many families in Pendleton as well.[3]

As early as March of 1862, the county court of Pendleton decided that the inflation problem required action. Asserting that the county had been

> . . . completely inundated with a spurious currency, . . . which will soon depreciate in value, if not prove wholly worthless; and will most likely be left in the hands of the poorer clafs [sic], least able to bear the lofs [sic], . . .[4]

the court ordered the issue and dissemination of county treasury notes to provide a safer currency for Pendleton citizens. Bonds were to be issued in denominations of 25, 20, 15, and 10 dollars as were county treasury notes of much smaller value, the latter to be redeemable in the larger bonds. Two dollar, one dollar, and fifty cent notes were

to be circulated, each denomination in the amount of 600 dollars. Thirty-five and thirty cent notes were authorized, 300 dollars worth of each. Twenty-five, ten, and five cent notes were also to be issued, each in the amount of 100 dollars. The court ordered that the new currency be printed as quickly as possible and distributed among the merchants of the county.

A recurring practice in western Virginia throughout the war consisted of raids by both sides into the seats of counties held by the enemy for the purpose of sowing confusion and civil disorder by destroying public records. Pendleton's records remained intact throughout the conflict although Franklin was subject to such Federal forays. It was during the March 6 session of the court that the clerk was authorized to remove the county records to a safer repository should the town be threatened by the "Public enemy."[5] Destruction of county property seems to have been caused not only by Federal, but also occasionally Southern troops. At the April convocation a committee appointed by the court ascertained that the court house and public square had been damaged to the extent of forty-five dollars as a consequence of its occupation by the Charlotte Cavalry.[6]

One especially critical item that early in the war came to be in short supply was salt. In May of 1862, the Virginia Assembly appropriated funds to stimulate the state's production of salt, and authorized the county courts to purchase such quantities of this mineral as their people might require. The salt was to be purchased by the counties, financed by loans or levies, and then distributed among the populace at cost.[7] The Pendleton justices selected Benjamin

Hiner as the agent responsible for procuring salt for the county. Two hundred bushels per month were ordered to be purchased from the state's supply.

The last war-related business considered by the court in 1862 involved a charge of treason against James Burgoyne, Reuban Harman, and Henry Mowery. No details concerning the acts upon which the allegations were based can be found in the court records. On the motion of the prosecuting attorney and with the acquiescence of the court, these charges were dismissed at the November 6 session.[8]

The First Incursion of Federals

Following his abortive attempt to dislodge the Confederates from their position atop Allegheny Mountain in December of 1861, Milroy wintered his Federals at Cheat Mountain and Beverly. Periodically scouts and patrols were sent out from Milroy's brigade for reconnaissance and pursuit of Confederate guerrillas.[9] Such a patrol entered Pendleton by way of Harman, Randloph County and established an encampment at Mouth of Seneca on March 1, 1862. Captain George R. Latham was in command of eight or nine hundred men, the first known Federal regulars to enter the county.

The North Fork Valley was also occupied by Southern defenders. Two small detachments of the Charlotte Cavalry and the Rockbridge Cavalry were posted in Germany Valley for the protection of Southern sympathizers in that vicinity. A small company of North Fork men, led by Captain Joseph H. Lantz, congregated at the old log Lutheran church, a mile and a half south of Mouth of Seneca. Many of Lantz's

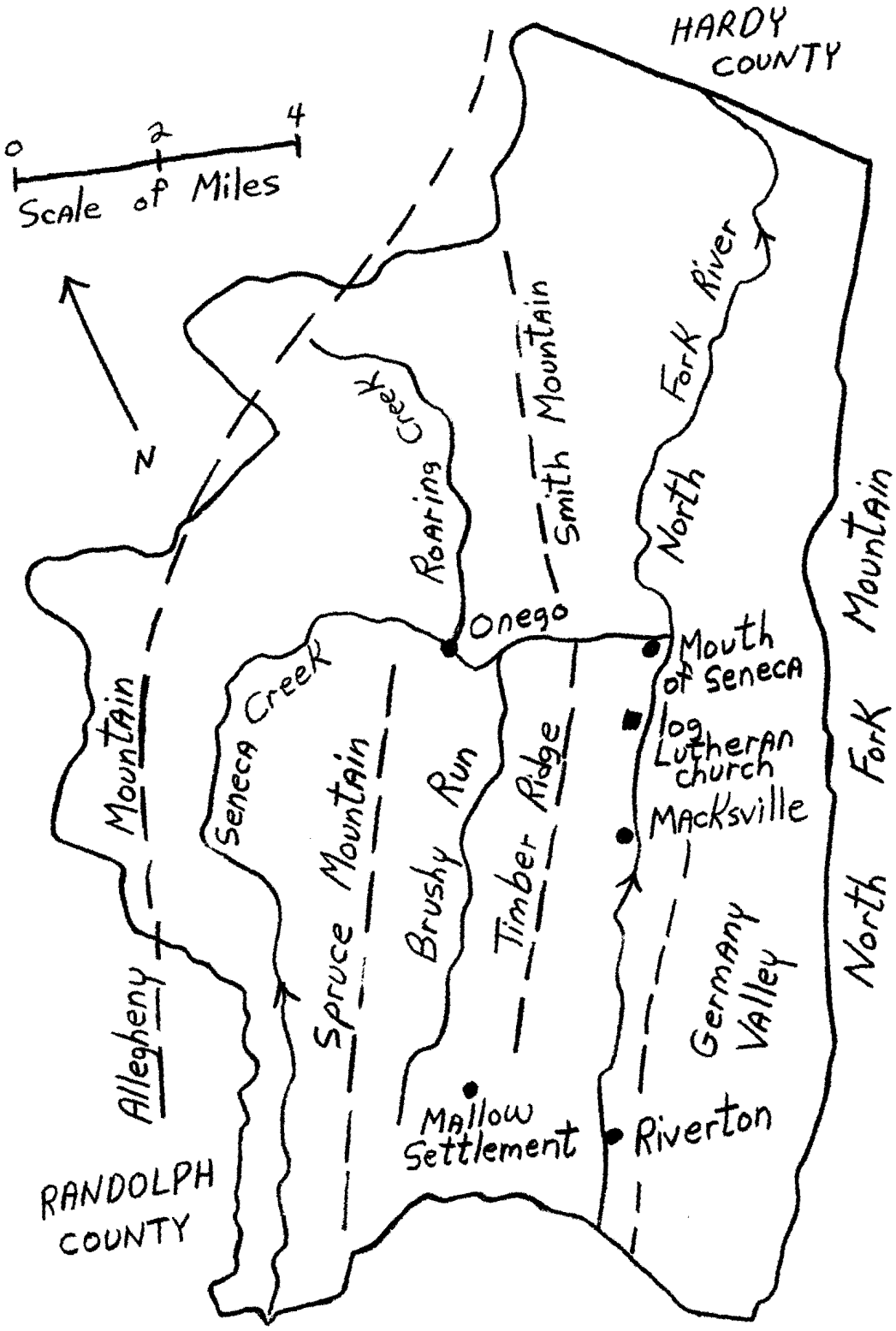

Plate No. 7. District No. 5 (Union)

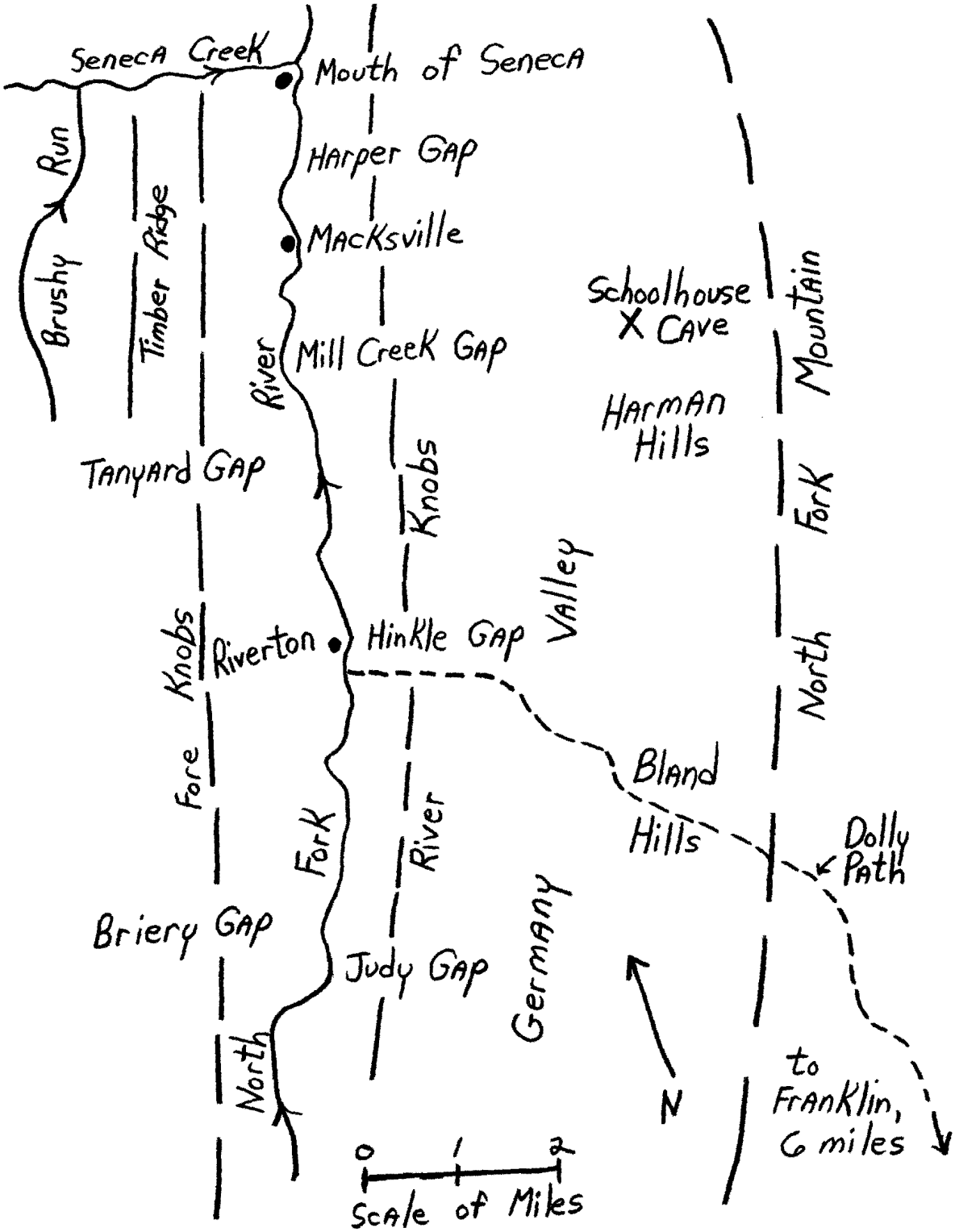

Plate No. 8. Germany Valley and Vicinity

men were still unsure of where to place their allegiances in those confused and unsettled times, and therefore continued as members of this militia company in the absence of clearly expedient alternatives. Inefficiently armed with flintlock rifles and pepper-box pistols, and lacking even the rudiments of military training, this motley group fled before the advance of the Federals, but not before a number, including Captain Lantz, were taken prisoner.[10]

On March 2, a contingent of Federals advanced south along the North Fork to clear the area of Rebel forces. The Union soldiers were met by a small force composed of Dixie Boys and some of the men from Lantz's company. The Rebels were ensconced in the rocks bordering the Hinkle Gap leading into Germany Valley, this defile being situated immediately east of the present village of Riverton. Their plan was to ambush the Federals from this very strong defensive position, after which the cavalry would charge down upon the front of the Northern troops, who after the unexpected ambuscade would hopefully be thrown into some confusion. However, the plan was never fully executed. The Dixie Boys opened fire with the desired results, but the cavalry, instead of charging, fled over North Fork Mountain via the Dolly Path to Franklin. The outnumbered Rebels were forced to fall back into Germany Valley, in the course of which Perry Bland of Lantz's company and Thomas Powers of the Dixie Boys were killed. The Federals did not venture far into Germany Valley and soon retired to their camp at Seneca for the night. But before withdrawing, they dragged the two corpses from the mountainside, draping them over a fence as a warning to the local inhabitants with respect to the fate of Rebels.[11]

The next day William Freeland, a paroled member of the Franklin Guards, and seventeen year old George W. Hammer traveled on horseback from the South Branch to the North Fork to obtain news of the recent events there. Upon reaching Germany Valley both were captured by a Lieutenant Weaver and a detachment of infantry from the Eighth Ohio. When questioned on the purpose of their mission, they replied that they were going courting. Not finding this pretext compelling, the Federals accused the two of spying, and according to one version of the incident, sentenced them to be shot. Luckily for young George Hammer, his cousin Abe Hinkle had dared to incur the hatred of his Confederate relatives by remaining loyal to the Union. Upon learning of George's predicament, Abe interceded for his cousin and managed to have his sentence commuted to confinement in prison.[12]

The two prisoners were taken to Seneca on March 4; there they found a number of men from Lantz's company in custody. These included Captain Lantz, George Bennett, Laban Teter, Tobias Raines, James B. Buckbee, William Sites, Sr., and Jonathan Nelson, among others. As these men were members of the Virginia militia, their continued captivity would seem legitimate. But also taken prisoner were some Southern sympathizers too aged for military service, including Jacob Phares, Copelin Thompson, Solomon Hedrick, and Philip Harper. The prisoners were marched that day to the house of Soldier White on Dry Fork in Randolph County. That night Freeland was able to escape and return to Franklin with his belated report of these happenings. Young Hammer, and presumably the other captives as well, was then taken to Beverly and incarcerated in the Randolph County jail for several weeks.

Following that sojourn the prisoners were removed to Camp Carlile in Wheeling where they were offered the opportunity to return to their homes if they would swear allegiance to the Union. Captain Lantz, George Bennett, and Laban Teter took the oath, but all others refused and were consequently transferred to the Federal prison at Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio. In mid-September some Pendleton men, including George Hammer, were removed to Johnson's Island in Lake Erie. Hammer was exchanged on November 24; he returned home to enter the Sixty-second Regiment.[13]

Arbitrary Arrest

Early in the war President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus, an action he considered necessary for the preservation of the Union. This action must have seemed particularly fitting to Unionists acquainted with the division of sentiment, the breakdown of civil order, and the resort to guerrilla warfare which characterized western Virginia. The need to combat the troublesome and proliferating Confederate irregulars, often little more than bandits clothed in Southern patriotism, and the impotence of the usual instruments of orderly justice seemed to justify the arbitrary arrests of suspected persons even if definite evidence of overt acts in support of the rebellion were weak or absent altogether. It was common practice for patrols authorized to arrest specific persons to also apprehend others against whom no charges had been lodged. If the evidence against a captive appeared inconclusive, he was often released upon his taking the oath of allegiance.

One student of the subject, after analyzing the reasons for the arrests of western Virginians as presented in the Official Records, concludes that probably only a little over fifty percent of the prisoners were apprehended for really legitimate reasons. During 1861 the State Department administered this area and many arrests were made on trivial charges. But in February of 1862 the War Department assumed this responsibility, and a review of individual cases was undertaken to secure the release of those persons against whom the charges lacked substance. Stricter standards for the sufficiency of allegations justifying detention were promulgated, but many unwarranted arrests continued to be made.[14]

A March 13, 1862 register of former prisoners discharged from Camp Chase or Camp Carlile includes the name of Hezekiah Bennett, the only person listed as a resident of Pendleton County. This report contains no date of arrest or discharge, stating merely that Bennett was "released on oath and bond."[15] A list of prisoners in custody dated two days later reveals six county names and the reasons for their incarceration. Bushrod Coberly was charged with service as a "Rebel mail carrier." George W. Hammer was alleged to have been a "Rebel scout; violating parole." Hammer seems to have been confused with his comrade Freeland on the last part of the charge. "Jacobs Farris" (Jacob Phares) was accused of "Giving aid to the enemy." Anthony McDonald was charged with being a "Rebel aider and horsethief." William Sites was arrested for his membership "In Captain Lauty's (Lantz's) militia company; unorganized." The charge against "Coplin" (Copelin) Thompson alleged that he was a "Rebel aider" guilty of "intimidating Union citizens."[16]

During the entire course of the war sixty-five Pendletonians were imprisoned at Camp Chase. Of these seventeen were civilians and the remainder consisted of captured Confederate soldiers. Thirteen of the sixty-five died while confined there. Among those eventually to be captured and incarcerated at Camp Chase were Stewart D. Bland and Amos B. Warner, the leaders of the Dixie Boys. Civilian officials suffering the same experience included John E. Wilson and Solomon Hedrick, justices of the county court, and John M. Jones, clerk.[17]

The Flight of the Mennonites and Dunkards

In 1860 the Shenandoah Valley counties of Augusta and Rockingham were the home of about 400 Mennonite families and a somewhat larger number of Dunkards, this latter group also referred to variously as Brethern, Dunkers, or Tunkers. The adherents of these religious groups accepted literally the teachings of Christ to "love your enemies" and "turn the other cheek," and therefore usually refused to bear arms for the Confederacy. During 1861 some young Mennonites fled to the mountains to avoid military service. Many others served, but refused to shoot at the enemy or purposely took ineffective aim. By late spring of 1862, the need for the Confederates to obtain every able-bodied man became acute, but the determination of the Mennonites and Dunkards to resist conscription also crystallized by that time. This resistance was stiffened by the stand of Mennonite Bishop Samuel Coffman, who ruled that acquiescence in military service disqualified one for church membership.

In contrast to the reluctant cooperation of 1861, many more men of draft age hid or fled.[18]

In a March 21, 1862 communication to Governor Letcher, General T. J. Jackson wrote of his intention to employ the religious objectors in such noncombatant roles as teamsters. He also noted that eighteen of these had recently been captured in their attempt to escape to the Union lines through Pendleton County, the usual path of the pacifists' flight.[19] By this date an extensive system of letter delivery, hide-outs,and guides had been developed through Mennonite and Dunkard cooperation to pilot the refugees over the mountains of Pendleton to Petersburg in Hardy County, a post often occupied by Federal soldiers.

Flight was usually undertaken in groups, most of which reached the Union lines. However, at least two had the misfortune to be captured. One of these bands, comprised of seventy-six fugitives, left the Valley of Virginia on March 13, 1862, passing through Hopkins Gap and traversing the Shenandoah Mountain. ". . . we arrived at Judy's on the South Fork where we stayed all night. The next day we crossed Ketterman's Mountain and came to the South Branch of the Potomac." A short distance beyond Petersburg, the group was apprehended by two Rebel scouts. Despite their large number, they submitted meekly to the Confederates' authority. This was hardly a hazardous endeavor for the two scouts, for with the exception of a single pistol, these gentle people were totally unarmed.

The captives were immediately started on the weary trek over the mountains toward Richmond for incarceration. The first night was spent at the home of Captain Bond on North Mill Creek, where one Mennonite

escaped. On March 16 they arrived in Franklin where a few more prisoners were added. Here the refugees were placed under guard in the Pendleton courthouse where they slept on the floor. The next day the prisoners reached Monterey, and two days later entered Staunton.[20] Joseph Waddell noted their presence in his diary on March 19, 1862.

> Some, if not all of them, are simple-hearted, inoffensive people belonging to the Dunkard Church, whose tenets forbid going to war. They will be sent to Richmond tomorrow, and are confined tonight in the courthouse, every door and window being guarded by a sentinel. There is something pitiful in the case of these people, flying as they were to escape conscription, and being taken like partridges on the mountains.[21]

Also in March, probably after the larger group had been captured, eighteen fugitives, mostly Dunkards, were arrested by Confederate soldiers near Moorfield, Hardy County.[22]

As a result of lobbying efforts on the part of the pacifist religious sects, on October 11, 1862, the Confederate Congress enacted a law exempting members of Quaker, Dunkard, Nazarene, and Mennonite churches from military service, provided they furnish substitutes or remit a tax of 500 dollars. One reporter credited the quiet submission of the seventy-six runaways near Petersburg with convincing the Congress that the pacifist convictions of these sects were sincerely held.[23]

During the subsequent interval of a year and a half, the members of these churches were generally spared pressures to enter the army. But as the manpower resources of the South inevitably became strained, exemptions from service were correspondingly more difficult to obtain, a problem reflected in the increasing number of fugitives seeking the

Union lines. One group of nineteen Dunkards who fled to Petersburg found their number swollen to sixty-three after two weeks at that town. Often the escapees were just verging on military eligibility. Of one band of seventeen runaways, fifteen were seventeen year old boys. Flight through Pendleton apparently continued until October of 1864, when many Mennonite and Dunkard families, and nearly all the sixteen and seventeen year old boys, left the devastated Valley of Virginia for the North under the protection of Sheridan's troops, not to return until the conclusion of the war.[24]

At least one Mennonite refugee established his new home in Pendleton. "Potter John" D. Heatwole deserted from the Confederate army, apparently sometime after the spring of 1863. For a while he secreted himself in the mountains, but eventually the authorities located his hiding place and sent soldiers to apprehend him. Warned of the imminent danger of his capture, Heatwole eluded his pursuers by walking backward through the snow to the top of a mountain. Fleeing westward, he found asylum for the remainder of the war in the neighborhood of Mouth of Seneca. His preaching in that vicinity led to the erection of the first Mennonite meeting house in the new state of West Virginia following the close of the war.[25]

One other significant religious development for this same area resulted from the war, although not involving Dunkards or Mennonites. Lutheranism constituted the predominant faith in the North Fork Valley at the outbreak of the rebellion. One and a half miles south of Mouth of Seneca stood the log Lutheran Church where Reverend George Schmucker had served as pastor since 1841. With the advent of war,

the members of the congregation with few exceptions became ardent Unionists, while Reverend Schmucker strongly supported the Southern cause. During the war the church structure was renamed Camp Luther and alternately used by both Union and Confederate forces as a barracks or base of operations. Considered a nuisance because it attracted soldiers to that specific point, its complete destruction by fire sometime during the war was said to have been caused by the women of nearby farms. The physical destruction of the church sanctuary, in conjunction with the estrangement between minister and congregation, ended the life of the Lutheran Church on the North Fork. Efforts to rejuvenate the congregation immediately after the war proved fruitless, and there have been few if any Lutherans in that valley since.[26]

Thus, it was not until early 1862 that Pendletonians began to feel the ominous burdens of war on their home ground. By that spring, Federal regulars had initially penetrated the county's boundaries, shed native blood, and threatened civil liberties with the policy of arbitrary arrest. During this period, the county court adopted its first strong measures to cope with the inflation and scarcities induced by the war. For all their seriousness, however, these perplexities were merely the inauspicious beginnings of crises destined to take drastic turns for the worse as the struggle evolved. Large forces of both sides would soon occupy the county. Most lethal of all, the bane of incipient guerrilla warfare was rising up in the people's midst.

Notes

[1]William Frank Zornow, "Aid for the Indigent Families of Soldiers in Virginia, 1861 - 1865," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 66 (October, 1958), pp. 454-55, hereinafter referred to as "Indigent Families."

[2]County Court, p. 259, Morton, Pendleton County, p. 182.

[3]Jos. A. Waddell, Annals of Augusta County, Virginia, from 1726 to 1871 (2nd ed.: Bridgewater, Virginia: C. J. Carrier Company, 1958), pp. 475, 477-78, hereinafter referred to as Annals of Augusta.

[4]County Court, p. 259.

[5]Ibid., pp. 259-61.

[6]Ibid., pp. 264-65.

[7]Zornow, "Indigent Families," pp. 457-58.

[8]County Court, pp. 266, 269, 274.

[9]George Weimer Goldthorpe, "The Battle of McDowell, May 8, 1862," West Virginia History, XIII (April, 1952), p. 167, hereinafter cited as "Battle of McDowell.

[10]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 16-17. One source claims that about thirty of Lantz's company were captured. See John D. Keister, "First Civil War Battle in Pendleton County Fought Near Riverton," Pendleton Times, January 23, 1931, p. 1.

[11]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 18-19.

[12]Boggs, Hammers, pp. 62-63.

[13]Ibid., p. 63; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 20-21.

[14]James Branham, "Arbitrary Arrest in West Virginia, 1861-1865" (unpublished M.A. thesis, West Virginia University, 1959), pp. 31-35.

[15]Official Records, II, Vol. II, p. 264.

[16]Ibid., pp. 267-68.

[17]Ibid., pp. 264-68; H. M. Calhoun, "Memorial Address Delivered by H. M. Calhoun, of Franklin, W. Va. at Camp Chase, Ohio on June 1, 1929" (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Company, 1973), Appendix.

[18]Samuel Horst, Mennonites in the Confederacy, A Study in Civil War Pacifism (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1967), pp. 15, 16, 29, 34, 37, 41, hereinafter referred to as Mennonites in the Confederacy.

[19]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 835.

[20]Horst, Mennonites in the Confederacy, pp. 44-45, 51-52, 121-22.

[21]Waddell, Annals of Augusta, p. 466.

[22]Horst, Mennonites in the Confederacy, p. 56.

[23]Ibid., pp. 80, 82.

[24]Ibid., pp. 85, 89, 104-07.

[25]Ibid., pp. 74, 125-26; Harry A. Brunk, History of Mennonites in Virginia, 1727-1900, Vol. I (Staunton, Va.: McClure Printing Company, 1959), pp. 361-62.

[26]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 115-16.

IV. McDOWELL AND ITS PRELUDE

On March 29, 1862, Major General John C. Fremont assumed command of the Mountain Department, supplanting General Rosecrans. President Lincoln appointed Fremont not primarily for his skill as a military leader, but to appease the Republican Party's radical wing, disgruntled since the "Pathfinder" had been removed from his command in Missouri as a result of overzealous abolitionist activities embarrassing to Lincoln. The Mountain Department, which consisted of about 19,000 Federal troops, included the Railroad District under Brigadier General B. F. Kelley, the Cumberland District commanded by Brigadier General Robert C. Schenck, and the Cheat Mountain District under Brigadier General Robert H. Milroy.[1]

Lincoln was very much interested in having Fremont march from western Virginia into eastern Tennessee, relieve the pro-Unionist element there, and capture the railroad center at Knoxville. Fremont devised a plan to accomplish these objectives. With Blenker's division, Fremont would march up the South Branch Valley, joining Schenck's brigade at Moorefield or Franklin. At Monterey Milroy's brigade would be added, and the united command would march to Salem, Virginia, destroying the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad at that point. The railroad was far and away the most important line of transport and supply between the northeast and southwest sections of the Confederacy. Fremont would then advance along the railroad to Knoxville. In southwestern Virginia the army of General Jacob Cox

would assist by proceeding eastward from the Kanawha Valley. Part of this proposal was finally approved by Lincoln and Stanton, but the objective was changed. At Salem, instead of advancing into Tennessee, Fremont would move along the railroad in the opposite direction, toward Richmond, having combined with General Banks' force of 14,000 men that in the interim would have marched up the Shenandoah Valley in an advance parallel to Fremont's progress up the South Branch. Thus, Fremont's movements would constitute part of a strategy for the capture of Richmond and the Confederate army defending that city. Also converging on the Southern capital would be General McClellan with over 100,000 troops approaching from the east, and General McDowell with 40,000 men on the north bank of the Rappahannock, ready to advance when the enemy's movements ceased to threaten the safety of Washington, D. C.[2]

Rebel Guerrilla Activity

Before Fremont had taken charge of the newly created Mountain Department or formulated his strategy, Milroy had planned to march eastward from Cheat Mountain along the turnpike to Staunton. On March 16, 1862, Milroy advised Rosecrans that conscription in Pocahontas and Highland counties had spread much disaffection with the Southern cause, and that a demonstration toward Staunton would encourage the Unionist sentiment in these areas.[3] There doubtless were Unionists in the two counties, both adjacent to Pendleton, but Milroy certainly exaggerated in his dispatch to Rosecrans three days

later when he wrote of "general consternation" there. Forty-six refugees from the two counties had informed Milroy of "forcible drafts into rebel army under penalty of death for refusal. They beg and pray for protection; say hundreds will assist in driving out traitors if we come over."[4] Subsequent wartime developments suggest that in accepting these reports as fact, the general overestimated the strength of Union feeling in these counties.

In the early spring of 1862, General Johnson's army of 3,000 Confederates and twelve cannon were in occupation of Camp Allegheny. This force consisted of a small cavalry detachment and six infantry regiments, the Twelfth Georgia, and the Twenty-fifth, Thirty-first, Forty-fourth, Fifty-second, and Fifty-eighth Virginia regiments. Small outlying commands were posted at Franklin, Crab Bottom, and Monterey. About the first of April Johnson withdrew eastward to the crest of Shenandoah Mountain so that his rear and right flank would not be exposed to a Federal force marching up the South Branch.[5] Having been in Highland County at this time, Joseph Waddell reported in his diary on April 3 that in Highland, Pendleton, and Bath counties the withdrawal had "caused a great panic. . . . Many of the people were flying to get away from the Yankees. It was really painful to witness the anxiety of the women."[6] At Monterey the order went out that all members of Pendleton companies that had escaped capture at Rich Mountain were to join Johnson's Army of the Northwest. A similar call was issued to the soldiers of the county's Forty-sixth Militia Regiment, which disbanded April 5, 1862.[7]

All the while that the Federals were maneuvering in the implementation of Fremont's plan, Confederate guerrillas continued to harass them. The activity of these Rebel irregulars had intensified during the spring of 1862, encouraged by Governor Letcher's commissions authorizing the recruitment of "Ranger" companies. Their presence severely hampered Federal troops in western Virginia. Not only did all supply trains require a heavy guard, but troops were scattered over the mountains in an attempt to protect the inhabitants of Unionist communities, making it more difficult for the Federals to concentrate their forces for effective operations. General Milroy complained especially of this last handicap and recommended the formation of home guard units to relieve his men of such details.[8]

In correspondence dated March 31, Milroy informed Fremont that, a week before, 300 Rebel guerrillas had attacked a Unionist settlement in Pendleton, the exact locale unspecified but probably in the vicinity of the North Fork and its tributary, Seneca Creek. Seventy-five loyal citizens had repulsed the Confederates, almost certainly Captain Elza's Dixie Boys, until the latter were reinforced. Milroy had 300 men of the Twenty-fifth Ohio under Major Webster sent to their aid.[9] Setting out from Beverly, this Federal patrol passed through Seneca and Circleville on its way to Monterey to join Milroy. No record of any encounter with the Rebel guerrillas could be found. Portions of its route over "almost impassable roads" had not previously been visited by Union troops — a reference to the Upper North Fork.[10]

On April 6, Fremont notified Secretary of War Stanton that Milroy had occupied Allegheny Summit, and that the Confederate forces

appeared to be withdrawing eastward. Milroy was ordered to take possession of Monterey or hold some defensible point west of the town.[11] The next day Milroy advised Fremont that a scouting party of ninety Federals under Captain Latham, sent out from Cheat Mountain the previous week, had entered Monterey, traveling via Circleville and Crab Bottom. Milroy proposed to move his headquarters to Monterey on April 8, and recommended that supplies be transported from New Creek to Monterey by way of Franklin rather than Beverly. Two days later a contingent of his troops was stationed at Crab Bottom as well.

On April 9, Milroy informed Fremont from Monterey that Johnson's force held a position beyond the Shenandoah Mountain, but that 300 Confederate cavalry were at McDowell. At this time the countryside was covered with a deep snow and beset by freezing rains. Ice-encrusted roads impeded troop movements and supply efforts. As the ice and snow melted over the next several days, the swollen river fords became impassable further adding to the difficulties of Milroy's supply trains.[12] At Monterey on the thirteenth, the Federals repulsed an attacking force Milroy estimated to be 1,000 strong.[13]

Although Pendleton was predominantly Southern in sympathy, its divisions in sentiment are illustrated by Fremont's report on the seventeenth that "Franklin is rebellious, but the flag was cheered at points along the road" as detachments from the brigades of Milroy and Schenck passed through the county.[14]

The guerrillas of Pendleton continued to be troublesome. On April 18, Fremont directed Milroy to dispatch troops from Monterey down the North Fork to Seneca Creek, and down the South Branch as well,

blocking every likely road by which the Rebel irregulars on the North Fork might attempt to escape. At the same time and in coordination with Milroy, General Schenck was ordered to send detachments from Moorefield to the North Fork while he proceeded to Franklin with the bulk of his command. Their instructions further stated that all Rebels found at the houses of "Sylvanus Harper, of Bennett, of Hedwick, of Ferris, and the Arbigasses" (Hedrick, Phares, and the Arbogasts) should be arrested, and the members of their bands killed or captured. Lieutenant Colonel T. M. Harris, commanding at Weston, was directed to block the passes through Randolph County by which the Rebels might escape westward to the Tygart Valley.[15]

This expedition yielded at least slight success, for the April 25 issue of The New-York Commercial reported that one of Milroy's patrols had captured eight Rebels on the North Fork, including "Barnett, a notorious guerrilla."[16] The name Bennett was apparently corrupted into Barnett in this account. Writing from McDowell on May 1, Milroy apprised Fremont of a recent guerrilla attack resulting in a Federal loss of twenty wagons and about eighty horses. In response, Milroy was compelling the local citizenry to furnish horses for another wagon train, and had dispatched several parties to pursue the guerrillas of Highland and Pendleton.[17] However, most evaded capture, for on May 11 Schenck reported the same band of 300 harassing Union people on the North Fork and Seneca Creek.[18] Bushwhackers and guerrillas were not limited to the North Fork Valley. On May 6, bushwhackers attacked and almost captured a forage train of Milroy's brigade on the South Branch. General Schenck sent a cavalry squad to apprehend the attackers, but the Rebels were not to be found.[19]

The Approaches to McDowell

During the interval between April 23 and May 5, 1862, and preceding the general Federal advance, Company A of the Fifty-fifth Ohio Volunteer Infantry was engaged in stringing a telegraph line along the South Branch from Moorefield to Franklin, a distance of forty miles. About four miles of the line were constructed per day. The remainder of the regiment occupied Franklin, and cavalry scouts daily patrolled the road along the line. At Franklin, a telegraph office was established in the brick home of William McCoy.[20]

One of the soldiers of the Fifty-fifth described the inhabitants of the valley traversed by the telegraph wire as "very ignorant, and most of them are Secesh," but pretending to be loyal to the United States. These Federals purchased ham, eggs, and butter from the local farmers, who were eager to receive silver coins which had ceased to circulate in the South. Such coins were naturally much more sought after than Confederate paper money or the scrip issued by the county court.[21]

In the meantime, sizable Union forces were involved in marching or preparing to march up the South Branch. Schenck's brigade left Moorefield on April 29 and advanced to Petersburg, whence the trek toward Franklin was begun on May 3. Two days later, Fremont's troops departed from New Creek, arriving at Petersburg on the seventh. Blenker's division was in camp there by May 11, the movement of the Germans having frequently been hindered for want of shoes to march in. The flooded South Branch delayed Schenck's command at Petersburg

ford.[22] Rising river waters at Upper Tract in Pendleton also proved vexing. The wooden bridge there had been burned, with merely the stone abutments left standing. The artillery and wagons were first drawn through the river at a ford near the burnt bridge, and the infantry crossed along the wagons forming a bridge over the South Branch. Thus far, except for the rising streams, the march was not particularly burdensome, for Schenck reported the condition of the road between Petersburg and Franklin to be "very good."[23] By May 5 the brigade had reached Franklin. A skirmish took place in or near the town on this date. The details of the incident are not found in the Official Records, but Schenck's force was certainly involved. The next day the brigade encamped nine miles south of Franklin.[24] As General Schenck proceeded up the South Branch, a detachment of his command was engaged in a parallel movement southward along the North Fork in search of Captain Elza's guerrillas. Upon arriving at Circleville, this contingent of Federals camped in the village church.[25]

During the last days of April, Milroy had advanced from Monterey to the hamlet of McDowell and beyond. Prior to his arrival the inhabitants of that neighborhood had hidden their livestock in the mountains to preclude its confiscation by the Federals. Forage for the command's horses and mules was exceedingly scarce in the vicinity. Milroy dispatched two regiments to scout and forage as far as the eastern slope of Shenandoah Mountain, just eighteen miles west of Staunton. At this juncture on the eve of the battle, Milroy commanded 4,087 men along the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike. His

brigade included the Twenty-fifth, Thirty-second, Seventy-third, and Seventy-fifth Ohio infantry regiments, the Second and Third (West) Virginia infantries, two companies of Ohio artillery and part of the First (West) Virginia Cavalry. Schenck's force near Franklin comprised about 2,500 troops of the Fifty-fifth and Eighty-second Ohio infantry regiments, Fifth (West) Virginia Infantry, one company of the First Ohio Artillery, and four companies of the First Connecticut Cavalry.[26]

On the morning of May 7, the advance of Milroy's command was driven from the eastern flank of Shenandoah Mountain by the approaching infantry of General Edward Johnson. Milroy moved eastward with a portion of his force to check the Confederates. For a time the shells of Hyman's Battery, positioned on Shaw's Ridge, a western foothill of Shenandoah Mountain, drove Johnson's infantry back to the eastern slope of the mountain. But after learning that the Confederates had begun a flanking movement to the right, Milroy retreated to McDowell where he concentrated his entire command. Now realizing that the forces of Jackson and Johnson had combined, Milroy wired Fremont for reinforcements. Fremont directed Schenck to march at once to Milroy's aid. From a point nine miles south of Franklin and twenty-five miles from McDowell, Schenck commenced the forced march of his 1,800 available men. Five miles north of Monterey, probably at or near Forks of Waters, Schenck left his wagons and his soldiers' knapsacks under an admittedly inadequate guard to expedite the advance to McDowell, still thirteen miles distant by the most direct route. Having moved his brigade over twenty-five miles in the past twenty-four hours, Schenck arrived at McDowell at ten o'clock on the morning of May 8. Skirmishing had already begun.

As the Federals began a general advance up the South Branch, General Johnson withdrew his Confederates from Allegheny Mountain eastward to the crest of Shenandoah Mountain. By April 20 Johnson was threatened by Milroy in his front, Banks in his rear, and Schenck at Moorefield on his right flank. Therefore, his force retreated to West View, a point just seven miles west of Staunton. The task of his superior, Major General T. J. Jackson, was to prevent the juncture of Banks' and Fremont's commands so that these might be defeated separately, tie up a sufficiently large number of Federal troops in the Shenandoah Valley to relieve the pressure on Richmond, and protect that portion of the Valley surrounding Staunton. At the end of April Jackson was confronted by Milroy at McDowell, Banks at Harrisonburg, and Fremont at Petersburg awaiting the arrival of Blenker's division.

Leaving Ewell's army of 8,000 men at Elk Run Valley to threaten Banks' rear should that general attempt an advance on Staunton, Jackson's division started on the road to Port Republic on April 30. After a toilsome march of several days in hard rains and over extremely muddy roads in front of Banks' force at Harrisonburg, Jackson passed through Brown's Gap to the eastern side of the Blue Ridge. Arriving at Mechum's River Station on May 4, he placed his troops on railroad cars and moved them to Staunton, instead of in the opposite direction to Richmond as his own troops and Banks had anticipated. From Staunton Jackson marched his command westward to join that of "Allegheny" Johnson. The combined force prepared to assault Milroy, hopefully to clear the Confederate rear before

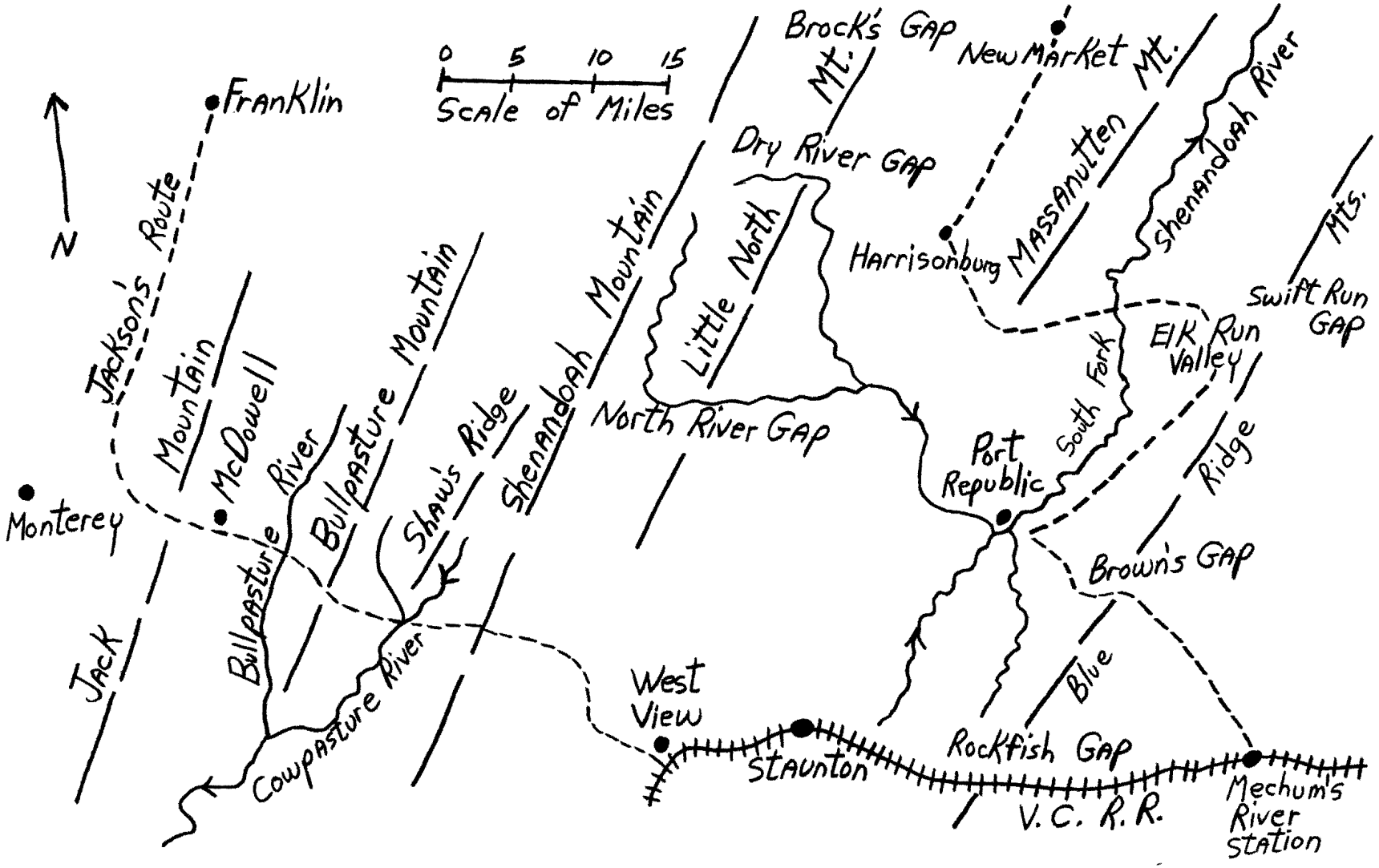

Plate No. 9. Jackson's Route to McDowell and Franklin

proceeding against Banks' larger force. Not only had Ashby's cavalry demonstrations effectively shielded these movements from the cognizance of Banks, but Jackson's pickets detained all traffic traveling northward from Staunton that could have apprised the Federals of his whereabouts. General Banks, unaware of Jackson's position, assumed that he had departed for Richmond to reinforce Johnston and Lee.[28]

Meanwhile, Johnson's Army of the Northwest had undergone some reorganization at West View. On May 1 the Pendleton Minute Men abandoned the designation of Company B, Thirty-first Regiment and became Company K, Twenty-fifth Virginia Infantry. Wilson Harper continued as captain of this company. Company E of the Twenty-fifth was also reorganized. Soldiers of Pendleton's volunteer companies who had escaped capture at Rich Mountain, former members of the Forty-sixth Militia Regiment which had disbanded several weeks before, plus some transfers from the Hardy Blues comprised this company and probably contributed to the membership of Company K as well. E. W. Boggs was elected captain of Company E.[29]

Jackson's division of the Army of the Valley consisted of three infantry brigades. The Stonewall Brigade was composed of the Second, Fourth, Fifth, Twenty-seventh and Thirty-third Virginia regiments, as well as Carpenter's and the Rockbridge batteries. Included in the Second Brigade were the Twenty-first, Forty-second and Forty-eighth Virginia regiments, plus the First Virginia Battalion. The Third Brigade was formed from the Tenth, Twenty-third, and Thirty-seventh Virginia regiments. The three brigades embodied an aggregate of 6,000 troops in addition to the 3,000 men under the immediate command of Johnson.[30]

The Battle

Early in the morning of May 8, 1862, the Confederate force proceeded from the west slope of Shenandoah Mountain to the outskirts of the hamlet of McDowell. Johnson's troops headed the column while the Stonewall Brigade and 200 cadets from the Virginia Military Institute were more than a half day's march to the rear. The turnpike's eastern approach to the village descended Bullpasture Mountain through a narrow gap and then crossed a bridge spanning the Bullpasture River, which at this time happened to be in flood. Since the bridge and the pass through which the turnpike threaded its way could have been defended too easily by the Federals, Jackson deployed his troops atop Sitlington's Hill, a ridge trending perpendicularly south from the highway and commanding the valley and village below. This deployment was partially fortuitous as Milroy had dispatched skirmishers against a Confederate observation party on the summit, and Johnson ordered up reinforcements to secure the hill. Still, it provided a most advantageous position for the Southern army.

Jackson could not profitably launch a frontal attack down the hill's steep gradient. Although cleared at the crest, it was too rugged and heavily wooded in its lower reaches, and the swollen river lay immediately beyond. Any attempt to funnel troops across the bridge would invite disaster because the guns of Hyman's Battery, positioned on a knoll within the village, could be readily trained on that point. Also, Jackson wished to preserve his force for the later encounter with Banks. To shell the Federals from Sitlington's

Hill would force their withdrawal but inflict minimal harm. Moreover, the large Stonewall Brigade, constituting half the manpower of Jackson's division, would not arrive on the scene until midnight, too late to participate in an engagement on May 8. Therefore, Jackson decided to flank the Federals that night by having part of his army traverse a rough mountain trail discovered by his scouts, a path that led north of the village and issued on the McDowell and Franklin road. But the Confederate leader was not afforded the opportunity to execute his plan. The Federals attacked first.[31]

On the day of the battle, the opposing forces at McDowell possessed a rough numerical parity with about 6,000 soldiers on each side. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, sporadic skirmishing and the firing from Hyman's Battery comprised the only action on the battlefield. In the interim, Milroy and Schenck were assessing their situation. Forage had always been difficult to procure in that vicinity, was now totally depleted, and as Schenck reported, "If our horses starve a day longer, they will not be able to draw away the train or carry us off." Also, the prospects for prompt reinforcement appeared bleak. Fremont was sixty miles away in Petersburg and, as Schenck put it, "That was poor supporting distance." The Federal position at McDowell was untenable. Not only was it vulnerable to Confederate artillery that would inevitably be located on Sitlington's Hill should the Federals remain, but it could also be flanked. For these reasons Schenck and Milroy resolved to make a reconnaissance in force against the Confederate

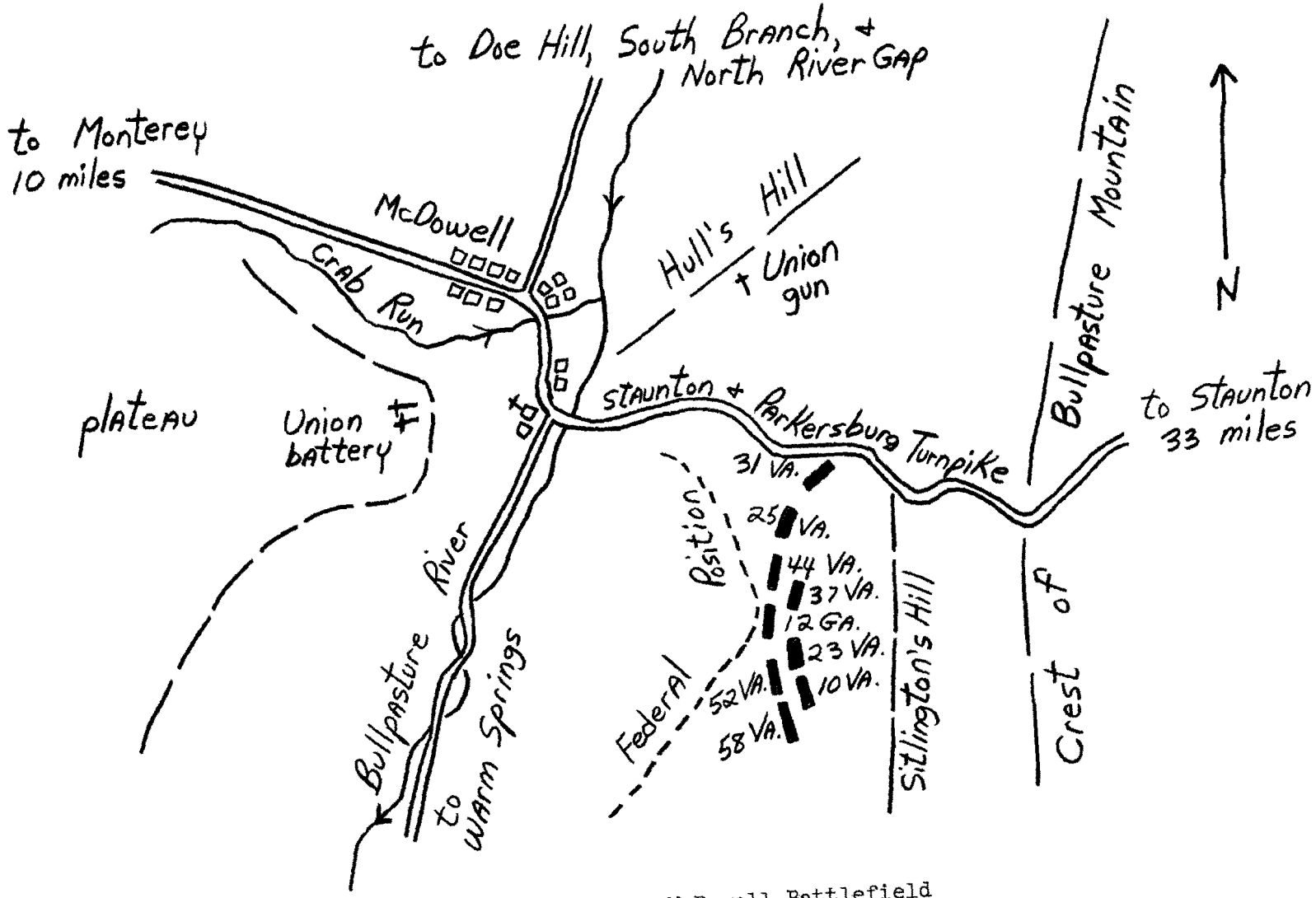

Plate No. 10. The McDowell Battlefield

line, and then retreat before the enemy had regained his balance after the surprise blow.[32]

At approximately 4:30 p.m., Milroy initiated the advance of 2,268 Federals across the bridge and up the abrupt acclivity of Sitlington's Hill. Defending the summit of the ridge, about 4,000 Confederates lay in readiness. This battle was to involve small arms fire predominantly, for the Confederates did not bring any artillery forward; the Federals employed but a single six-pounder, firing with little effect from Hull's Ridge across the turnpike. Following the engagement of the opposing lines, Hyman's Battery in the village ceased its shelling.[33] Despite the absence of significant artillery support, the encounter was a heated one. Jackson described the conflict as "fierce and sanguinary," and Laban C. Davis, a Pendleton soldier who fought in many of the war's major battles, later recalled that "It was the hardest musketry fire for the number engaged that I saw during the whole war."[34] The two lines attained their greatest proximity at the center, where the fire was so intense that the balls cleared away the brushwood utterly and even felled small trees.[35]

The Southern troops enjoyed the superior elevation but their forms were silhouetted against the sky as they fired. In contrast, the Federals were protected by a quantity of fallen timber, and partially camouflaged by the lengthening evening shadows and the powder smoke which soon enveloped the hill. Although the Confederates could reload in safety behind the crest of the hill, they had to lean out and thus expose themselves to discharge their fire down the steep mountainside. Their superior position aggravated a tendency to aim

too high. As a consequence, a high proportion of the Federal fatalities were shot in the head, and one-half of the wounded were able to walk away with the Union withdrawal since their wounds afflicted the upper parts of their bodies.[36] Possibly to magnify the accomplishment of his unit, Colonel McLean of the Seventy-fifth Ohio wrote in his report that the mountainside, at least in the center where his regiment fought, was "entirely destitute of protection either from trees or rocks," and that the Confederate position enabled them to fire while presenting only a small part of their anatomies as a target. The more open higher ground did afford less protection as the Federals approached the crest, but a Southern fatality rate three times that sustained by the Federals emphasizes the difficulties that confronted the Confederates despite their seeming advantage of position.[37]

Part of the higher Southern casualties resulted directly from the foolish heroism of the Twelfth Georgia while defending the center and most exposed segment of the line. The Georgians refused to withdraw to the top of the ridge for their greater protection, and despite the entreaties of their commander, continued to fight in advance of their comrades. During the course of the contest, this regiment sustained 175 casualties, more than any other on either side. At one point two Ohio regiments mounted a most effective bayonet charge on the right flank near the summit. After the grayclad ranks broke and rallied several times, the Twenty-fifth and Thirty-first Virginia regiments were put in the line in aid of the Twelfth Georgia and Forty-fourth Virginia. Some of the fiercest combat of the battle

ensued, much of it hand-to-hand. It was participation in this action that caused a loss of seventy-two men to the Twenty-fifth Virginia, which included two Pendleton companies. This was the second highest casualty total of any regiment on the field, although the Fifty-eighth Virginia had more killed.[38]

As twilight gathered, both sides continued to fire at their adversaries, whose positions were now revealed only by the powder flashes of their muskets. Although the Federals had almost gained the crest of Sitlington's Hill, the strong Confederate position, the approach of darkness, and the exhausted ammunition supply of the attackers dictated a withdrawal at about 8:30 in the evening. The Federals made an orderly retreat down the slope, taking most of their dead and wounded with them.[39]

The Confederates sustained 498 casualties at McDowell compared to 256 for the Federals. Seventy-five Southerners and twenty-six Union soldiers were killed during the engagement. Of the seven members of the Twenty-fifth Virginia that were killed, six were Pendleton soldiers. These were Charles E. Dyer, Isaac L. Hartman, Joseph Propst, Jacob Rexroad, and Michael Skiles of Company E and Michael Ketterman of Company K. Included among the wounded were William S. Dyer, A. Jackson Wilson, John W. Calhoun, Miles H. Dahmer, Adam J. Hinkle, Jonathan C. Kile, Felix Propst, George Washington Smith, Addison Simmons, and Abel Wimer of Company E as well as Cyrus Champ of Company K. Colonel George H. Smith, commanding officer of the Twenty-fifth Virginia and formerly captain of the Pendleton Rifles, was also seriously wounded at McDowell.[40]

Milroy and Schenck had skillfully directed the Union troops during the battle. Despite their untenable position and problems of supply, they avoided a potentially disastrous Confederate flanking movement, inflicted twice the casualties and three times the fatalities on an enemy superior in position (and numbers as well, if one includes the nearby and fast approaching Stonewall Brigade), and retreated in good order. Still, the engagement constituted a strategic victory for the South, in large part because of the resultant Federal retreat and two weeks sojourn at Franklin.

Notes

[1]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 162-63.

[2]Ibid., pp. 159-61, 164-65; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 7. Warren W. Hassler, General George B. McClellan, Shield of the Union (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957), p. 107, hereinafter cited as McClellan. One authority reports that Banks' force totaled 19,000 men. See William Allan, History of the Campaign of Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia from November 4, 1861 to June 17, 1862 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), pp. 68-69, hereinafter referred to as Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley.

[3]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 25.

[4]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 7.

[5]Morton, Highland County, p. 122; Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 171-72.

[6]Waddell, Annals of Augusta, pp. 467-68.

[7]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 31.

[8]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, 72.

[9]Ibid., p. 34.

[10]Edward C. Culp, The 25th Ohio Vet. Vol. Infantry in the War for the Union (Topeka, Kansas: Geo. W. Crane & Co., 1885), p. 41, hereinafter referred to as 25th Ohio.

[11]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 52.

[12]Ibid., pp. 57-58, 63-64, 69.

[13]Ibid., Pt. I, pp. 422-23.

[14]Ibid., pp. 85-86.

[15]Ibid., pp. 90-91.

[16]Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc. (11 vols.; New York: G. P. Putman, 1861-68), Vol. 5, Diary of Events, p. 95, hereinafter cited as Rebellion Record.

[17]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 123.

[18]Ibid., p. 175.

[19]Hartwell Osborn, Trials and Triumphs; The Record of the Fifty-Fifth Ohio Volunteer Infantry (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1904), pp. 31-32, hereinafter referred to as Trials and Triumphs.

[20]Ibid., p. 31; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 56.

[21]Osborn, Trials and Triumphs, pp. 31, 34.

[22]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 165-66.

[23]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 133.

[24]Ibid., Pt. I, p. 2; Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," p. 166.

[25]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 29.

[26]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 165-68, 180.

[27]Ibid., pp. 180-81, 185; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 147. Three companies of the Fifty-fifth Ohio were engaged in a scouting mission at the time and therefore were not able to be included in Schenck's column.

[28]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 172-77; Mark M. Boatner, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Company, Inc. 1959), pp. 441, 476. Until June 1, 1862, General Joseph E. Johnston was in command of the Confederate army around Richmond. But Robert E. Lee, as military advisor to Jefferson Davis, was pre-eminent in the formulation of Southern strategy. On June 1, Lee assumed the immediate command of the Army of Northern Virginia, succeeding Johnston who had been wounded.

[29]Wallace, Military Organizations, pp. 140-41; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 31, 40.

[30]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 170-71; G. F. R. Henderson, Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1936), p. 210, hereinafter referred to as Stonewall Jackson; Allan, Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley, p. 68. According to Goldthorpe, Jackson's division of the Army of the Valley consisted of 8,000 men with another 3,000 under Johnson. Both Henderson and Allan attribute merely 6,000 men to Jackson's division, a more likely figure. Allan places Johnson's Army of the Northwest at 3,000 troops while Henderson ascribes 2,800 men to that force. All agree that Ewell's division at Elk Run Valley comprised 8,000 troops.

[31]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 178-79, 182-84, 186.

[32]Ibid., p. 187; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 28.

[33]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 200, 202.

[34]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 471; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 44.

[35]Morton, Highland County, p. 129.

[36]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 188, 191, 202; George W. Sponaugle, as told to H. M. Calhoun, "The Battle of McDowell, As Told By An Eyewitness and Participant," Pendleton Times, February 18, 1927, p. 1.

[37]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, pp. 462, 468, 476.

[38]Ibid., pp. 462, 476; Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 189, 192.

[39]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," p. 99.

[40]Ibid., p. 201; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 476; Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 412-29; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 45, 267-75.

V. THE AFTERMATH

The Federal Withdrawal to Franklin

By the time of the Federal retreat from the slope of Sitlington's Hill, darkness had fallen and the moon was shining. These Union troops joined their comrades in McDowell, ate supper, and slept. While the battle was in progress, Schenck had started the wounded and supplies for which wagons could be found on the road toward Franklin. At one o'clock in the morning, the troops were awakened and quietly began the retreat to Franklin while their campfires were left burning. A portion of the stores for which no transportation could be had was burned. Schenck marched his men to Forks of Waters where they stopped for rest at eight o'clock, erected a temporary field hospital, and prepared to repulse a Confederate attack, should one be attempted. However, except for a Rebel cavalry dash that captured some Federals in the rear guard, there was no confrontation. At two o'clock in the afternoon, Schenck resumed his march.[1]

When the Confederates entered McDowell early on the morning of May 9, they found the wounded their enemy had been unable to transport, some stragglers whom they took prisoner, and the dead Union soldiers in the Presbyterian Church and several private homes. The retreating Federals had not had time to inter their fallen comrades after the battle. Leaving a detail in the village to bury the dead and guard the captured supplies and prisoners, Jackson quickly dispatched two

cavalry companies in hot pursuit of the Union army, the infantry following some distance behind. He also ordered his topographical engineer, Captain Hotchkiss, to hurry back to the Valley of Virginia and there organize troops to block the passage through Brock's Gap and the roads along the North River and Dry River gaps of the Shenandoah Mountain. These were routes by which Fremont might subsequently attempt to combine with Banks' force near Harrisonburg. Their obstruction was quickly accomplished by felling the trees on both sides over these roads.[2]

Along the road up Crab Run the Confederates encountered a number of abandoned wagons to which the Federals had set fire. The pursuit was interrupted briefly at an unsigned highway junction half a dozen miles northwest of McDowell. After some hesitation as to the proper route, the Southern troops pushed forward toward Franklin. The main body of Confederates traveled only a short distance on the ninth.[3] That evening found Schenck's force nine miles south of Franklin, probably at or near the Cave community. Rebel cavalry appeared at that place in the Federal rear, apparently to reconnoiter. Other than wounding and capturing several Union soldiers on picket duty, they avoided an encounter.[4]

Not until the next day, May 10, did the chase begin in earnest. North of Forks of Waters Schenck ordered his men to set fire to the hay ricks, rail fences, and wooded hillsides of the narrow valley as they retreated. So effectively did this tactic obscure the atmosphere that Jackson's troops had to grope their way cautiously through the smoke, all the while being fired upon by Federal sharpshooters.

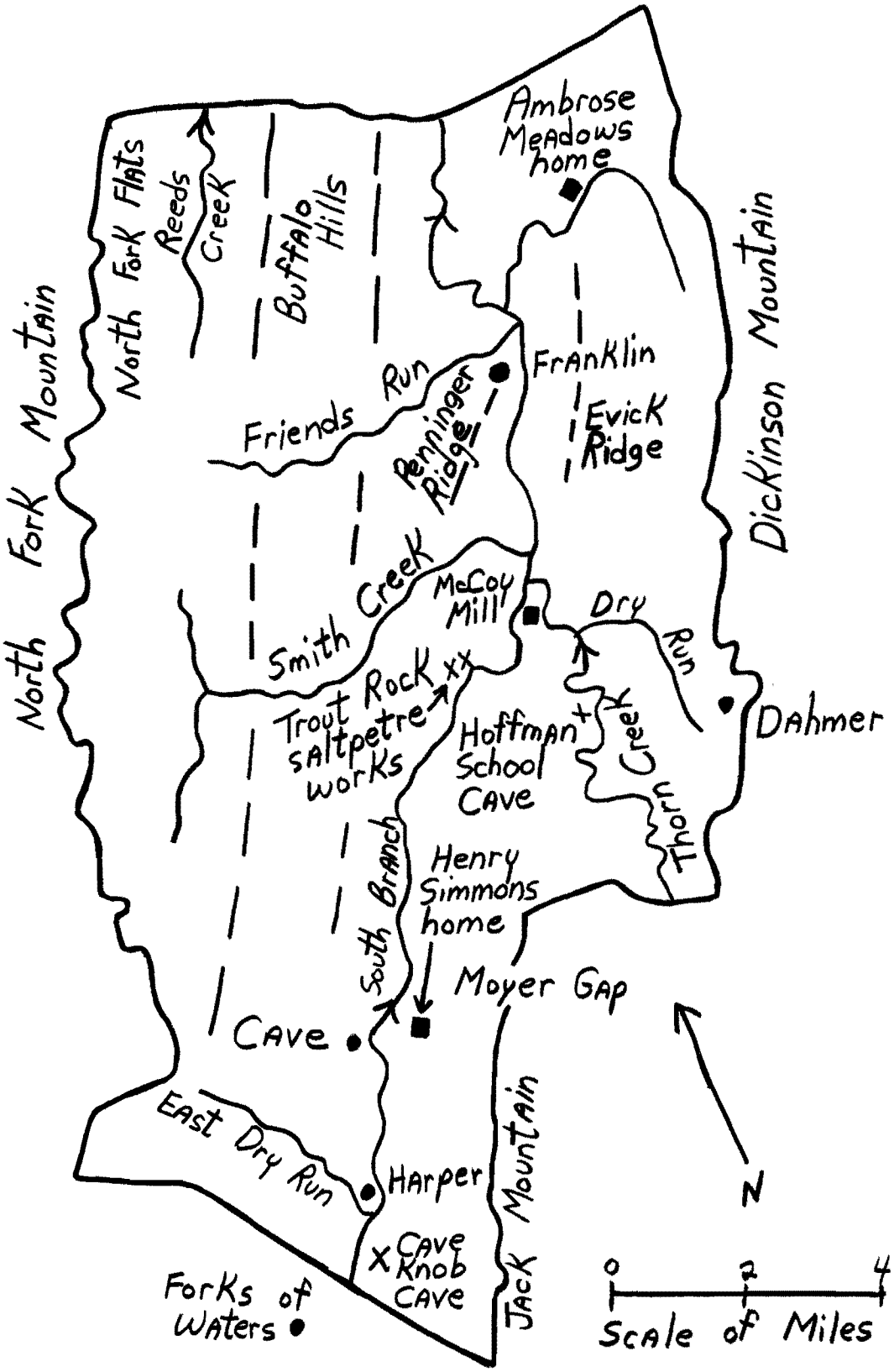

Plate No. 11. District No. 1 (Franklin)

Confederate skirmishers were detailed to the woods and fields on each side of the road to protect the column from ambuscades. George Sponaugle, a Pendleton soldier in that column, described the scene as "almost like marching in the night." The Federals were also afflicted with nuisances. The secessionist inhabitants of the countryside, including the women, felled trees over the road to impede the movement of the Union troops. As a result, the Federals were forced to abandon many wagons, some artillery pieces, and much clothing.[5] Captain Winfield, one of Jackson's cavalry officers, noted in a letter to his wife three days later that the Confederates had "obtained baggage and plunder enough to fill a Swisher barn." He also alluded to "coats, overcoats, hats, pants, shirts, etc. that they find strewn around."[6]

On the afternoon and evening of May 8, the sounds of the engagement at McDowell had carried to Franklin. The townspeople realized the defeat of the Federals when Schenck's supply wagons, left at Forks of Waters during the battle, began pouring into the town. Over the next several days these were followed by the remainder of the Union army.[7] The withdrawal had been orderly, but Schenck and Milroy had been chased so far north that joining forces with Banks would now be difficult.[8]

The rear and advanced guards of the opposing armies skirmished much of the way to Franklin, especially four miles south of the town at Trout Rock, a narrow defile through which the South Branch flows. Here the hills were defended by sharpshooters. Captain Winfield ordered ten of his cavalrymen to force their way through the gap, but the abortive attempt resulted in the loss of two horses and the

wounding of one of the attackers. A squad under a Captain Knott made a similarly unsuccessful effort. Finally, Jackson becoming impatient to resume the advance, Captain Harry Gilmor and ten of his men stormed the gap, taking possession and four prisoners while the entire affair was watched by a Confederate regiment of cheering spectators.

Passing through the gap, the Confederates came into view of the Federal battle line crossing the valley about a mile south of Franklin. Brisk skirmishing ensued, the Rebels driving the Union cavalry back upon their infantry line. Just south of the lane leading to McCoy Mill, there stood a log dwelling, and north of the road was a frame barn. The Southern skirmishers took cover behind both of these structures. Five shells from a Federal Parrott gun pierced these buildings, one exploding within the log house just as the family residing therein was scurrying away to safety. Jackson then ordered artillery brought forward to shell the Federals from their position, after which the Rebels pursued their enemy to within one-half mile of the town, where they were halted by a volley from Union guns. Here the Federals had taken a virtually unassailable position on the mountain that the graycoats had no desire to attack.[9]

On May 10, Schenck reported to Colonel Albert Tracy, Fremont's adjutant, that both brigades were encamped on Penninger Ridge, two miles south of Franklin at the point where the telegraph wire had been broken, and that his former campground in the town was reserved for Blenker's division when it should arrive. General Schenck was attempting to ascertain who in the neighborhood should be held responsible for the severed line. An indecisive cavalry skirmish

of the night before was reported, the outcome being merely the loss of two Rebel horses. Schenck expressed his belief that Jackson would move westward to Huttonsville, Beverly, Philippi, or even Grafton, offering the Federals an opportunity to get in his rear and cut him off.[10]

Schench considered his position at Franklin to be a precarious one, but he also believed that his force was safer defending the town than attempting to continue the retreat while encumbered with so much baggage and so many wounded. His fears were heightened by reports of his scouts that the combined forces of Jackson and Johnson aggregated 14,000 troops, and that three days previous in Staunton these were being reinforced by three additional Confederate troop trains. In fact, this intelligence was false or exaggerated. The Southern force confronting Schenck's command of 6,500 men totaled only about 9,000 troops with no prospects for reinforcement. In a communication of the same day, Schenck erroneously reported that General Johnson had been mortally wounded at McDowell.[11]

The following day, on May 11, the two Federal brigades evacuated Camp Milroy on Penninger Ridge, withdrawing two miles northward to a position on Friend's Hill on the northern edge of town. Batteries of artillery soon occupied the commanding heights about the town, and rifle pits were constructed. Schenck wrote of his removal to Franklin as a routine movement, but the Confederate versions of Harry Gilmor and George Sponaugle assert that the Federals were driven from Penninger Ridge at the cost of only one wounded Southern soldier. Milroy also reported the withdrawal, adding that enemy scouts hovered

about the Federal encampment and occasionally fired into the Union pickets. Later that afternoon, Schenck advised Colonel Tracy that the Confederates were attempting to flank the Federal right over the hills west of town, and that two regiments were then skirmishing with the Rebels. He also stated that he expected to be attacked in force, perhaps on several sides.[12]

The Confederate army went into camp on the river bottom opposite McCoy Mill, two and one-half miles upstream from Franklin. The Twenty-fifth Virginia was posted on Penninger Ridge. General Jackson established his headquarters in the substantial brick farmhouse of Henry Simmons, located ten miles south of the town. After a reconnaissance of the terrain west of the Confederate encampment, Jackson apparently considered the possibility of flanking the Federal position by leading his troops through Smith Creek gap to Friend's Run and attacking the Union army from the west and rear.[13] However, this strategy was over-ridden by the difficulty of maneuvering offensively in rugged terrain which favored the defenders, the necessity of returning to the Shenandoah Valley to defeat Banks before that general received reinforcements, and the imminent augmentation of the forces of Milroy and Schenck that would be occasioned by Fremont's arrival.[14]

On the twelfth of May, two days before Fremont's main force reached Franklin, Jackson's army assembled at the mouth of Smith Creek two miles south of town for religious services. During the worship, skirmishing between this point and Franklin continued unabated. Occasional stray bullets whistled over the heads of the Confederate veterans who, despite the din, listened attentively while reclining

on bunches of hay procured from nearby ricks. The service was concluded abruptly after a courier had handed Jackson a dispatch, for the army was immediately ordered to begin marching back to the Valley of Virginia.[15]

Two Tragedies

On May 9, 1862, Jacob Sinnett and Soloman Rexrode set out from their homes on Thorn Creek to see their son and nephew, Henry Sinnett and Aaron Rexrode, both members of the Twenty-fifth Virginia Regiment, as they passed down the South Branch in pursuit of the Federals. Too old for military service but fervently devoted to the Southern cause, the two men had somehow learned of the outcome at McDowell and desired to witness the Yankee retreat. Taking their rifles with them, they ascended to the top of Jack Mountain, from which they enjoyed a panoramic view of the South Branch Valley. Since the valley was still occupied by Federals, Sinnett and Rexrode waited until late in the evening but the Confederate force had not yet come into sight. Intending to return the following morning, the disappointed men started home. Before they had completely descended from Jack Mountain, they encountered a squad of Union cavalry.

At the appearance of the enemy horsemen, Rexrode jumped over a fence to his right and was able to escape by running down a hill. At some point during his flight he came upon a Federal soldier, probably igniting forest fires. An episode of hand-to-hand combat followed, which was concluded when Rexrode managed to throw his opponent, grab

his rifle, and dispatch the Federal with a point-blank shot in the stomach.

Sinnett vaulted over the fence to his left when the Federals came into view, but as his course traversed open fields and was uphill, his mounted pursuers quickly overtook him. After having kept him that night in a stable under guard, the Federals started Sinnett on the way to Franklin the next morning, but killed him en route. For about two weeks his family was ignorant of his fate. Two other prisoners of the Federals, Jacob Rexrode and Andy Rankin, the latter the miller at McCoy Mill, were finally released, informed by their jailors that Sinnett had been killed by Union soldiers, and told of the location of the corpse. The rent clothing of the badly decomposed body suggested mutilation by bayonets.[16]

On the day before the engagement at McDowell, a scouting party of Pendleton soldiers was sent out from Camp Washington east of Shenandoah Mountain to ascertain the strength and whereabouts of Fremont's army on the way to reinforce Milroy and Schenck. This scout, led by Captain E. W. Boggs and consisting of part of Company E of the Twenty-fifth Virginia, included Dick Blewitt, Adam Bible, Aaron Rexrode, Isaac Hinkle, John Murphy, Jack Wilson, and Hendron Davis. The next day this group observed Franklin from Evick Ridge east of the town as they listened to the distant roar of the conflict at McDowell.[17] Their plans to enter the inadequately guarded town, destroy the Federals' supplies, and kill the enemy sick and wounded were disrupted when a contingent of Union cavalry rode into the town. Despite the enemy

presence, Jack Wilson and Dick Blewitt easily slipped into Franklin and obtained information from some of the town's citizens.

The following day these scouts were perched atop the cliff at Wilson Hole, overlooking the South Branch and the village of Ruddle. From this vantage point they observed the numbers and types of passing Federal military units, possibly some advance detachments of Fremont's force marching southward to Franklin. That night the party cut the Federal telegraph line at several points north of the town and tied the wires across the road at a height calculated to drag a rider from his horse. Realizing that telegraph service had been interrupted, the Federals dispatched a mounted party to investigate. While the Confederates watched and listened from a nearby laurel thicket, the Union soldiers, galloping rapidly through the darkness, were swept from their horses amid a volley of expletives. Despite their wounds and surprise, all of the startled and now dismounted Federals managed to get away.[18]

General Milroy had threatened the destruction by fire of every dwelling on the South Branch should the telegraph wire be cut. In the attempt to force him to divulge the identity of the culprits who had severed the line, the Federals arrested James W. Byrd and imprisoned him at Franklin. Byrd was able to convince his captors that scouts of Jackson's army were likely responsible, so the threatened burnings were abandoned for a time.[19] Also concerned with the unjust and indiscriminate destruction of property should the retaliatory conflagrations be carried out was Reverend Ambrose Meadows, a Brethren preacher and Unionist sympathizer. Meadows too had attempted to explain to the Federal officers that the local inhabitants were not to blame.

On May 10, Schenck sent a detail to bring Meadows again to his headquarters. Meeting Meadows on the way, the Federals permitted him to return to his home temporarily to see his ailing wife, abed with a baby less than a week old. Two Union soldiers accompanied him. While the three men were at Meadows' house, Captain Boggs' Confederate scouting party stopped there to procure food. A fight ensued in which one of the Federals was killed and the other wounded. An exaggerated report of the incident, that the Meadows family was harboring Rebel bushwhackers, was carried to Schenck's headquarters, and a large party of Federal soldiers was ordered to the scene. Meadows' wife, baby, and two year old twin daughters were removed to the yard while the house and every other structure on the premises, including the nearby Hammer sawmill, were set afire. A short distance away beyond the cognizance of his wife, Meadows himself was promised immediate death if he did not reveal who had severed the telegraph wire. While pleading his innocence and ignorance concerning the incident, he was shot through the head, after which his body was pierced with bayonet thrusts. One member of this party of Federals recalled after the war that Captain R. B. McCall had earnestly but unavailingly importuned Colonel Zigler, the officer in charge, to refrain from burning the Meadows home. Nearly all the men believed that Zigler, and Major Creps who fired the shot, had committed an unprovoked murder.[20]

That General Schenck received a grossly distorted version of this episode is evident from his report to Fremont's adjutant:

Camp Milroy, near Franklin
May 10, 1862

Colonel:

A small scouting party from Franklin was enticed into a home today, and on a signal given by the owner of the house was set upon my bushwhackers. One of my men was taken and his brains beaten out before the door.

I sent out another party when I learned of it, who shot the owner of the house and burnt the house. Another bushwhacker was killed by another of our scouting parties today in his attempt to escape after being taken in the very act of firing with his rifle upon one of our cavalrymen.

Robt. C. Schenck
Brigadier - General[21]

Col. Albert Tracy

The other "bushwhacker" to which Schenck referred as having been killed was Jacob Sinnett.

Fremont's Army at Franklin

On May 14, Fremont's command marched into Pendleton's seat of government "with drums beating, and bugles, and bands playing."[22] His adjutant, Colonel Albert Tracy, described the town in less than glowing terms: "Franklin is like the most of these Virginia villages - a miserable, wood-built, unpainted old tumbledown, and beyond its being a point for present military occupation, would not be worth the while to search forth to any great extent."[23] The newly arrived units went into camp in the fields east and north of the town. The Federal forces at Franklin now totaled about 15,000 men.[24]

In the wake of Jackson's withdrawal, begun on May 12, several companies of Confederate cavalry commanded by Captain Harry Gilmor were left behind to annoy the Federals, inducing them to believe that the mass of Jackson's army still confronted them. To this end the Rebels burned the mountainside forests to simulate the campfire smoke of a sizable infantry encampment. Gilmor asserts that for a time this ruse was successful, for as Jackson retreated, the Federals were expecting a Confederate attack and continued to shell the surrounding hillsides for a day after the Southern withdrawal.[25] As late as May 15 the mountainsides about Franklin continued to burn and smolder, producing a blanket of smoke so dense that it was difficult for the Union troops to bear the resultant discomfort and annoyance.[26]

While at Franklin, Fremont still intended his raid on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad as part of the planned encirclement of Richmond, but its execution continued to be delayed as his command was beset by difficult supply problems. During his occupation of Franklin as well as the month previous, Fremont complained of a lack of horses, shoes, blankets, and overcoats. Wagon and artillery teams were debilitated from the hard marches and insufficient forage. Many cavalry horses were starving. Since the Rebel forces had denuded much of the Pendleton landscape of forage, Fremont reported that little could be secured from local supplies. An inadequate number of wagons meant that by the time the force reached Franklin, less than one-fourth the necessary forage was available. As a result, the army's animals began to die by the scores.[27]

Bread was in extremely short supply, but nearby grist mills were pressed into service to process what grain could be found, and John McClure's brick tannery was razed to provide bricks for the construction of Federal bake-ovens.[28] For days fresh beef, often unsalted, was the only ration for the troops. As an Ohio soldier described these conditions, "We had plenty of beef, but nothing else. Hard-bread grew so scarce that a half-dollar was refused for a single cracker."[29]

Although the countryside was already waterlogged, incessant rains pummelled the Federals for days after their arrival in Franklin. The combination of poor diet, hard rains, and heavy labor on fortifications undermined the health of the troops, dysentery becoming especially prevalent.[30] On May 22 the medical director noted that the Germans of Blenker's division suffered particularly great hardships. Two-hundred were sick at Franklin, and medical stores had not been brought forward with supplies. Demoralization resulted inevitably from these wretched conditions.[31]

In addition to illness which plagued the poorly provisioned Federals, the wounded transported from McDowell had to be treated. The old Union Church, the only religious structure in town, situated on what is now High Street, was put into use as a hospital. Private homes supplemented in the provision of shelter for the sick. The cries of the wounded, many of whom had amputations or operations performed without benefit of anesthetics emanated at intervals from the old church. Until they were exhausted, church pews were fashioned into coffins for the dead. Thereafter, wrapped only in blankets, the dead

were temporarily interred on the hill behind the church to the east of town.

The calamities of supply that afflicted Fremont's command translated into misfortune for the inhabitants of Franklin and environs. In anticipation of the battle believed imminent, the Union officers advised the town inhabitants to vacate their homes. All who adhered to this counsel did so to their later regret, for these dwellings were plundered by hungry soldiers, especially Blenker's Germans, the most defectively equipped and provisioned of all the Federals. All the livestock in the town, save one milk cow of a strange blue hue were eventually slaughtered to feed the Union army. The final victim was a white, blooded, shorthorn bull belonging to one of the town's more prominent citizens, William McCoy.[32]

McCoy demanded the payment of damages in compensation for the depredations of the Federals. Colonel Tracy wrote sarcastically in his journal that McCoy had assigned exorbitant values to the hundreds of rods of rail fence consumed by the soldiers' campfires, the cows and sheep slaughtered, and the hay, oats, and corn requisitioned from his barns. Along with McCoy's itemized account of damages due him, the Federals sent to the War Office in Washington a list, also pilfered from the McCoy premises, of supplies that he had gratuitously contributed to a Confederate volunteer company raised in the Franklin neighborhood. It is extremely unlikely that his compensation was forthcoming.[33]

Although the local means of subsistence for such a large force were scanty, the privations suffered by the Federals made it

essential to gather up what sustenance could be located. One such foraging party traveling toward the South Fork passed through Buffalo Gap. Fired upon by Rebels hid in the rocks in the gap, the Northern troops suffered at least one fatality. As a retaliatory measure, all the empty dwellings in the immediate area were burned to their foundations.[34]

While Fremont occupied the South Branch Valley, he secured intelligence concerning enemy activities by the use of his "Jessie Scouts." Imported from Missouri and named after his wife, Jessie Benton Fremont, these men donned Confederate uniforms and appropriated the papers of captured Rebels. Serving as both scouts and spies, they could approach enemy picket lines or acquire information from unsuspecting Southern sympathizers. Their existence was a perilous one, for if caught by the enemy they were likely to be hanged. Often they were mistaken for genuine Confederates and shot by Federal pickets. While their intelligence operations were valuable to Fremont, they were also known to purloin horses and other property from Union people. At Petersburg and later at Franklin, Fremont had to listen to complaints of the transgressions of stray Rebel soldiers, offenses many of which were doubtless perpetrated by his own Jessie Scouts.[35]

On occasion the Jessie Scouts had trouble convincing Confederate soldiers that they were fellow Rebels. A typical incident occurred in May of 1862 when one of these daring fellows by the name of Smitley, clothed in the uniform of a Confederate officer, stopped at Dove's Mill several miles upstream from Circleville. Smitley was accompanied by John Dove, brother of the miller. Smitley and Dove entered the

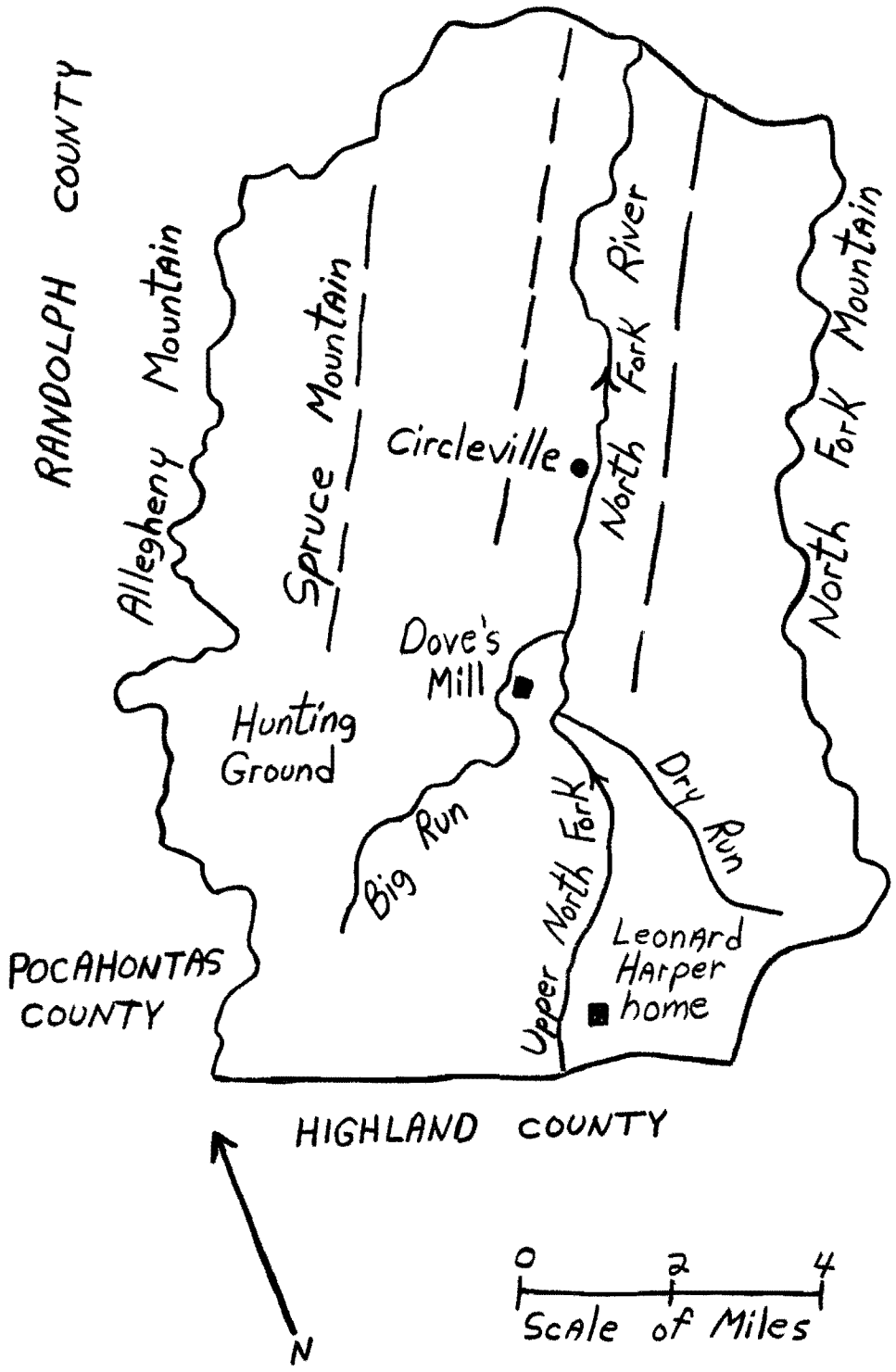

Plate No. 12. District No. 6 (Circleville)

dwelling house and soon became engrossed in conversation the two brothers having not seen one another for a lengthy interval. Meanwhile, a number of Captain Elza's Dixie Boys, who had been at the mill nearby, surrounded the house. In a jesting tone, Smitley invited the Rebels into the dwelling, assuring them that there were merely two visitors within and that none of the Dixie Boys would be harmed. Disarmed by Smitley's levity, the Rebels accepted the invitation but remained suspicious when he asserted that he was one of Jackson's scouts. To bolster this declaration, Smitley asked to be taken to Captain Elza, whom he claimed to know. To his chagrin, the Rebels thought this a good idea. Smitley and Dove, mounted and armed but surrounded by Dixie Boys proceeding on foot, were led in the direction of Elza's camp. All the while, Smitley was trying to figure out how to avoid meeting the Rebel leader. About dusk as the camp neared, a stream had to be crossed, the Rebels traversing a foot log and the two Union scouts fording the stream on their horses. As the Rebels were awkwardly crossing the log, Smitley and Dove spurred their horses, charging downstream. Smitley effected his escape, but Dove was shot off his horse as the Dixie Boys discharged a volley after them.[36]

Despite the emphasis on foraging patrols to resolve the Federal supply problems, Fremont continued to dispatch parties to deal with the ubiquitous guerrillas. On May 24, newly promoted Colonel George R. Latham and 500 troops marched to Seneca to eliminate the threat posed by the "notorious Bill Harper and his gang of bush-whackers." Four of the Rebels were killed, one of whom was erroneously believed to be Harper himself.[37]

While Fremont's command remained at Franklin in the attempt to recuperate and supply itself, Jackson had returned to the Valley of Virginia and engaged Banks, driving that unskillful general all the way down the Valley and across the Potomac River.[38] On May 24 Lincoln ordered Fremont to the Shenandoah Valley by way of Harrisonburg to attack Jackson and thus relieve Banks.[39] Up until this time Fremont presumably had planned to continue southward to the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad once the logistics problem was worked out. As late as May 16, the Secretary of War inquired of Fremont's timetable for striking the railroad and marching to Richmond.[40]

On the morning of May 25, Fremont's army evacuated Franklin, marching northward toward Petersburg, and not eastward to Harrisonburg as Lincoln had directed. At Moorefield on May 28, Fremont wired Lincoln that Jackson's obstruction of all the roads and the necessity of falling back upon his lines of supply made a direct march to Harrisonburg impossible. He claimed that his men had been saved from starvation only by five days rations found at Petersburg.[41] The Federal force then proceeded from Moorefield to Strasburg in the Shenandoah Valley in pursuit of Jackson.

The Federals seemed to experience almost as much difficulty leaving Franklin as they had surviving there. On May 26, Brigadier General Louis Blenker reported to Fremont from a point eight miles north of Franklin that his division's slow progress could be attributed to the obstructions caused by the overturned wagons of Schenck's brigade, the road often blockaded "to such an extent as to prevent even the infantry from passing by." Blenker also advised his

superior that in consequence of these impediments much of the army's baggage and provisions remained in Franklin.[42] However, by the afternoon of the same day part of the force had reached Petersburg, with the remainder soon to follow.[43]

After the return of Jackson's army to the Shenandoah Valley, Captain Gilmor's company of Confederate cavalry remained several weeks in Pendleton, riding forty miles a day to ascertain Fremont's movements and harass Federal supply trains. Gilmor reported daily skirmishes and the capture of numerous enemy men and horses. As the rear guard of Fremont's command was leaving Franklin, Gilmor and twenty-six of his cavalrymen charged into the town, capturing eighteen prisoners, several wagons, food, and medical supplies. The Rebels paroled 250 sick and wounded Union soldiers. This is possibly the skirmish reported near Franklin on May 26, but about which the Official Records give no details. A second raid into Franklin sometime later yielded twenty prisoners. After the Federals had completely evacuated the town, Gilmor made it his base of operations for a time, until his return to the Valley. Due to its recent occupation by large forces, he found that the country was devoid of the grain his horses needed for hard scouting.[44]

The people of Franklin were doubtless glad to witness the departure of the Federals. The marks of devastation occasioned by the occupation must have lingered for the duration of the war and beyond. Colonel Tracy wrote of

> Fences leveled, fields laid waste, buildings torn down, or stripped of every hanging or fastening, . . . no living thing, available for food or sustenance within the scope of vision. Pantries, stores, and cellars have also been thoroughly emptied — for . . . our people were next to starving, while this was the country of an enemy.[45]

In a May 28 letter to his daughters attending school in Staunton, William McCoy interpreted the events and conditions about Franklin during the interval of large troop concentrations in that vicinity.

> It is now more than a month since we have been able to hear anything directly from you, and during all that time we have been surrounded with nearly all the horrors of actual war.
>
> For some three weeks after you left home, we were constantly annoyed by foraging and scouting parties of U. S. troops, who generally however treated us with justice and fairness, respecting the rights of private citizens not found in arms.
>
> About three weeks ago, General Schenck of Ohio undertook to march a large force from New Creek by way of Franklin to Monterey, there to join General Milroy and march to Staunton. General Schenck remained about three days in this place, and upon my invitation made his headquarters at our house. We were much pleased with him and his staff, and the conduct of the troops under his command.
>
> He afterwards marched to McDowell and joined the force of General Milroy, attacking General Johnston [sic], by whom they were repulsed and driven back to this place, where they were joined by General Fremont with a very large re-enforcement, mostly Germans and other foreigners; when the work of destruction of property commenced in earnest.
>
> The whole army, said to be twenty thousand strong, were encamped for two weeks in and around this place. Having many sick and wounded, nearly every house in town has been converted into a hospital; and there has been a great mortality among the troops. Several officers boarded with us, and one lieutenant from Ohio died in the house.
>
> Great fears were felt on last Sunday week that a battle would be fought exactly in Franklin. In fact, there was a good deal of firing, both of artillery and small arms, without any loss on either side.

General Jackson had pursued the U. S. troops to within one mile of town, but finding General Schenck in possession of all of the strong points around here, he was compelled to fall back again in the direction of McDowell and Staunton.

Yesterday morning, the whole army of General Fremont commenced a hasty retreat toward Petersburg, or New Creek, and today the whole of the army is gone, leaving about 125 sick and wounded men behind.

This morning a small body of Confederate cavalry came in and made prisoners of most of the men who had been left to take care of the sick, and captured some 50 or 60 stands of guns, etc.

Both armies having been encamped upon our property, we have suffered very great loss, from the burning of fencing and killing of cattle, sheep and hogs by the soldiers; but I thank God that we still have enough left to live upon another year. But you would hardly know Franklin now if you were to see it. Scarcely a lot or garden in town has any fence left. Boggs' property was nearly all destroyed, my corn house and stable broken open, and everything pillaged.

We have no mails here anymore, and of course can hear nothing of the operations of the Confederate Army. Nothing could afford us as much pleasure as it would give us to know that peace was made.[46]

The Significance of McDowell and the Subsequent Federal Retreat

The events surrounding the engagement at McDowell and its aftermath in Pendleton probably constitute the county's most important contribution to the larger developments of the war. Of course, the happenings within Pendleton forged merely one link of a lengthy chain of events, most of which took place in neighboring counties of the Shenandoah Valley and comprised the celebrated Valley Campaign of Stonewall Jackson.

The Shenandoah Valley possessed considerable strategic significance. It presented a singularly ideal theater for Confederate maneuvers calculated to divert Union troops from campaigns against Richmond. Trending northeast and southwest, it offered Southern forces a sheltered approach from which to threaten Washington. The Alleghenies on the west and the Blue Ridge on the east protected the flanks and supply lines of armies moving northward, with only a few passes through the mountains having to be guarded. In contrast, the further southwestward up the Valley that the Union forces pushed, the greater their distance from Richmond. The Virginia Central and Manassas Gap railroads connected the Valley with eastern Virginia, and facilitated the rapid transfer of troops and material between regions east and west of the Blue Ridge.

The spring of 1862 prior to the Battle of McDowell was a period of darkness for the Southern cause. Confederate armies had experienced one disaster after another. In contrast, the Federals were preparing to implement their strategy for the capture of Richmond and their prospects for success appeared good. This plan of encirclement of the enemy's capital and the Army of Northern Virginia involved almost 200,000 Union troops. McClellan, with over 100,000 men, was advancing westward toward Richmond via the peninsula between the James and York rivers. A force of 40,000 Federals, commanded by General McDowell, occupied the north bank of the Rappahannock, protecting Washington until the way might be cleared for the expected march to Richmond. General Banks, with more than 14,000 men, was advancing up the Shenandoah Valley. With about 15,000 troops, Fremont

was to move up the South Branch Valley to the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, sever that line of transport and communication, join with Banks' force, and proceed to Richmond along the railroad right-of-way. In the meantime, McClellan and McDowell would be applying pressure on the Confederate capital from the east and north. As the Southern army would be cut off from its sources of supply and vastly outnumbered, the conflict in this most important theater of the war would presumably be over.

This plan could succeed only if constant Federal pressure were applied, for then the Confederates would be unable to benefit from their naturally shorter interior lines of transport and communication. But the Union armies could not apply such continual pressure, and the Confederates were thereby given room to maneuver among the various fronts. McClellan's excess of caution on the peninsula, McDowell's greater concern for protecting Washington than attacking the Rebel forces, and Fremont's immobilization (such as at Franklin) from obstinate problems of supply, sickness, and bad weather all relieved the pressure on the Confederates. Moreover, disunity of command plagued the Federals. Fremont commanded the Mountain Department; Banks, the Department of the Shenandoah; McDowell, the Department of the Rappahannock. These independent commands were ineffectively coordinated through Stanton and Lincoln, both of whom lacked military training. Jackson, in contrast, was part of Lee's unified command.

Still, bold action was in order if these overwhelming Union forces, however dilatory or ineptly synchronized, were not to advance inexorably, through their tremendous mass if for no other reason, and

invest the Southern army and capital. Jackson, never commanding more than 17,000 men, was able to neutralize this enormous Union host of nearly 200,000 by the audacious and skillful movements of his Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Obviously, he had to defeat separately the larger forces opposing him, or at least alarm and confuse them sufficiently to prevent their convergence.

It has already been noted that Jackson, using the Blue Ridge Mountains and Ashby's cavalry demonstrations to shield his movements, departed from Elk Run Valley by a circuitous route to fool Banks into assuming that he had marched to Richmond to reinforce Lee. This maneuver had the effect of maintaining Banks' anxiety concerning threats to his rear and flank. Not realizing that Jackson was in his front, Banks was afraid to advance toward Staunton, a move that would menace not only that town and vicinity, but also the rear of Jackson's army. Jackson's order leaving Ewell and 8,000 Confederates at Elk Run Valley reinforced Banks' hesitation. Having effectively cleared his rear, Jackson was able to proceed westward and engage Schenck and Milroy at McDowell before their brigades were augmented by Fremont's command.

The Battle of McDowell definitely constituted a strategic victory for the South. It also raised Confederate morale at a critical time. The South won despite the fact that Milroy and Schenck avoided a disastrous flanking movement, inflicted twice their own loss on a numerically superior enemy, and retreated in good order. Schenck's order to fire the mountainsides to retard the Confederate advance was a clever and effective tactic. The Federal retreat seemed as much a result of the dearth of forage as the presence of the Confederates or

the untenable defensive position right at McDowell. Yet Jackson achieved his most urgent objectives, for the Federal withdrawal to Franklin, combined with the poor state of fitness and supply of Fremont's army and Jackson's obstruction of the important passes, rendered highly improbable the planned combination of Banks' and Fremont's forces.

Having prevented the juncture of the two Federal commands, and aided by Fremont's immobilization at Franklin, Jackson quickly returned to the Valley to attack Banks, driving him down the Shenandoah Valley and across the Potomac. The U. S. War Department evidently had not been alarmed by the outcome at McDowell, for General McDowell was ordered to join McClellan near Richmond. However, Jackson's subsequent movements in the Valley, his rout of Banks to the Potomac, and the threat to Washington inherent in these movements occasioned the greatest consternation in the Northern capital. The success of Jackson's maneuvers in the Shenandoah Valley was made possible by the events at McDowell and Franklin which prevented Fremont from reinforcing Banks.

After Banks had been chased across the Potomac, Fremont was ordered to the Valley to catch Jackson, thus aborting the drive toward the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad and postponing the encirclement of Richmond. McDowell's corps was commanded to defend Washington from the threat posed by Jackson instead of aiding McClellan's peninsular movement against Richmond. The cautious McClellan felt that without the assistance of McDowell's force he could not succeed against the huge Confederate army which, according to his exaggerated intelligence reports, confronted him. Although the Federal peninsular force had held its own in the fighting there, Lincoln blundered by recalling

McClellan and his army to Washington in August of 1862. The President believed that McClellan was conducting a dilatory campaign, and he was also sensitive to the intense pressure of the Radical Republicans who urged that McClellan, a conservative Democrat, be dismissed from his command. But the most prominent and immediate concern motivating Lincoln's action was his inordinate anxiety for the safety of Washington after Jackson's demonstrations in the Valley, events in which Pendleton played a small but important part. Thus was Richmond saved from probable capture. It can be argued that the war was consequently protracted for as much as two years; it took that long for the Union army again to get as close to the capital of the Confederacy.

The residents of Pendleton's seat of government suffered great material losses as a result of the two weeks occupation by Fremont's army. The ill-provisioned Federals expropriated nearly all of the area's livestock, grain, and forage, destroyed its fencing, and burned a number of dwellings. But by sharing these hardships, which immobilized Fremont's force and delayed the combination with Banks, the people in and about Franklin contributedto the triumph of Jackson's Valley Campaign and the relief of Richmond. The situation causing their privations was the Confederacy's good fortune.[47]

Notes

[1]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," p. 204; Culp, 25th Ohio, p. 43; Samuel H. Hurst, Journal - History of the Seventy-Third Ohio Volunteer Infantry (Chillicothe: 1866) p. 19, hereinafter referred to as Seventy-Third Ohio.

[2]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 204-06.

[3]Ibid., p. 206; George W. Sponaugle, as told to H. M. Calhoun, "The Retreat from McDowell," Pendleton Times, February 25, 1927, p. 1.

[4]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 157.

[5]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 204-07; Sponaugle, "Retreat from McDowell."

[6]John W. Wayland, Virginia Valley Records (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1965), p. 285.

[7]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 47.

[8]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," p. 207.

[9]Harry Gilmor, Four Years in the Saddle (New York: Harper, 1866), pp. 36-37; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 48; Osborn, Trials and Triumphs, p. 33.

[10]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, pp. 162-63.

[11]Ibid., pp. 163-64.

[12]Ibid., p. 172; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 49; Sponaugle, "Retreat from McDowell."

[13]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 46, 53; Sponaugle, "Retreat from McDowell.

[14]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 473.

[15]Gilmor, Four Years in the Saddle, pp. 37-38; Calhoun 'Twixt North and South, pp. 54-55. In his report of the Battle of McDowell, dated March 7, 1863, Jackson states that he began his return to the Valley on May 15, 1862. But G. F. R. Henderson asserts that the Confederates left the vicinity of Franklin shortly after noon on May 12. The weight of the evidence seems to support Henderson. Captain Winfield wrote a letter to his wife on May 13 from a camp seven miles south of Franklin. Sandie Pendleton, an adjutant of Jackson, penned a letter to his mother from McDowell on May 15. Fremont's adjutant, Colonel

Albert Tracy, noted in his diary under date of May 14 that as the Federals entered Franklin on that day, Jackson's force had already withdrawn. Jackson's error could be attributed to the lapse of time between the battle and his report. Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 473; Henderson, Stonewall Jackson, pp. 230-31; Wayland, Virginia Valley Records, p. 285; W. G. Bean, ed., "The Valley Campaign of 1862 as Revealed in Letters of Sandie Pendleton,"The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 78 (July, 1970), p. 357; Francis F. Wayland ed., "Fremont's Pursuit of Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley, The Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy, March - July 1862," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 70 (April and July, 1962), p. 173, hereinafter referred to as "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy."

[16]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 65-69.

[17]Ibid., pp. 70-71; Boggs, Hammers, pp. 84-85.

[18]Boggs, Hammers, pp. 85-86. There are a number of discrepancies between the accounts of Boggs and Calhoun, especially with regard to the sequence of events. But all the participant-observers agree that the day after McDowell Fremont's main army was under surveillance within Pendleton as it marched south to reinforce Milroy and Schenck. However, the bulk of Feemont's command clearly did not arrive in Franklin until May 14. Thus, unless the scouts' reconnaissance actually took place four or five days subsequent to May 9, it is unlikely that anything more than some advance units could have been observed. Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 10.

[19]Boggs, Hammers, p. 86.

[20]Very detailed but varying accounts of the Meadows episode can be found in Boggs, Hammers, pp. 84-88, 92-93; Calhoun, Betwixt North and South, pp. 70-79; and "The Murder of Ambrose Meadows, "Pendleton Times, November 19, 1926, p. 1.

[21]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 496.

[22]Hurst, Seventy-Third Ohio, p. 20.

[23]Wayland, "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy," p. 173.

[24]Henderson places the number of Federals at Franklin at 17,000. Henderson, Stonewall Jackson, p. 235. For a brief period the three brigades of Blenker's Germans did not get on well with Schenck's troops. In their ludicrous ignorance of Virginia political conditions, the Germans, mainly from Pennsylvania and New York, were shocked to find Virginia units among the Federal force. However, their distrust soon evaporated as they learned that these Virginians from the western counties were intensely loyal to the Union cause and made excellent soldiers. T. F. Lang, Loyal West Virginia from 1861 to 1865 (Baltimore: Deutsch Pub. Co., 1895), pp. 66-67, hereinafter cited as Loyal West Virginia; Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," p. 163.

[25]Gilmor, Four Years in the Saddle, pp. 38-39.

[26]Osborn, Trials and Triumphs, p. 33.

[27]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, pp. 6-11.

[28]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 114.

[29]Hurst, Seventy-Third Ohio, p. 20.

[30]Francis Smith Reader, History of the Fifth West Virginia Cavalry, Formerly the Second Virginia Infantry, and of Battery G, First West Virginia Light Artillery (New Brighton, Pa.: F. S. Reader, 1890), p. 166, hereinafter referred to as Fifth West Virginia Cavalry.

[31]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, pp. 11, 30.

[32]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 51, 53-54.

[33]Wayland, "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy," pp. 175-76.

[34]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 51.

[35]Boyd B. Stutler, "Fremont's Jessie Scouts in the South Branch Valley," Civil War Miscellany, Microfilm Roll 4, West Virginia University Library, pp. 1-5.

[36]Reader, Fifth West Virginia Cavalry, pp. 254-55.

[37]Ibid., pp. 166-67.

[38]Millard K. Bushong, "Jackson in the Shenandoah, "West Virginia History, XXVII (January, 1966), pp. 92-93.

[39]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 644.

[40]Wayland, "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy," p. 173.

[41]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 645.

[42]Ibid., Pt. III, p. 254.

[43]Wayland, "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy," p. 176.

[44]Gilmor, Four Years in the Saddle, pp. 39-40; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 3.

[45]Wayland, "Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy," p. 175.

[46]William McCoy, "Franklin in Civil War Days," Pendleton Times, March 28, 1930, p. 1.

[47]Goldthorpe, "Battle of McDowell," pp. 159-61, 209-14; Bushong, "Jackson in the Shenandoah," pp. 85-96, passim; Henderson, Stonewall Jackson, p. 223; Hassler, McClellan, pp. 107, 172-95, passim.

VI. THE GUERRILLA WAR INTENSIFIES

In the months following the departure of Fremont's troops, relative but not total quiet reigned in Pendleton. The Federal command stationed at Beverly continued to send patrols into the county to combat the Rebel bushwhackers and Partisan Rangers. In June of 1862, Captain James A. Jarboe and a detachment of the Tenth (West) Virginia Infantry apprehended several bushwhackers on Seneca Creek and the North Fork. The captured Rebels were sent to Wheeling for imprisonment.[1] About this same interval, three of Imboden's companies were operating in Pendleton and Randolph counties, "breaking up Peirpoint's [Pierpont's] militia musters and capturing notorious Union men."[2]

The calm was also marred by an unfortunate tragedy. John Dice Harman and three companions were driving a herd of cattle over the Allegheny Mountain to a summer grazing range on June 10. Having fallen behind to prod a dilatory calf, Harman stopped at a spring near the top of the mountain. While quenching his thirst, he was mortally wounded by a rifle bullet resounding from the mountainside. As Harman had not participated in the war and had no known enemies, it was supposed that he was mistaken for Sampson Snyder, a leader of Unionist irregulars who customarily rode a grey horse of similar appearance to Harman's.[3]

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

Much military effort in western Virginia was directed toward the preservation or destruction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Controlled by the Federals during the entire war, this road was of critical importance in the transport of troops and supplies because it was the most direct Northern route between eastern and western theaters of the conflict.[4] But its exposed right-of-way through northern Virginia presented an enticing target to Confederate raiders. Consequently, Federal scouting parties were frequently dispatched to the South Branch counties to frustrate these attacks.

At least two Confederate attempts upon the railroad directly involved Pendleton. On August 14, 1862, Colonel John D. Imboden, guided by Zeke Harper and commanding 300 of his Partisan Rangers, set out from Franklin in his first attempt to destroy the railway bridge over the Cheat River at Rowlesburg. From Mouth of Seneca, Imboden advanced over Allegheny Mountain, avoiding roads and trails by cutting his own path through dense forest. However, his route passed near the home of Unionist John Snyder, whose nineteen year old daughter, Mary Jane, guessed the Confederate's destination. Riding twenty-five miles that night over the mountains on horseback, she was able to warn the Union garrison at Parson's Mill in time for the Federals to retreat to Rowlesburg. At St. George, Imboden realized that he had lost the advantage of surprise, and fearing that the Federals would be ready for him at Rowlesburg, he returned to Pendleton County over the same route he had traveled a week earlier.[5]

During November 5 to 14, 1862, General Milroy led a force through Pendleton, Highland, and Pocahontas counties, capturing forty-five prisoners, seventy-five head of cattle, and twenty-five horses. He reported that guerrillas and Rebels had been cleared from that area, not knowing that Imboden was at this time carrying out his second raid against the Rowlesburg bridge.[6]

Colonel Imboden left his camp on the South Fork, just north of the Hardy-Pendleton line, on November 7, 1862. Guided by scout William Harper, the 310 mounted men crossed Allegheny Front Mountain six miles north of Mouth of Seneca in a snowstorm. Passing down the west flank of the mountain via a cowpath along Red Creek, Imboden arrived at the confluence with Dry Fork only hours after 600 Federals had passed that point traveling toward Seneca. On the morning of the ninth, the Confederates captured the Union garrison of thirty men at St. George. However, an escaped Federal, some distance from the town when the alarm was sounded, immediately started for Rowlesburg.[7]

Again turning back at St. George without attaining his objective, Imboden returned up Dry Fork, intending to attack Milroy's wagon train at Camp Bartow. Setting out from the Sinks[8] on November 12, Imboden's guide became confused, and the Confederate force found itself lost in one of the wildest regions of the Alleghenies. Bill Harper had departed the Rangers at St. George on another mission, and without his expert services, Imboden's force turned up back at the Sinks after a day of wandering. Having abandoned his plan to attack Milroy's camp, Imboden and his men emerged from the wilderness near the Pendleton-Highland line on November 13.

The Rebel colonel's scouts now received helpful intelligence from a citizen recently discharged by Milroy from the prisoner camp at Hightown. Colonel George Latham was at Circleville with 500 troops of the Second (West) Virginia Infantry, two field guns, and about thirty cavalrymen. Imboden's scouts were also told that 1,300 Federals had moved a few hours earlier from Forks of Waters down the South Branch toward Franklin. After coming across the still-burning campfires of the recent 1,300 man encampment, the Confederates were able to elude the Federals by following them down the valley to a gap leading eastward (probably Moyer Gap), whereupon the Rangers crossed over to the South Fork, and then rode northward to their camp in Hardy County. In his report to Stonewall Jackson, Imboden noted that cavalry duties in mountainous western Virginia quickly jaded the strongest horses. "If you are familiar with that country, you will not be surprised to learn that it will be several weeks before my horses regain their strength and vigor."[9]

Upon reaching the South Fork, Imboden learned that a Union force commanded by General Benjamin Kelley had attacked the Rebel camp at daybreak on the morning of November 9, the same morning that the Confederates had seized the Union garrison at St. George. Kelley reported that his men had routed the enemy, killing and wounding many, and capturing fifty prisoners, 350 hogs, as well as numerous wagons, horses, and cattle.[10] Log huts providing winter shelter for the Southern soldiers were burned.[11] The Rebels were pursued for about a mile to "a place where the road crossed the creek and went around a spur of the mountain." This spur is probably Sweedlin Hill,

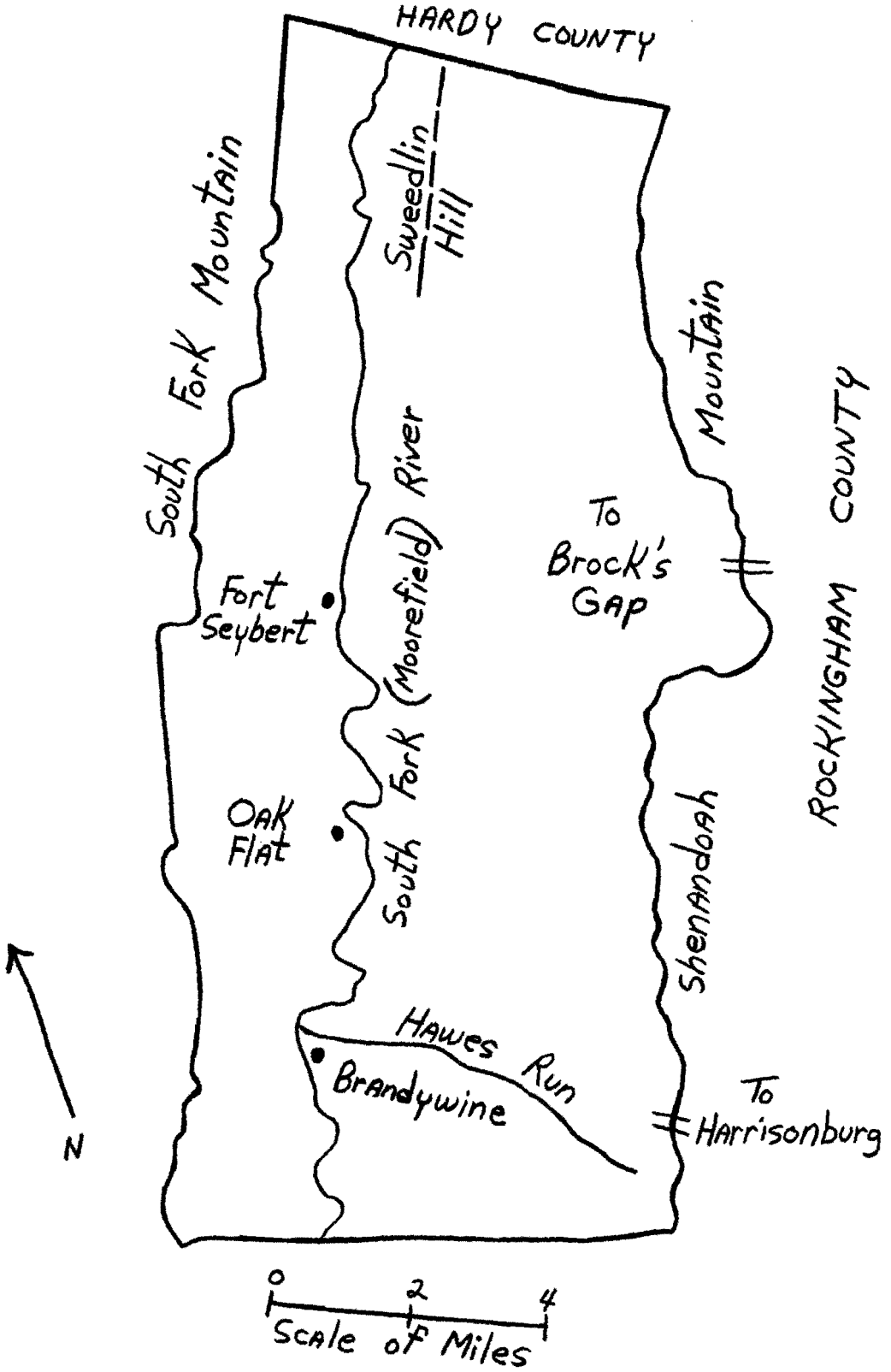

Plate No. 13. District No. 3 (Bethel)

Pendleton County. Concealing themselves at this point, the Confederates opened fire upon their pursuers, wounding several and driving them back. The Federals then brought up an artillery piece, the twelve-pound shells of which forced the Rebels to scatter without further pursuit.[12]

General Kelley repeatedly emphasized the importance of Federal occupation of the South Branch Valley. On December 9, 1862, Kelley reported that several brigades were en route to Franklin and Moorefield. Occupying these towns, he argued, would afford protection to Unionist citizens, prevent Confederate raids against the railroad or into counties to the west, and enable the Federals to harass the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley from Winchester to Staunton.[13]

After Imboden was promoted to brigadier general in January of 1863, units of his brigade were to attack the Baltimore and Ohio again and again. The Jones-Imboden raids of that spring inflicted great damage on the road. Accompanying Imboden as part of his Northwest Virginia Brigade were regiments containing companies of Pendleton soldiers, namely, the Eighteenth, Twenty-fifth, and Sixty-second Virginia. This operation did not directly involve Pendleton save for one of General Jones' forage trains traveling from Moorefield back to the Valley via Franklin, collecting the "surplus bacon" on the way.[14] Also, several thousand horses and cattle captured by the raiders were apparently driven back to the Valley of Virginia over the Seneca road across Cheat and Allegheny mountains.[15]

Most demonstrations against the railroad were staged from Hardy County, the base from which McNeill's Rangers operated as a company of Imboden's brigade. Hardy averaged forty miles closer than

Pendleton to New Creek, the most exposed and vulnerable point on the line. Yet even Hardy County was too distant from a concentrated Federal force to be effectively policed by Union cavalry scouts. The outposts precariously maintained by the Federals at Petersburg and Moorefield were an attempt to compensate for this weakness. These small outposts probably did thwart numerous attacks on the railroad, but wagon supply trains were almost impossible to protect consistently from McNeill's marauders, and if not very heavily guarded were often captured. On the grounds that the burdens of protection and supply outweighed the advantages, Kelley was criticized for maintaining these outlying detachments, often several hundred men or fewer, at unsupportable distances from the main Federal force.[16]

In virtually every communication from Lee to Imboden, the former urged upon the latter the advantages of striking the Baltimore and Ohio at every opportunity. About 25,000 troops were diverted for the road's defense, soldiers that could not be deployed against the Confederate armies in the Shenandoah Valley or elsewhere.[17] But other than serving this very important function, the raids upon the railroad, however spectacular, were of debatable long-term significance. The railroad's management became exceedingly adept at effecting speedy repairs, replacing even destroyed bridges with temporary trestle-work so rapidly that the operation of the road would often be restored within hours, or at most several days. Even during the periods of greatest destruction, the railroad carried such a large volume of freight that the company continued the payment of dividends.[18]

Unionist Irregulars Organize

By the spring of 1863, and possibly earlier, "Home Guard" companies began to be formed in Pendleton communities Unionist in sentiment. These were thought necessary for the protection of themselves and their homes against their neighbors of Southern persuasion, as well as various companies of Imboden's brigade that frequented the county. On March 10, 1863, a contingent of Confederates — members of Companies F and I of the Sixty-second Virginia and commanded by Lieutenant Solomon Cunningham — were sent to the Mallow Settlement on Timber Ridge. Their mission was to kill or capture the Unionist Home Guards there, "Swamp Dragons" or "Swamps" as they were derisively designated by the Rebels. Upon arriving in that locality, the party divided, four members setting out for the home of Abraham Mallow, while the remainder of the detachment headed in the direction of Michael Hedrick's place. The four Confederates in the former party captured a Swamp working in the blacksmith shop near the Mallow dwelling. Asked if any of his comrades were in the house, he replied that there were two more within the dwelling. Naively accepting this statement on its face, the Rebels approached the house and ordered the occupants to come out. Not two, but twenty-four Swamp Dragons rushed out and in the ensuing skirmish wounded all the Confederates. George Homan Kile, William Freeland, and Joseph Custard managed to escape, but Harmon Hiner sustained a serious wound and was captured.

In the meantime, the rest of the Confederate detachment had taken captive Michael Hedrick and his son Solomon. Hearing the gunfire

at Mallow's, they hastened to that place, finding Hiner disabled and encircled by Home Guards. The Rebels opened fire, which the Swamps returned. In this brief skirmish, at least Confederate Lieutenant Ephraim Wimer was wounded, and probably several others on both sides. Hiner's injuries, as well as those of one of the Swamps, were nursed by the women of the Mallow household until he was taken home several days later by his father, Benjamin Hiner, presiding justice of the county court.

Guarded by George W. Hammer and Zebulon Puffenbarger, the Hedricks were marched over the Dolly Path toward Franklin. The Rebels had captured several new Enfield rifles from the Swamps, and the Hedricks were each required to carry one of the unloaded pieces to relieve their warders of this burden. After the party had reached the North Fork flats on the mountain's eastern slope, Solomon Hedrick struck Puffenbarger in the head and knocked him to the ground with the butt of the rifle he was carrying. Hammer's gun misfired, permitting Solomon to escape. When Puffenbarger regained consciousness, he wished to kill Michael Hedrick, but young Hammer prevented his doing so. With the remaining prisoner, the two Rebels continued to Franklin, followed by their comrades the next day.[19]

More than a week later The Wheeling Intelligencer, in its March 21, 1863 issue, reported a skirmish near Mouth of Seneca between loyal "Swampers" and a force of Rebels, the Unionists being defeated.[20] Charles W. Shreve recalled another encounter near Seneca at about the same time. In the Dry Fork area of Randolph and Tucker counties, Sampson Snyder and his father, John Snyder, headed a band of

Union guerrillas which were in frequent combat with the Rebels of Pendleton. Yet a teenager, Shreve accompanied one of the Snyders and twenty-one Swamps on a scout. On the Mouse farm they exchanged several volleys with a similarly small party of Imboden's men, the North Fork River dividing the two forces. The Confederates soon withdrew with four wounded. The Unionist company sustained no casualties.

Shreve's experience illustrates one very important reason for the organization of Home Guards. Shortly after the skirmish at Seneca, Shreve was conscripted into Imboden's brigade, participating in that general's raid into western Virginia in April of 1863. Near Staunton he deserted the Confederate army but was captured and returned to his company. After accompanying the Confederates on another foray, he escaped for a second time near Harrisonburg. Returning to Pendleton, he joined the Home Guards and served for the duration of the war.[21] The companies of Swamp Dragons helped to protect their members from impressment into the service of the Confederacy.

During the interval between April 11 and 18, Colonel George Latham and a contingent of the Second (West) Virginia Infantry marched from Beverly to Franklin, taking the town by surprise and scouting five miles beyond, but finding no significant enemy force. Latham reported five prisoners taken and two men wounded, one of whom was a member of the Seneca Home Guards.[22] The Swamp Dragon probably rendered guide services to Latham. As auxiliaries to the regular Federal troops, the Swamps also scouted, relayed intelligence, and occasionally reinforced the regular units en masse for special missions.

Early in May, Captain Hart and fifty men from the Ringgold Battalion had ridden from Greenland Gap to Seneca Gap to blockade the latter pass against some unspecified threat.[23] That same month, a battalion of the Fifth (West) Virginia Cavalry, then stationed at Beverly, skirmished with bushwhackers near Franklin. In this fight Major McNally, their commanding officer, sustained serious wounds. After the unit returned to Beverly, McNally's wounds were nursed in her home by Mrs. Laura J. Arnold, staunch Unionist and sister of Confederate General T. J. Jackson.[24]

On occasion Federal cavalry scouts entered Pendleton to assist or protect Home Guard companies there. Early in June of 1863, Lieutenant Crago was sent on a patrol to Mouth of Seneca to aid a force of Swamp Dragons led by Captain Evan Harper. With forty men of the Ringgold Cavalry, Crago expected to help the Home Guards in repulsing a Rebel attack. On the second day of the scout as the Ringgolds neared Seneca, they were fired upon by bushwhackers concealed on the mountainside. After Crago had moved his men out of range and dismounted a detail to clear the mountainside, a figure at a dwelling in the distance, but within earshot, shouted to the Ringgolds to hold their fire, for the bushwhackers were friendly. Harper's men had been nervously awaiting a Rebel attack and had mistaken the Ringgolds for the enemy. Captain Harper explained that no Federals had been shot because his men had unfamiliar firearms newly issued by the government, and all had fired too high. He boasted that "Every man of them could kill his squirrel at a hundred yards with his old rifle."[25]

The New State of West Virginia

On June 20, 1863, West Virginia became the thirty-fifth state of the Union. Pendleton was included within the limits of the new state, notwithstanding the loyalty of a large majority of her citizens to the Confederacy, and the operation of her county court under the Richmond government for the entire war. The general war situations and the control of much of western Virginia by Federal forces, especially the Tygart Valley immediately to the west of Pendleton, enabled the northwestern counties to impose the new state on a number of eastern counties Southern in sympathy. The expediency of statehood as a war measure eclipsed doubts with respect to its constitutional propriety.

But the West Virginia boundaries and Pendleton's inclusion were not completely arbitrary. The plan was to make the state as large as possible, but without encompassing so great a Confederate population as to challenge the future rule of the Unionist element in the northwest. Speeches in the constitutional convention suggest that Pendleton was incorporated because her rivers flow toward the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which the new state proponents were anxious to shield from antagonistic Virginia legislation following the war. Other important considerations were that the county had a small slave population and possessed within its bounds no Virginia-financed internal improvements that would encumber the new state with indebtedness.[26]

Predominately Confederate, Pendleton naturally had little voice in the formation of West Virginia. Following passage of the secession ordinance, Unionist counties in the northwest held conventions at

Wheeling in May and June of 1861, establishing the "Reorganized Government of Virginia." Pendleton was not represented in either convention. The Reorganized Government passed an ordinance proposing the division of the state. The referendum on this issue, held in October of 1861, resulted in overwhelming approval among those western Virginians who voted, but no ballots were recorded for Pendleton. On November 26, 1861, a constitutional convention met at Wheeling, but the county was not represented in the regular session which lasted until February 18, 1862. It was only in the recalled session of February 12 - 20, 1863 that John L. Boggs served as an irregularly chosen delegate for the county's Union people. The following April the basic law for the new state was ratified by a wide margin, but again Pendleton registered not a single ballot on a measure of critical importance for her future.

However, later in the war scattered Unionist communities in the eastern counties of West Virginia voted under the new government. In March of 1863, Pendleton Unionists approved the Willey Amendment, which abolished slavery in the new state, by a vote of 181 to 0. In the 1864 presidential election, Lincoln received 211 votes in the county, and McClellan none. Not only must these figures be compared to the county's 1,168 eligible voters in May of 1861, but it should also be noted that Federal soldiers from other states often cast ballots in these elections.[27]

Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia

Rugged terrain and narrow, rough roads militated against large scale military operations within the county, so guerrilla and small unit actions predominated. At every opportunity both Confederate and Unionist irregulars harassed enemy troop movements and supply trains. Often individual bushwhackers as well as groups of guerrillas would impede the movements of regular soldiers by the continual firing into their columns from concealed positions on the mountainsides. On occasion a march would be accompanied by incessant skirmishing to protect the main body of troops from the ubiquitous bushwhackers. Although conflict in western Virginia produced far fewer casualties than were suffered in major engagements elsewhere, the war in the mountains possessed a certain nerve-wracking quality. Lieutenant F. H. Crago of the Ringgold Cavalry described the usual Federal scouting forays as well as the threat posed by bushwhackers:

> Most of the scouting parties sent out consisted of from 25 to 50 picked cavalrymen in command of a captain or lieutenant, and would often make a journey of 40 to 50 miles, returning within 24 hours. At times we were exposed to the fire of bushwhackers from the mountainside as we rode along the mountain path or trail. Quite a number of the Ringgold boys fell by the bullets of this unseen and cowardly foe. There was a great deal of this kind of warfare in the mountains of West Virginia, and all who experienced it will testify that it took more nerve to march along these lonely mountain paths, not knowing what moment the sneaking foe would fire from ambush, than it did to enter the hotly contested battle, where whole armies were engaged. I have experienced both and am free to say that I greatly prefer the latter — though I have no strong desire for either.[28]

One view holds that the mountaineers by their character, "individualistic, undisciplined, slovenly, suspicious, and full of guile," were naturally predisposed to this type of warfare.[29] Often members of the guerrilla bands posed as ordinary civilians during the intervals between missions, deceiving at least those on the other side who were not also neighbors or acquaintances. The mountains, and the guerrilla's intimate knowledge of every isolated trail, provided a clandestine sanctuary into which the raiders could disappear after wreaking their havoc on enemy camps and supply trains. Because of the division of sympathy frequently encountered among the mountain population, irregulars of both sides readily found support among the inhabitants in the form of food, hiding places, and information.[30] This was particularly the case for the Southern partisans in Pendleton since their supporters were in the majority. So vexatious was this practice to the Federals that in November of 1864, General Kelley threatened to devastate the South Branch Valley like the Shenandoah if valley residents did not cease providing sustenance and hiding places to McNeill's Rangers.[31]

Life for Pendleton citizens was complicated by the region's status as a buffer zone between the Valley and the trans-Allegheny, and the fact that the county was not occupied on a really consistent basis by the forces of either side. Also, the presence of Unionists and secessionists living as neighbors fostered a bitterly personal conflict. Sometimes even members of an immediate family were divided in political allegiance. The most remarkable example of this phenomenon within Pendleton involved two brothers. James Boggs, who resided in

Franklin, was presiding justice of the county court that swore allegiance to the Confederacy, a brigadier general of the Virginia Militia, and Pendleton's representative to the Virginia General Assembly in 1861. His brother, John Boggs, served as Pendleton's Unionist delegate to the recalled session of the constitutional convention in February of 1863, was the county's representative in the West Virginia legislature from 1863 to 1865, and fought in the war as a captain of the Mouth of Seneca Home Guards. Only the death of James on January 28, 1862 averted a potentially tragic confrontation between the two men.[32]

In the atmosphere of lawlessness spawned by the war, it was inevitable that many excesses would result. The war years accorded opportunities for the violent settlement of longstanding personal grudges with relative impunity. Many Pendletonians found it advisable to sleep in the woods even on cold winter nights to avoid being bushwhacked in their houses. Often guerrillas were merely bandits plundering under the cloak of patriotism. Because of these excesses, General Milroy usually referred to the Confederate irregulars in uncomplimentary and intemperate language, in one message to Fremont asserting that "robbers, thieves, and murderers are organizing, under the name of guerrillas. . . ."[33]

John D. Imboden, on the Confederate side, was no more generous. In September of 1862, he informed Stonewall Jackson of the capture and transportation to Staunton of Captain Bond and "some four or five" members of a Hardy and Pendleton Home Guard company. Imboden alluded to Bond as a "bandit leader" and his followers as "desperadoes,"

accusing them of "horse-thieving and plundering." One killed was named Mallow, reportedly a deserter from both the Confederate and Union armies in turn. But exaggerated epithets seem to have been applied so indiscriminately to the enemy that it is impossible to ascertain whether Imboden wrote truthfully that Mallow had "turned horsethief and robber" or was "a great scoundrel."[34]

However, it was not uncommon for soldiers to switch sides, especially those conscripted into the Southern army against their will. The Snyders' Unionist irregular company, allegedly responsible for numerous depredations, included a large number of Confederate deserters. Many of the cruelties perpetrated by the Snyder Swamps have been attributed to these renegades. To the regret of other Unionists, these excesses blackened the reputation of all the Home Guard units.[35]

The Effectiveness of the Irregulars

A thesis of V. C. Jones' Gray Ghosts and Rebel Raiders is that the war would have ended in Union victory as early as the summer of 1864 had it not been for the operations of Rebel guerrillas such as McNeill's Rangers. The general argument is that for a time the irregulars were able to neutralize the Federal numerical advantage by forcing the diversion of large contingents of Union soldiers for the protection of rear areas and supply channels.[36] An opposing evaluation, at least as applicable to West Virginia, is advanced by Richard O. Curry and F. Gerald Ham. These writers believe that

guerrilla warfare as practiced in western Virginia brought the Confederates minimal benefits. Despite the annoyance, civil dislocations, and destruction of lives and property, the Federals retained control of the major lines of communication and thereby ensured the success of the West Virginia statehood movement.[37]

However, the evidence establishes beyond cavil that guerrilla activity in western Virginia did tie down substantial numbers of Federal troops. In a broadside issued to attract enlistments in his Partisan Rangers in the spring of 1862, Imboden stated that the proper objective of the irregulars was

> . . . to hang about their camps and shoot down every sentinel, picket, courier, and wagon driver we can find; to watch opportunities for attacking convoys and forage trains, and thus render the country so unsafe that they will not dare to move except in large bodies.[38]

In April of 1862, General Milroy apprised Fremont that he was greatly hindered by the details assigned to protect the citizens of Unionist communities. Therefore his troops were ineffectually scattered over the mountains and could not readily be concentrated for action against the enemy.[39] In his report of June of 1862, Fremont echoes the same complaint with respect to the Mountain Department generally.[40] Also expressing similar concerns was George R. Latham in a letter to Governor Pierpont of the Reorganized Government of Virginia. This letter was dated April 14, 1862 and written from Monterey. Latham and his troops had been

> . . . scouting and skirmishing with a gang of Guerrillas and horse thieves in the mountains of Tucker, Randolph, and Pendleton counties. We captured several of this gang and killed several others, among them their captain, Tom Powers. They have reorganized with Zike [Zeke?] Harper for Captain, and are committing all sorts of depredations, and the Union citizens have sent all the way here for me and my company to go to their assistance, and I am ordered out to start early in the morning. Can there be nothing done in the way of militia organization to suppress these bands of marauders without taking the troops regularly in the U.S. service for that purpose?[41]

In numerous letters General Lee expressed his opposition to the partisan bands because they diverted manpower from the regular Confederate service. Yet he enthusiastically applauded the forays of Imboden and McNeill against the Baltimore and Ohio, and he repeatedly acknowledged that large numbers of Federal troops were necessarily removed from offensive operations to defend that railroad.

Regular military units were usually at a great disadvantage in combatting guerrillas because of the latter's vastly superior knowledge of the terrain. However, there were several important exceptions to this generalization. The Sixty-second Virginia Infantry of Imboden's brigade, which included several companies of Pendleton soldiers and customarily operated in western Virginia, naturally experienced fewer difficulties in this respect. On the Federal side, the Ringgold Cavalry developed into the most proficient scouting and anti-guerrilla force functioning in the mountains in and about Pendleton County.

As early as April of 1862, General B. F. Kelley requested that the Ringgolds be transferred from General Banks' command to his own.

At this time Governor Letcher of Virginia was issuing his commissions for the organization of Confederate guerrillas or "Mounted Rangers." To parry this menace, Kelley needed a force well acquainted with the topography, roads, trails, and mountain passes of western Virginia. As a result of the unit's service in that region in the summer and fall of 1861, the Ringgolds had already acquired this familiarity which made them a crack unit and endeared them to Federal officers vexed with the ravages of the enemy irregulars.[42] The first of many forays made by this unit into Pendleton specifically appears to have taken place in November of 1862.[43]

Early 1863 was a time when the war was generally going badly for Unionists in western Virginia, when guerrilla disruptions, secessionism, and disillusionment with the ability of the Wheeling government to protect the lives and property of loyal citizens were on the rise.[44] But, however effective the Confederate guerrillas originally, in the judgment of this writer their disruptive capabilities diminished significantly following the spring of 1863. This development, not recognized by Curry and Ham, can be attributed to two basic causes. The first is that, to relieve regular Federal troops of the duty of protecting Unionist communities, the suggestion of Milroy and Latham that local militia companies be organized was finally implemented and afforded at least a partial solution to this annoyance. The second factor was the adoption of a more mobile and aggressive mode of warfare by the Union regulars.

By the autumn of 1862, Union sympathizers had informally coalesced for their mutual protection. John and Sampson Snyder of Dry Fork of Randolph County had formed a company which included Pendleton men. About this same time, Captain John S. Bond was leading a Hardy and Pendleton Home Guard unit. On March 24, 1863, Captain Evan C. Harper organized a company at Mouth of Seneca.[45] This trend toward greater Unionist emphasis on self-defense gained momentum with the admission of West Virginia as a state on June 20, 1863. Early in July the state's first legislature enacted a law authorizing and equipping Home Guard units, the members of which were to be designated as State Troops. This measure, which provided for the payment of the Home Guards while in actual service, stimulated the establishment of a number of Pendleton companies.[46] In anticipation of the legislature's action, Captain Isaac Alt's company was mustered in at Brushy Run on July 1, 1863. The company of Hardy and Pendleton men under Captain John Bond was mustered in on December 9, 1863. Evidently Bond had been exchanged following his capture by Imboden's men in September of 1862. On May 1, 1864, after the death of Evan Harper, Captain John Boggs assumed command of the Mouth of Seneca company. Composed mainly of men from other companies whose initial terms of service had expired, Captain Michael Mallow's unit was enrolled on July 1, 1864. Other Unionist companies from the western section of adjacent Hardy County were those led by Adam Yocum, James Rohrbaugh, and Daniel Schell. Typically, members of two or more companies combined in varying proportions for a particular foray. Often a force composed largely of one company would be commanded by the captain of

another. Rosters of Boggs' and Mallow's companies reveal ninety and fifty-seven members respectively. Of fifty-eight men in Alt's company, six were killed and four captured, three of the latter dying in captivity. Fifty-four men, the majority of whom were Hardy countians, composed Bond's company. Seven of these are listed as killed, and five as captured.[47]

Another legislative act of 1863 declared that all property belonging to the enemies of West Virginia and found within her borders was forfeited to the state. Although never stringently enforced and usually ignored, this law constituted a potential menace to Southern sympathizers and provided the semblance of legality to Home Guards determined to punish treason.[48]

The second factor diminishing the effectiveness of the Confederate guerrillas was a consequence of the Jones-Imboden raids of April and May, 1863. These raids, which inflicted great damage on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Burning Springs oil field, produced consternation among the higher echelons of the Federal command. The result was a reshuffling of officers, incompetent and dilatory leaders like Benjamin Roberts being supplanted with energetic and aggressive types such as William W. Averell. With Beverly as his base of operations, Brigadier General Averell mounted and retrained his infantry, implementing a war of mobility and militancy against the Confederates. Hereafter, Federal commanders in West Virginia generally became more aggressive, and the most spectacular raids were now directed against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad rather than the Baltimore and Ohio.[49]

These developments were doubly beneficial to the Federals, for just at the time that the regulars adopted more enterprising and combative tactics, the Home Guard companies became more active, further freeing the regulars for offensive operations. The Confederates also made strides in this direction. For example, the Sixty-second Virginia Infantry was mounted sometime in the latter half of 1863.[50] But the Rebel gains were relatively less impressive than those of the Federals, with whom the momentum remained for the duration of the war. This was true despite a number of daring Confederate forays such as the capture of Generals Crook and Kelley at Cumberland by McNeill's Rangers, or Rosser's raids against Beverly and New Creek.

Summer and Autumn, 1863

During the second half of 1863, Pendleton continued as a locale for regular army movements. In addition to the usual Federal cavalry patrols, Averell passed through the county on several of his raids during these months. Toward the end of June, Colonel Jackson and 1,200 Confederates were stationed at McDowell.[51] Also, skirmishes between the county's Unionist and secessionist companies escalated in frequency and intensity.

Sometime in the course of the summer, a raid against Southern sympathizers on Smith Creek was carried out by a portion of Snyder's Swamp Dragons. George Harper, Sr. of Germany Valley, a prominent and influential champion of Southern independence in that neighborhood, had removed about twenty of his horses to pastures on the James Mauzy farm to better protect them from Unionist marauders. The Swamps, who made

the most of every opportunity to seize or despoil the property of secessionists, proceeded to Smith Creek and captured the horses of Harper and others. While expropriating additional horses and consuming a ten gallon keg of apple brandy, Snyder's men were attacked by a band of Rebels consisting of Amos Warner's Dixie Boys plus several Confederate soldiers at home on leave. Included in this group were Perry Hartman, Job Hartman, Solomon Moyers, William Lambert, George W. Sponaugle, and Harrison Simmons, among others. Ensconced behind trees and fences, the Rebels exchanged volleys with the Swamps, who secured cover in Simmons' barn. The Swamp Dragons finally withdrew, getting away with only their horses captured from Harper. No casualties are known to have resulted from this encounter. Soon after the above incident, Snyder's men returned to Smith Creek. Early one morning they shot William Lambert as he returned to his house from the hiding place where he had slept the previous night. They also burned the dwelling of Perry Hartman; however, Hartman himself managed to escape the clutches of the Swamps.[52]

Shortly after July 2, 1863, the date on which the West Virginia legislature authorized the organization of Home Guard units, a detachment of Captain Harper's company journeyed to Piedmont, West Virginia, to procure a wagonload of arms, ammunition, and supplies. Volunteering for the trip were John A. Harper, Jacob Harman, Elijah Harman, Daniel Dice, Jonas Kisamore, Wilson Westfall, John Hartman, and George Custer. The expedition proved uneventful until the return journey when the party stopped for breakfast near Greenland Gap, Hardy (now Grant) County. Only part of the group could be accommodated at

the first house, so Dice, Kisamore, and Elijah Harman went on to the next dwelling. But it was agreed before separating that a shot would be fired as a warning of danger to the other party, should either of the groups run into trouble. Soon after arriving at the second house, the three Swamps were surrounded by about forty of McNeill's Rangers. Recognizing that capture was certain and imminent, Harman discharged his firearm, warning the remainder of the company and aiding their escape. The three captives were transported to Richmond's Castle Thunder prison, from which Harman escaped and the other two were exchanged after a period of some months.[53]

One day near the end of the summer of 1863, Isaac V. Porter, Isaac N. Bland, and James H. Warner, members of the Eighteenth Virginia Cavalry at home on furlough, were bathing in the North Fork River at Judy Gap. When this activity was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a detachment of Seneca Home Guards, the three Confederates, devoid of clothes and firearms, could do little but surrender. The news of the capture was carried to Amos Warner and Stewart Bland who, without time to gather allies, started out by themselves to intercept the Home Guards. Learning that the Swamps had traveled up Briery Run Gap, and anticipating that they were heading toward Seneca, Warner and Bland hurried up Tanyard Gap. Now in front of the Swamps, the two Rebels hid themselves on a bluff over the road along Brushy Run, from which they ambushed the Home Guards as the latter approached. Warner and Bland were armed with new repeating rifles and Colt revolvers which created a considerable din. In the confusion of the lively exchange of gunfire that ensued, Isaac Porter and Isaac Bland were able to get away.

The Swamps withdrew with James Warner still in their custody, but in ignorance of the serious wounds that they had inflicted on their two attackers. Since his injury involved his shoulder, Amos Warner was able to walk and secure aid for his comrade, who was wounded in the leg. Both men recovered and took further part in the war. James Warner was eventually transported to Camp Chase, Ohio, where he remained until after the close of hostilities.[54]

After the formation of companies of State Troops, the Unionists within Pendleton were better able to protect themselves, as well as contribute more effectively to the Northern war effort as auxiliaries to regular units. But they were still compelled to seek the assistance of regulars if threatened by a large Confederate force. In September of 1863, the Ringgold Cavalry, encamped at Moorefield, rode into Pendleton to buttress a Home Guard company for at least the second time. Seventy Federals under Lieutenants Crago and Vangilder found Captain Bond and his men lying in ambush in expectation of a Rebel attack. This time, however, the Ringgolds were not fired upon. Nor was the Southern force located.[55]

Sometime in the latter part of 1863, about twenty-five Home Guards under the command of Captain Alt engaged about 200 Rebel cavalry led by Captains McNeill and White. In this encounter, which occurred near Pendleton's northern border, two Home Guards were killed and several Confederates wounded. About the same time, Lieutenant Jonathan Hiser led about fifteen Swamps to Reeds Creek near Upper Tract to capture a number of Confederate soldiers home on furlough. While in the attempt, a brief skirmish resulted. Taylor Smith, a

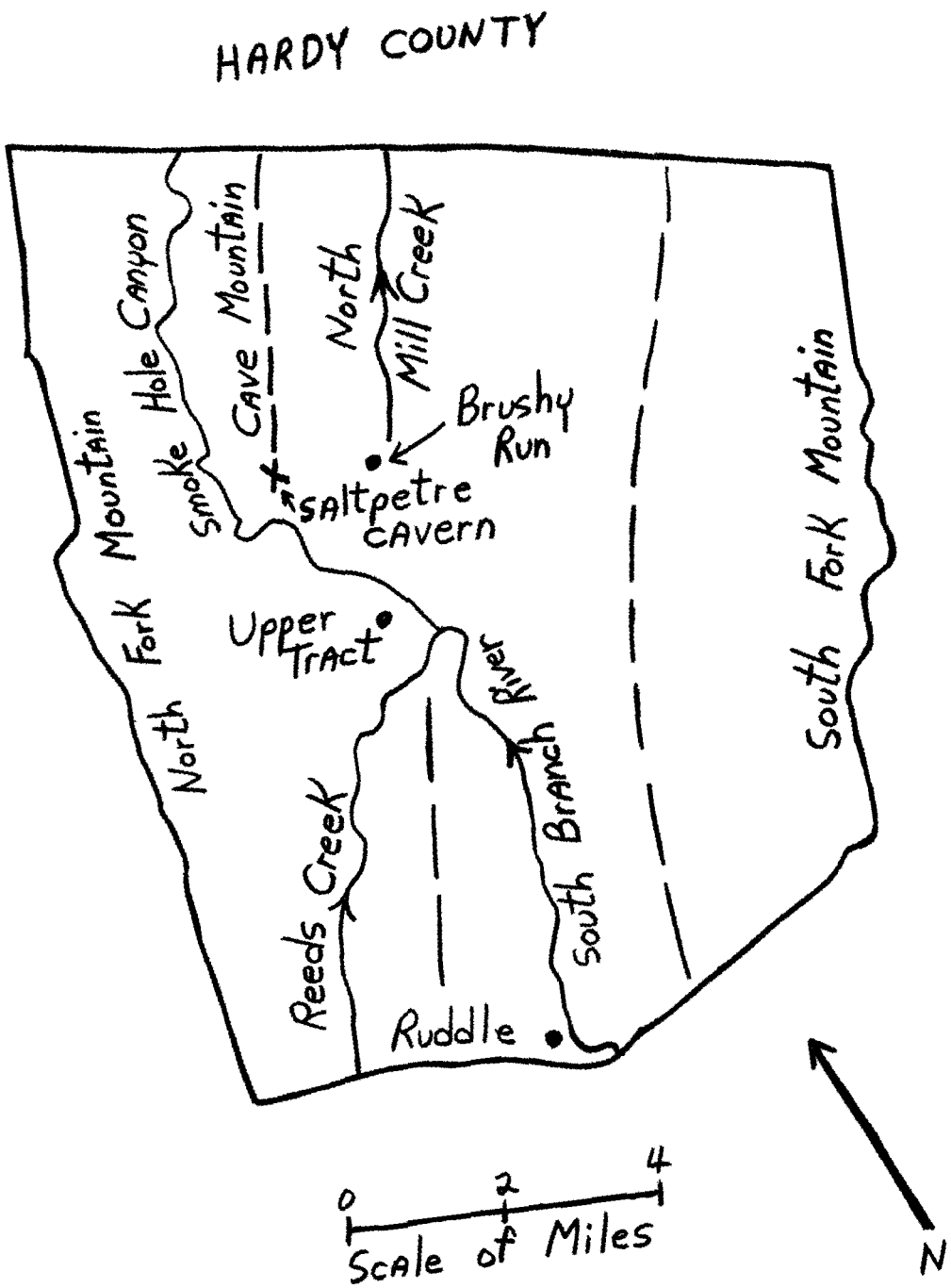

Plate No. 14. District No. 4 (Mill Run)

civilian of Southern views, was wounded. Two Confederates, Joseph Custer and Adam Hedrick, were taken prisoner.[56]

Throughout the war, Snyder's Swamps continued to be an object of Imboden's wrath. In September of 1863, that Confederate general expressed his resolve "to go to the North Fork in Pendleton, and try and clear out Snyder's gang of Union robbers and murderers, known as Swamp Dragons."[57] Three months later, these guerrillas were responsible for the death of Confederate scout William Harper. It was in December that he visited the home of his uncle, Leonard Harper, on the Upper North Fork. Although warned that the Swamp Dragons were lurking in the area, the intrepid scout decided to stay for the night. At two o'clock in the morning, the house was surrounded by ten of Sampson Snyder's men shouting, "Where's Bill Harper?" Armed with a pistol and a bowie knife, Harper climbed through his upstairs bedroom window onto a snow-covered porch roof, closed the window, wrapped himself in a sheet, and lay on the roof. Having entered the house and ascended the stairway, one of the Swamps peered through that window onto the roof. Mistakenly believing that his presence had been discovered, Harper fired at the Swamp through the window, and although at very close range, missed. Jumping from the roof to the ground, Harper was immediately confronted by Sampson Snyder. Firing his pistol within three feet of his adversary's face, Bill incredibly missed his target a second time. Snyder returned his fire more accurately, and Harper fell. As Bill tried to rise, Snyder grabbed him, enabling the Confederate to stab the Swamps' leader and cripple him for life. Immediately thereafter, Mathias Helmick shot Harper five times in the

chest. His body was heaved into the hog-pen for further mutilation. The episode was concluded as the Swamp Dragons proceeded to plunder the Harper farm, taking all the horses and as much grain, clothing, and provisions as they could carry. This act of pillage illustrates the excesses of which some of Snyder's men were capable. Mathias Helmick, Sampson Mick, and George Arbogast were Confederate renegades as well as Unionist plunderers. They had formerly served in Company C of the Sixty-second Virginia with Jacob Harper, deceased son of Leonard Harper. Arbogast had once been a tenant on the Harper farm. Both Helmick and Arbogast had been befriended by the Harper family in times past.[58]

The killing of William Harper was of some consequence, for despite his occasional poor marksmanship, he was a superb scout and pilot for the Confederate army, as was his brother Ezekial. Bill and Zeke both served as guides for Garnett's army in 1861. Bill later piloted Imboden to St. George on his abortive raid against the railway bridge at Rowlesburg in November of 1862. In April of 1863, he guided General William E. Jones on his raid to the Ohio River. His daring, and especially his expertise as a guide, were of great benefit to the South. Imboden's tendency to lose his way in the Alleghenies following Bill's departure from his command in November of 1862 lends credence to this assertion. Zeke Harper was as fearless as his brother. On one occasion in Pendleton County, Federals surrounded him on three sides, killing his horse and two comrades. Zeke dispatched the nearest Northern soldier and escaped through the fourth side. It was Zeke who piloted Imboden in his raid from Franklin to St. George, and later into western Virginia during the Jones-Imboden raids.[59]

By the middle of 1863, the war in Pendleton, fought predominantly by relatively small contingents of regulars and guerrillas on both sides, had attained a character and intensity that would continue essentially unchanged to the conflict's conclusion. The identities and designations of the antagonists, their patterns of parry and thrust, and the atmosphere of lawlessness and anxiety had become largely established. And, with the formation of the Home Guards and the newly found aggressiveness of the Union regulars in West Virginia, the war's local developments, in harmony with those on the larger scene, became increasingly favorable to the Federals.

Notes

[1]H. E. Matheny, Major General Thomas Maley Harris (Parsons,W. Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1963), p. 44.

[2]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 578.

[3]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 80-81.

[4]Lang, Loyal West Virginia, pp. 145-46.

[5]Fansler, Tucker County, pp. 194-98; Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, pp. 950-51, and Vol. XIX, Pt. II, p. 630.

[6]Official Records, I, Vol. XIX, Pt. II, p. 155.

[7]Ibid., p. 156; Fansler, Tucker County, pp. 200-01.

[8]So named because Gandy Creek here "sinks" into a cavern, flowing underground for two-thirds of a mile.

[9]Fansler, Tucker County, pp. 200-03; Official Records, I, Vol. XIX, Pt. II, pp. 156-58.

[10]Official Records, I, Vol. XIX, Pt. II, pp. 164-65.

[11]William H. Beach, The First New York (Lincoln) Cavalry (New York: The Lincoln Cavalry Association, 1902), p. 187.

[12]Samuel C. Farrar, The Twenty-second Pennsylvania Cavalry and the Ringgold Battalion, 1861-1865 (Akron and Pittsburgh: The New Werner Co.), pp. 75-76, hereinafter referred to as Ringgold Battalion.

[13]Official Records, I, Vol. XXI, pp. 843-44.

[14]Ibid., Vol. XXV, Pt. I, pp. 98, 116, 123-24.

[15]West Virginia Historic Commission, West Virginia Highway Markers, rev. ed. (West Virginia Historic Commission, 1967), p. 151.

[16]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. I, p. 713.

[17]Simeon Miller Bright, "The McNeill Rangers: A Study in Confederate Guerrilla Warfare, "West Virginia History, XII (July, 1951), p. 364, hereinafter cited as "McNeill Rangers."

[18]Lang, Loyal West Virginia, pp. 147, 153; Angus James Johnston, Virginia Railroads in the Civil War (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), p. 103.

[19]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 90-93; Boggs, Hammers, p. 84.

[20]Moore, Rebellion Record, Vol. 6, Diary of Events, p. 56.

[21]E. L. Judy, History of Grant and Hardy Counties, West Virginia (Charleston, W. Va.: Charleston Printing Company, 1951), pp. 256-57, hereinafter referred to as Grant and Hardy.

[22]Official Records, I, Vol. XXV, Pt. I, p. 83.

[23]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 103.

[24]Reader, Fifth West Virginia Cavalry, p. 250.

[25]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 107.

[26]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia; pp. 232-33; Alvin E. Moore, History of Hardy County of the Borderland (Parsons, W. Va., McClain Printing Company, 1963), pp. 94, 96-97.

[27]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, pp. 229-30; Curry, House Divided, pp. 86, 97, 145-52; Morton, Pendleton County, p. 111; James C. McGregor, The Disruption of Virginia (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 274.

[28]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 106.

[29]Curry and Ham, "Bushwhacker's War," p. 419.

[30]Ibid., p. 418.

[31]Official Records, I, Vol. XLIII, Pt. I, p. 658.

[32]Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 182, 373.

[33]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 71.

[34]Ibid., Vol. XIX, Pt. II, p. 631.

[35]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 15.

[36]Virgil Carrington Jones, Gray Ghosts and Rebel Raiders (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956), pp. vii-viii.

[37]Curry and Ham, "Bushwhacker's War," p. 433.

[38]Ibid., p. 424.

[39]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 72.

[40]Ibid., Pt. I, p. 5.

[41]H. W. Fournoy, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. XI (Richmond: 1893), p. 372.

[42]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 62.

[43]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, pp. 75-76.

[44]Curry and Ham, "Bushwhacker's War," p. 431.

[45]H. A. Alt, Genealogies of the Kimble and Alt Families (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1937), p. 81, hereinafter cited as Kimble and Alt Families.

[46]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 101-02.

[47]Alt, Kimble and Alt Families, pp. 76-85.

[48]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, p. 264.

[49]Ibid., pp. 225-27.

[50]Wallace, Military Organizations, p. 191.

[51]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 730.

[52]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 94-97.

[53]Ibid., pp. 101-04.

[54]Ibid., pp. 98-100.

[55]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 136.

[56]Judy, Grant and Hardy, p. 257.

[57]Official Records, I, Vol. XXIX, Pt. I, p. 107.

[58]Somewhat discrepant versions of this incident can be found in Fansler, Tucker County, pp. 211-13; "William Harper, Confederate Scout," Pendleton Times, July 16, 1926, p. 1; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 117-21; and Hu Maxwell, History of Randolph County, West Virginia (Morgantown, W. Va.: The Acme Publishing Company, 1898), p. 465.

[59]Fansler, Tucker County, pp. 194-95, 209.

VII. POLICIES AND PROBLEMS OF SUPPLY

The Impressment of Food and Forage

With the presence of the large Union force in Franklin in May of 1862, county farmers were first made ominously aware of the vulnerability of their food stocks when parties of hungry soldiers were operating in the vicinity. This problem was to annoy Pendletonians to the conclusion of the war. The county's location on the border between North and South left its citizens susceptible to the demands and depredations of both Confederates and Federals who seized available cattle, horses, and grain, particularly from persons of opposing allegiances. To prevent essential food and forage from falling into the hands of the increasingly hard-pressed Rebels, the Federals often expropriated these items beyond even what was needed to sustain troops on the march and gave vouchers for which the suppliers could obtain payment upon proof of loyalty to the United States. This practice worked a considerable hardship on Southern sympathizers, the status of most Pendleton people. Also, if one purchased supplies in an area controlled by the Federals, it was often necessary to sign an affidavit to the effect that the item acquired would be used by the purchaser or his family, and not sold or given to the Confederate army.[1]

General Rosecrans considered the Federal procurement procedure to be both unjust and inexpedient. In an April, 1862 letter to Stanton, Rosecrans argued that suppliers should be given immediate payment in

United States currency rather than certificates to be redeemed later after a demonstration of loyalty. All necessary supplies would then be furnished quickly, avoiding the delays so damaging to successful military movements. Greater economy would result since treasury notes would inspire greater confidence and therefore permit lower prices. This system of procurement would impress wavering souls with the authentic justice dispensed by the United States government, while exchanging certificates for supplies smacked of plunder.[2] Rosecrans' counsel on this matter was not heeded, perhaps because his suggested procedure would not penalize suppliers Southern in sentiment, or would inadequately guard against mischief worked by United States currency in rebellious hands. It was certainly at odds with the policies of total war later adopted by the Federals in the Shenandoah Valley and other theaters.

To protect their property, Pendleton people naturally hid their grain and drove their livestock into the mountains if given sufficient warning of the approach of a hostile force. But even a friendly party of soldiers might be forced to confiscate food and forage. Writing from Camp Washington to his home near Crab Bottom in April of 1863, Confederate soldier Asbury Mullenax warned his family to hide their grain and meat, for the Confederate government was preparing to expropriate all means of sustenance in Highland except for ten pounds of food per person.[3] Thus, even the authority to which one purported to render allegiance had to be resisted. Southern sympathizers bore a double burden since agricultural products sold to Confederate officials were paid for with a rapidly depreciating currency.

An example of the war's effects on the material fortunes of Pendleton civilians can be seen in the instance of George Hammer, who left an account book enumerating 2,800 dollars worth of property items either destroyed or confiscated. Except for several hundred dollars owed by the Confederate government, these damages were charged to the Federals and represented the confiscation of farm products as well as the destruction of the Meadows home and Hammer sawmill in May of 1862. Considering that four of Hammer's sons served in the Confederate army, it is hardly surprising that he never received any recompense for his losses.[4]

The South Branch and its tributary valleys served as important sources of sustenance for Confederate armies campaigning in Virginia. They were both more productive and closer to the Southern forces requiring supply than were food-raising areas further to the west. While the agricultural output of the South Branch was not so abundant as the richly endowed Valley of Virginia, which earned the title of "granary of the Confederacy," the maneuvers of large armies in the latter region caused it to become progressively more stripped of food resources as the conflict wore on. Rebel scouting parties sought these supplies on the South Branch, while Union cavalry patrols probed the area to frustrate the Confederates in this objective.

Because of its location at the headwaters of the South Branch, Pendleton was not quite so important to the Southern cause in this respect as was contiguous Hardy County further downriver. References in the Official Records to foraging patrols to Hardy appear rather more numerous than similar missions to Pendleton, but 1860 census figures show Pendleton to have been almost as productive despite its less

extensive bottomlands. With less than one-fifth the total slave population of Hardy in that year, Pendleton possessed 371,228 dollars worth of livestock and 81,184 acres of improved farmland compared to Hardy figures of 453,768 dollars and 85,564 acres.[5] Various Confederate cavalry units wintered or rehabilitated their horses in Highland and Pendleton because of the particularly good grasslands available there. These more southern counties were also better protected than Hardy from the incursions of Federal patrols.

The Saltpetre Caverns and Averell's Raids, 1863-64

To furnish nitrates essential to the manufacture of gunpowder, made scarce by the Federal naval blockade, the Confederate Nitre and Mining Bureau extracted saltpetre from limestone caves throughout the southern Appalachians. Since the early nineteenth century Pendleton's caves had been part of the "Old Saltpetre Trail," the itinerary along which buyers representing eastern manufactures traveled while purchasing the production of the nitre caverns.[6] Pendleton and a number of other counties along the present Virginia - West Virginia boundary comprised Confederate Nitre District No. 4, with headquarters at Union, Monroe County.[7] At least six county caves contributed in this manner to the Southern war effort, and one was pressed into the service of the Union.

The most important source was at Trout Rock where saltpetre earth was excavated from two of three caves opening in a bluff 200 feet above the South Branch River. Although Trout Rock was an established

production center, the wartime operation apparently did not commence in earnest until sometime after May of 1862, for the various accounts of skirmishes at that point between Jackson's and Schenck's advance and rear guards make no mention of a nitre works. Old men or young boys ineligible for the regular Confederate service labored as "petre monkeys" in Pendleton's nitre industry, and married men living near the caves were sometimes detailed from the army for such duty. The earth was dug from chambers and passageways often far under the mountain.[8] Although the main passage of the larger cave is about 1,500 feet long, and ten to twenty feet high and wide,[9] many side channels were mere crawlways through which the petre monkeys had to drag the bags of earth, their way lit only by smoking fagot torches. At the cave entrance the earth was poured into a spout or trough by which it slid down the mountainside to wagons ready to haul it to the leaching vats by the river. The earth from the smaller cave was transported to the same place for processing.

The cave earth was put in the vats and water was added. After standing for several days it was then drained. To this leach-water was added potash salts, produced by the leaching of wood ashes. In this manner calcium nitrate, or cave saltpetre, was converted into potassium nitrate (potash saltpetre). After concentration and purification, accomplished by the protracted boiling of the liquid in large iron kettles, the solid cakes of potassium nitrate were shipped from Pendleton to a powder mill, where they were blended with charcoal and sulphur in the manufacture of gunpowder.[10]

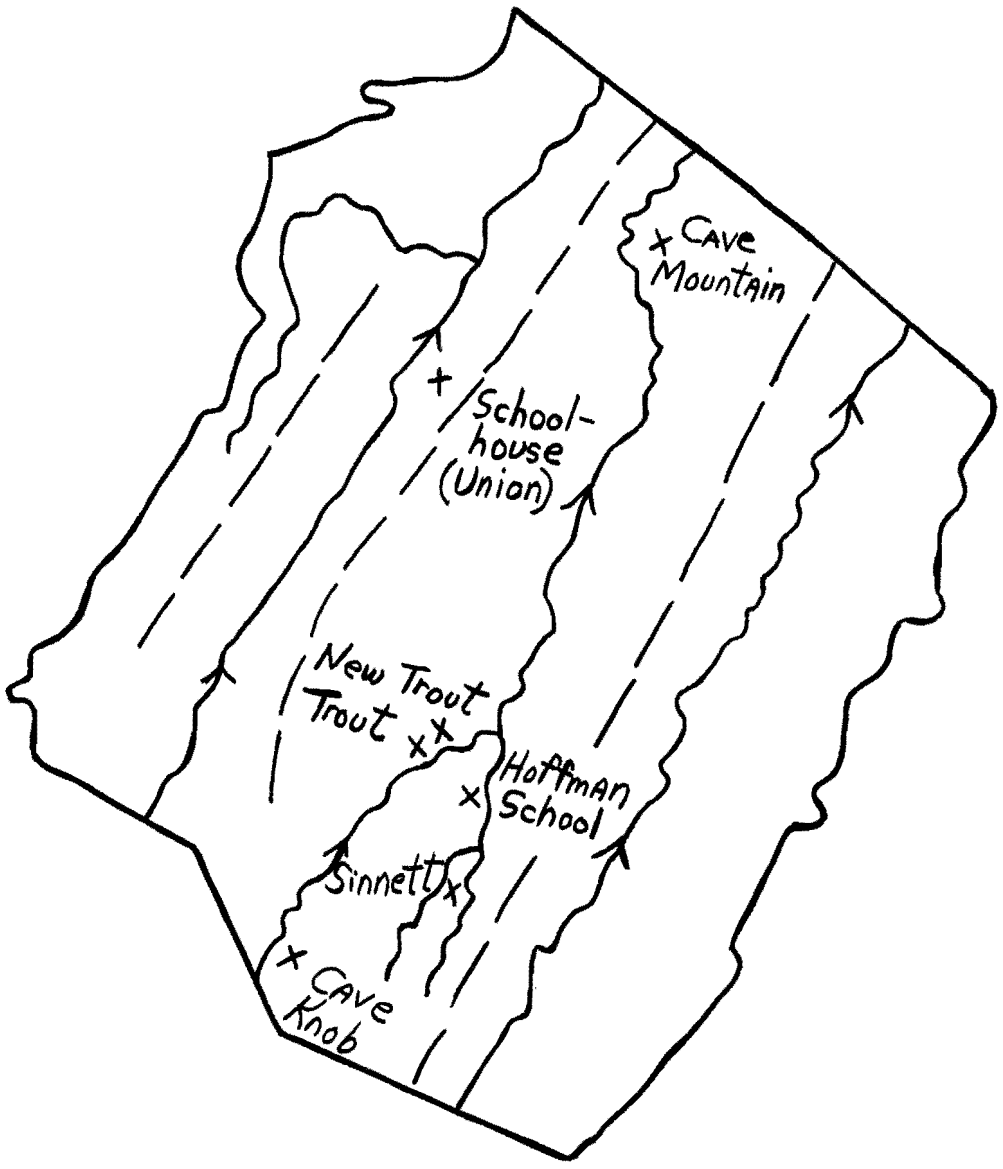

Plate No. 15. Pendleton Saltpetre Caverns

As the main thoroughfare between Franklin and Monterey traversed this valley, constricted into a narrows at Trout Rock, these activities could hardly be overlooked by the Federals. While passing through Pendleton in August of 1863 on a raid to Pocahontas and Greenbrier counties, General William Averell destroyed the Trout Rock works as he had been instructed. His force consisted of units of the Eighth West Virginia, Third West Virginia, and Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry. Averell had also been ordered to supply his troops from the countryside, as well as to gather any cattle beyond what his men required — giving vouchers — and sending them to the Federal lines under guard. Guerrillas presented a great danger and annoyance to Federal movements, and a few of the irregulars were captured on the road to Monterey.[11] In the thirty miles traveled between Petersburg and Franklin on August 19, the Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry

> . . . skirmished all the way with a double skirmish line right and left, and [was] bushwhacked all night by murderous guerrillas. The 20th we marched twenty-four miles to Monterey and skirmished from daylight to dark. Sometimes the enemy was so strong and aggressive that the whole command was deployed to resist his assaults.[12]

In mid-September Federal scouts reported several thousand Confederates under Jenkins and Imboden at Crab Bottom. But events two months later reveal that the Rebel force — which included infantry, cavalry, and several artillery pieces — had taken leave of that locality.[13] On November 12, after skirmishing with guerrillas and destroying 400 gallons of apple brandy at a distillery near Crab Bottom, Colonel John H. Oley of the Eighth West Virginia Infantry arrived at Trout Rock to again disrupt the nitrate operations. The

works had been burned in August and were still in the process of being repaired. The Federals also destroyed a second, smaller works "up a ravine," the location of which was divulged by a slave, and routed a party of guerrillas. These operations were carried out by troops of Averell's command returning from the Union victory won a few days earlier at Droop Mountain, Pocahontas County. After passing through Franklin, the Federals camped on a large river bottom a short distance beyond, finding an abundance of corn and hay for their horses. The following morning two squads were sent to Petersburg via Circleville and Seneca but found no Confederates. The remainder of the brigade marched toward the same destination down the South Branch. Some of these troops had traveled this identical route eighteen months earlier with Fremont. They marched through the "Mill Creek Valley — a good, loyal neighborhood, and the homes of Captain Ault's [Alt's] Swamp Rangers' . . . from here to New Creek there is a large proportion of Union men."[14]

Evidently the Federals encountered no resistance on that march to Petersburg, at least no such reports could be located. But in a communication of November 14 sent from Staunton, Imboden advised Lee's adjutant that he had ordered 200 of McNeill's men to harass Averell's column, "to obstruct the roads about and north of Franklin, and take position in the cliffs and bushwhack the enemy as he passed." Imboden had also dispatched forty fresh cavalry for a similar purpose, but as he composed his report he had not yet learned the results of either party's efforts.[15]

One month later Averell again moved south through Pendleton, this time on his raid to Salem, Roanoke County, where he would devastate the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. The saltpetre works, again in the process of being repaired, were destroyed for the third time on December 10, 1863 by about fifty cavalrymen of the Ringgold Battalion under Captain James Hart.[16] Inexplicably, no pickets had been set out and the works were in operation as the Federals suddenly arrived on the scene. Several petre monkeys were captured, but the remainder quickly climbed the steep hillside through the rain of Federal minie balls, all reaching the shelter of the cave entrance in safety. The prisoners were paroled after having been warned not to resume their mining activities.[17] That day the Federals also met a party of fugitives attempting to reach the Union lines, and that night, while encamped along the South Branch, Averell's troops engaged in a skirmish with bushwhackers.[18]

While Averell's main force raced southward to the railroad on the "Big Salem Raid," Colonel Joseph Thoburn with 700 infantry, a section of artillery, and the fifty Ringgold cavalrymen remained in Highland to make a demonstration toward Staunton, thereby keeping Imboden about that town for its defense and out of the way of Averell's raiders. Thoburn was to guard Averell's train of eighty wagons, scout the countryside beyond McDowell toward Staunton, and keep up the appearance of a 5,000 man force with an appropriately large number of campfires and bugle calls, all of which he accomplished. As the cavalry scouted, the infantry withdrew to Crab Bottom preparatory to rejoining Averell's command.[19]

At first the Confederates were deceived by Thoburn's ruse and had fallen back toward Staunton, but by December 18 Imboden's scouts had correctly ascertained the approximate strength of the Federal force. On that date Lieutenant John Byrd sent a dispatch to Imboden advising that about 1,000 Union soldiers were encamped on the William Heavner farm at Crab Bottom. He further reported that the Federals were "in a helpless situation, and ready to surrender without an effort." Believing that Thoburn would move down the South Branch to Petersburg because icy roads rendered impracticable any attempt to cross the mountains to the North Fork, Byrd boldly resolved to lead his twenty-five men down the Thorn and blockade the road upstream from McCoy Mill, hopefully checking the Federals until Imboden might arrive with a large force.[20]

Imboden's specific response to Byrd's intelligence is unknown, but when Thoburn's scouts learned that the principal route to Petersburg had likely been blockaded, his Federals were hardly "ready to surrender without an effort" to Imboden's larger force. Led by Abe Hinkle, "a guide of some note," Thoburn's command set out at 2:00 a.m. on December 21, crossing the mountains over a rough by-road to the North Fork Valley and Circleville. Byrd had considered movement in that direction as unfeasible because freezing rains had swollen the streams and so glazed the road surfaces that the horses could remain erect only with difficulty. Under such severe conditions the artillery had to be lowered slowly down the road on the western side of the mountain by ropes secured to the rear axles of the gun carriages. Only

one wagon was lost on this arduous journey. Continuing down the North Fork, the force arrived in Petersburg on December 23, 1863.[21]

On Christmas Eve General Averell entered Beverly with his 2,500 mounted troops, having returned through Pocahontas County from the Big Salem Raid. Marching over 400 miles in sixteen days, Averell had managed to reach Salem, destroy the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad facilities at that point, and barely extricate his force while dodging four Southern armies, all during a period of extraordinarily severe winter weather. By cutting the rail line supporting the Confederate army of General Longstreet, Averell's daring raid helped save the Union force under General Burnside besieged in Knoxville, Tennessee. His line of supply disrupted, Longstreet was compelled to end the siege. Thoburn's demonstration toward Staunton had contributed to the success of Averell's mission by distracting Imboden for a time.[22]

Calhoun asserts that following the December, 1863 raid on Trout Rock, that location was considered too vulnerable to the increasingly frequent passage of blueclad armies along the South Branch. While earth continued to be excavated from the cave, it was transported to Dry Run of Thorn Creek for conversion into usable nitrate.[23] This would also have been a relatively convenient site for the processing of earth conveyed from the cave high on the flank of Horner Mountain, now known as the Hoffman School Cave. This was probably done since it has been established that the cave was mined for saltpetre.[24]

In any case, the Trout Rock works continued to be raided. Just after dawn on March 3, 1864, the Fifteenth New York Cavalry arrived in Franklin. Encountering no Confederates, the regiment proceeded to

Trout Rock and destroyed the buildings at the works. Lieutenant Colonel Augustus Root estimated the loss to the Confederate government at eight to ten thousand dollars. Root's contingent numbered 400 men, including a small detachment of the Ringgold Battalion. The Federals reconnoitered the surrounding country but found no Rebels other than small scouting parties. The force captured two prisoners who informed Root that a Confederate enrolling officer, accompanied by a provost guard, was scheduled to appear in Franklin that day to induct conscripted county men. Root was also advised that Confederate troops were consolidating on the South Fork. The Federals crossed the mountain to Circleville where they camped for the night; at daylight Root's command started down the North Fork and out of Pendleton.[25]

Another important saltpetre source for the Confederacy was the cave opening in a crag near the crest of Cave Mountain. Its upper passage, 2,100 feet long and up to thirty-five feet high and fifty feet wide, was extensively excavated. Canvas sacks filled with cave earth were dragged down the mountainside to Big Spring at the river's edge, a vertical distance of about 1,000 feet. The work of processing the petre dirt was performed by members of Pendleton's militia regiment, the Forty-sixth. In the late summer of 1864, Home Guards, probably commanded by Captain Isaac Alt, are said to have attacked the nitre operations, driving the Confederates southward and destroying the large iron kettles at Big Spring. A second version holds that one night two years earlier a number of Smoke Hole men, not in sympathy with the Confederacy and resentful of being pressed into service as saltpetre miners while neglecting their own farms, dismantled the works and broke the kettles.[26]

In Sinnett Cave the petre dirt was extracted from beds in the floor of a large room, 800 feet long, 80 feet wide, and up to 40 feet high. The earth was dumped down chutes on the side of this chamber to a passage nearly 100 feet lower. From this point the miners hauled the dirt in sacks nearly 1000 feet to the entrance via a tortuous passageway, either crawlway or crevice but at few places comfortable walking. From the entrance the petre monkeys carried the bags of earth down the hillside and across Whitethorn Run to the leaching vats. This was apparently a large-scale operation. That no record could be found of raids on this and two other saltpetre caves in Pendleton may be attributed to either their secluded locations or intermittent production. One source that probably produced only a small quantity at intervals is Cave Knob Cave, immediately south of Harper on the South Branch.[27]

The single Pendleton saltpetre cavern mined by Unionists is located in the Harman Hills of Germany Valley, presently known as Schoolhouse Cave. This site had served as a source of nitre production during the Revolutionary War and before. Its entrance portal opens into a chamber 40 feet wide, up to 70 feet high, and 150 feet long. At the end of this gallery's steeply sloping floor, an abrupt ascent of 75 feet leads to the passage from which the petre dirt was excavated.[28] To facilitate its conveyance to the surface, the miners

> . . . constructed a wooden track part of the way down the incline, and then across a scaffolding or bridge work that they built up for the purpose, to the entrance of the passage referred to. They then gathered up all the log chains in the neighborhood

> round about, and welded them into one long chain. They constructed a rude car fitted to run on the track.
>
> They next constructed a device outside the mouth of the cave, similar to the oldtime wooden cider mill with a long lever or sweep, to the end of which a horse or horses were hitched. By driving the horse or horses around and around the chain was wound around a cylinder-like device and the car heavily laden, hitched to the other end of the chain, came slowly with a great deal of creaking up the steep incline to the world outside with its burden of nitre-laden dirt.[29]

After this operation had been carried on for a time and a large amount of nitrate had been amassed, the site was visited by a contingent from the Tenth West Virginia Infantry, encamped near Mouth of Seneca. Their leader, Captain Jarboe, fearful that the saltpetre would be expropriated by the Rebel guerrillas continually lurking in the vicinity, ordered that the mining cease and the works be dismantled.[30]

The County Court Copes with Worsening Economic Distress, 1863-64

By the third year of the war, the effective blockade of Southern seaports was causing great distress throughout the Confederacy. Pendleton confronted difficulties not only in furnishing the vital commodity of saltpetre to the South, but also in supplying the necessities of life to her own civilian population. Naturally, the same conditions of chaos inherent in border warfare that resulted in impoverishment also made the treatment of these problems all the more difficult.

When the county court assembled on January 8, 1863, it adjourned with plans to meet at the Vint schoolhouse on the following day, an order presumably made necessary by the presence of Union patrols or guerrillas in the Franklin environs. The next day the justices of the court immediately adjourned from the Vint school to the Hoover house, a private dwelling. Only three justices were present. In recognition of the menace of Home Guard raids and Federal cavalry incursions, the court composed a petition to the Confederate military authorities requesting a provost guard for Pendleton County. It was also ordered that the court would meet at the Vint schoolhouse if sessions at the courthouse were precluded by "the presence of the public enemy."[31]

The procurement and distribution of salt continued as a concern of the court. At the January session Jacob Dove was appointed agent for the apportionment of salt within the county. Persons of little or no property were to receive no more than thirty percent of a share. This ratio was to increase with persons possessing greater property until the maximum proportion of seventy percent was reached. Any surplus was to be awarded to citizens of still greater wealth. Much of the additional property of the more affluent inhabitants doubtlessly consisted of livestock requiring salt, so the distribution was not quite so arbitrarily undemocratic as it might initially appear. The court also appropriated 300 dollars for the indigent of the county.

During this time there were a number of personnel changes in the county government. John B. Moomau had resigned as commonwealth attorney, and an election was ordered for the selection of his replacement. George A. Blakemore would be elected as Moomau's

successor. The court appointed John Kiser as county receiver to supplant H. H. Masters, who had resigned. E. W. Boggs was nominated county treasurer protempore. James Skidmore was made a commissioner, replacing Samuel Johnson who had died. Samuel Anderson had been elected to the court in September of 1862. Already serving the county at this time were George McQuain as sheriff and John M. Jones as clerk.[32]

Although the relief of indigents and the impoverished families of soldiers remained primarily within the province of the county courts throughout the war, as the destitution became increasingly acute, state intervention grew more extensive. Also, as the currency system collapsed, distribution in kind tended to replace monetary relief. Recourse to impressments and requisitions became more and more necessary to fill the need.[33] As recorded by Waddell in Staunton, the rate of inflation was horrendous. In March of 1863 flour could be had at twenty-five dollars per barrel. By November 21 a similar barrel cost eighty dollars; and a mere eight days later, ninety-five dollars. Waddell had considered the earlier twenty-five dollar level as indicative of "either a time of famine or an utterly ruinous depreciation of the currency."[34]

At the court's February 5, 1863 convocation, David C. Anderson was authorized to purchase cotton cloths and yarns from the Southern textile mills for the people of Pendleton. Also during this session, H. H. Masters protested the approved distribution of salt, but the grounds for his objection were not noted in the court records.[35] In March the legislature created a superintendent of the

salt works, the occupant of this office being charged with making, impressing, and distributing salt among Virginia counties, the mineral to be sold at cost to the people.[36]

On July 9, with fourteen justices in attendance, the county court appointed E. W. Boggs as agent for the procurement of the county's salt supply for the succeeding year. Traveling expenses of 300 dollars were voted for him, these costs to be passed on to the purchasers of the salt. In the distribution for the ensuing year, for which the court levied the sum of 3,000 dollars, twelve pounds of the essential mineral were to be permitted for each person, as well as four pounds per head for horses and cattle up to fifty animals, beyond which none would be available. Each recipient of the salt was required to furnish an affidavit or orally swear to the size of his family, the number of his livestock, and his loyalty to the Confederate States of America. By this time the court records had evidently been conveyed to a place of safety, for at this session the court recognized the claim of John M. Jones for the expense of their removal.[37]

On August 6, the court appointed William McCoy, John E. Wilson, and William Evick to inspect the Franklin jail, reporting on its condition and the extent and cost of required repairs. In the meantime, the court ordered that prisoners be transported to Staunton and incarcerated in the Augusta County jail until Pendleton's should receive the requisite improvements. Although no indication can be found in the subsequent court records, the renovations were presumably made, for the Home Guards burned the edifice over a year

later, and captives were of necessity again conveyed to Staunton.[38]

The Virginia legislature further expanded the power of the county courts in 1863 by empowering them to borrow up to 10,000 dollars for each 1,000 white inhabitants. All needy persons, not merely the dependent families of soldiers, were to be eligible for this aid. Each court was to order the compilation of a list of those qualified for assistance. The courts were also to appoint an agent with the authority to purchase all necessary goods, or if that could not be brought about, to impress immediately whatever supplies were required. The person from whom the supplies were requisitioned could later appeal to the county court if he were not satisfied with the payment received. But its extremely narrow application diminished the effectiveness of the impressment provision. The law was intended to apply only to the goods of a speculator, one who purchased necessities of life for profitable resale when these supplies were in excess of his own family's requirements for the coming twelve-month period. Farmers and licensed merchants were exempted from the enforcement of this measure.[39]

Three justices constituted the court at its December 3, 1863 meeting. The salt procurement agent was authorized to borrow 3,472 dollars to defray the cost of purchase and transportation, this sum to be returned after the salt was sold. Edward J. Coatney was named as agent responsible for the needs of destitute families of soldiers. The magistrates of each district were required to report the names of all indigent persons living within their respective

bounds. At the February 4, 1864 term, the names of fifty-three families were submitted. Twenty- three names were reported from District No. 1 (now Franklin), and 14 from District No. 6 (now Circleville). Districts No. 2, 3, 4, and 5 (presently Sugar Grove, Bethel, Mill Run, and Union) reported 6, 3, 3, and 4 indigent families respectively. Additional names would be added to this list at subsequent court sessions. These figures reflect not only the level of need, but also the various proportions of inhabitants pro-Southern in sentiment. Coatney was authorized to borrow, in behalf of the destitute and on the county's credit, a sum not to exceed 2,000 dollars at any one time, to be refunded upon the resale of the grain.[40]

At the May 5, 1864 session, the three justices in attendance decided that the county seat was again an unsafe place to transact the public business. The court ordered that subsequent meetings would be held at the Kiser schoolhouse on the South Fork until Franklin could be considered secure from enemy incursions. The number of destitute within the county continued to increase. During the May term, five names were added to the list of indigents in District No. 1, as well as one each in Districts No. 2 and 4. The court empowered Coatney to impress meat and grain for their relief, the amount not to exceed 5,000 dollars at any one time. His remuneration was fixed at five dollars per day for time actually spent in rendition of services, and his bond was set at 10,000 dollars, E. W. Boggs pledging security for Coatney's performance.[41]

On March 9, 1864, the Virginia legislature enacted a measure appropriating half a million dollars for the purchase and sale of raw cotton and cotton yarns, cloth, and cards, these articles to be available to all Virginians in need.[42] John E. Wilson was appointed as Pendleton's agent in the administration of this law. Wilson's bond was also set at 10,000 dollars. James Hammer, George Hammer, Thomas Hartman, and William McCoy acted as his sureties. Wilson too was authorized to borrow up to 5,000 dollars on the county's credit for the procurement of these cotton goods. Families receiving these items were classified into five grades.

At the June term of court, three justices sitting at the Kiser schoolhouse attended to the county's affairs. It was ordered that any outstanding county notes remaining in the hands of Benjamin Hiner be collected and made available to Coatney for the relief of families of soldiers. Coatney was authorized to borrow an additional sum which, including the outstanding notes, was not to exceed 5,000 dollars. Ten more families were added to the list of indigents.[43]

Nine justices attended court on August 4, 1864. In addition to indicting Granville C. Lake for the murder of Thomas McQuain, the court at this session unanimously adopted a statement presenting Pendleton's position on her support for the Southern war of independence. This declaration acclaimed the heroism and tribulations of the county's Confederate soldiers and sympathizers, but excoriated the treason to Virginia committed by deserters and Unionists.

> . . . whereas we have been forced into a bloody and protracted Struggle in arms, to vindicate the said acts of Separation and resumption, which ever were our

> inalienable and inherent rights, by those who would destroy our liberties, deprive us of our property, and trample in the dust our franchises, drown the voice of humanity, religion and law, and who lay down as ultimata the entire annihilation of our people, and the destruction of our Country. And whereas, during the progrefs of this Scene of Carnage, the people of this County have borne a part — Some, Manfully baring their breaststo the Storm of battle, suffering privation, imprisonment, and the lofs of life and property --- While others have sought shelter from the enemies of the Country to secure their property, and others have committed the more heinous crime of deserting their Country's flag in the hour of her distrefs, and when patriotism demanded all her energies and fortitude; And whereas it is desirable that there should be some record kept to show in after times, who have nobly acted, and have not acted at all, or acted traitor.[44]

The clerk of the court was ordered to compile a record enumerating all those who served or deserted the Confederate cause, were killed or wounded, or suffered destruction of property at the hands of the Federals. In like manner an account was to be kept of those who joined the Swamp Dragons, supported the new state of West Virginia, or committed acts of murder and vandalism. If this compilation were ever completed, it has unfortunately been lost or destroyed.

The court met again at the Kiser schoolhouse on September 8, 1864. The three justices present decided that the county court would meet in Franklin at the courthouse on regular court days until further ordered.[45] Despite the increasing exposure of Pendleton to enemy operations, both regular and Home Guard, the county court managed to function to the very end. However, the court's authority became ever more precarious as the Home Guards assumed greater influence over parts of the county. The contention between the two forces created a vacuum in which neither side could impose a rule of law. Consequently,

bushwhacking and pillaging were carried on with relative impunity despite an occasional indictment by the court. The burned jail, the harassment by Swamps or Federals, the forced adjournments to the Vint and Kiser schoolhouses, and the rather more infrequent and less well attended court sessions during the last two years of hostilities all attest to the breakdown of civil order.

The decreasing activity of the court over the course of the conflict can be seen in the diminishing space allotted to each succeeding time period in the county records. Twenty-one pages of records are devoted to the interval covering May to December of 1861, while comparable figures for the years 1862, 1863, 1864, and January to April of 1865 are 20, 18, 10, and 4 pages respectively. There was also a decline in the volume of civil business, with a corresponding increase in war-related concerns.[46]

Another measure of the sometimes chaotic conditions in wartime Pendleton can be perceived in the more than forty marriages of Pendleton couples performed in Highland County during and immediately after the conflict. Further south and thus better protected from Federal forays, and possessing no sizable dissident Unionist element as did Pendleton, circumstances in Highland were somewhat more tranquil and conducive to the orderly processes of civil government.[47]

A definitive appraisal of Pendleton's material contribution to the support of the Confederate armed forces, as well as the relative success of Federal attempts to disrupt these activities, is rendered impossible by the apparent lack of corroborative county production

statistics. Nevertheless, despite the intrinsic confusion and paralysis of border conditions, it seems clear that county Confederates labored earnestly to assist in the economics of the Southern war effort. Naturally the county's rugged terrain and sparse population imposed limits on potential output. Because it never became the Federal policy to devastate the South Branch so methodically and utterly as the Shenandoah Valley, Northern counter-measures achieved only limited success. Evidence to this effect is embodied in the many directives of the county court, as well as the recurring references in the Official Records to the importance of Pendleton's food, forage, and saltpetre production.

Notes

[1]"Things Were Different Back in Those Times," The Herald, November 1, 1929, pp. 1, 4.

[2]Official Records, I, Vol. XII, Pt. III, p. 92.

[3]Asbury M. Mullenax, "A Civil War Letter," Pendleton Times, March 24, 1944, p. 1.

[4]Boggs, Hammers, pp. 94-96.

[5]Joseph C. G. Kennedy, Agriculture of the United States in 1860 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 154-55, 158-59; and Population of the United States in 1860 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 511, 513.

[6]Burton Faust, "Saltpetre Caves and Virginia History," from Henry H. Douglas, Caves of Virginia (Falls Church, Va.: Virginia Cave Survey, 1964), pp. 36-37, hereinafter cited as "Saltpetre Caves."

[7]Boyd B. Stutler, "The Confederate Postal Service in West Virginia," West Virginia History, XXIV (October, 1962), p. 37.

[8]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 111.

[9]William E. Davies, Caverns of West Virginia, Geological and Economic Survey (Beckley: Biggs-Johnston-Withrow, 1958), pp. 227-28, 251-53.

[10]Faust, "Saltpetre Caves," p. 40.

[11]Official Records, I, Vol. XXIX, Pt. I, pp. 33, 38. This raid took place on August 19, 1863, not August 18, 1864 as Morton asserts.

[12]William Davis Slease, The Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry in the Civil War (Pittsburgh: Art Engraving & Printing Co., 1915), p. 89.

[13]Official Records, I, Vol. XXIX, Pt. II, pp. 177, 198, 208.

[14]Ibid., Pt. I, p. 516; Moore, Rebellion Record, Vol. 8, Documents, p. 159.

[15]Official Records, I, Vol. XXIX, Pt. I, p. 549.

[16]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 144.

[17]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 111-12. Calhoun places the occurrence of this incident on December 12; Farrar and Moore, December 10.

[18]Moore, Rebellion Record, Vol. 8, Documents, p. 282.

[19]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, pp. 144-46.

[20]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 802.

[21]Ibid., Vol. XXIX, Pt. II, p. 580; Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 146; John W. Elwood, Elwood's Stories of the Old Ringgold Cavalry, 1847-1865 (Coal Center, Pa.: The Author, 1914), pp. 176-77.

[22]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, p. 227; Official Records, I, Vol. XXIX, Pt. I, p. 922.

[23]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 112.

[24]Faust, "Saltpetre Caves," p. 39.

[25]Official Records, I, Vol. XXXIII, Pt. I, p. 228; Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 169.

[26]WPA Writers' Program, West Virginia, The Smoke Hole and Its People, Rev. ed. (Huntington, [1941]), p. 15; Davies, Caverns of West Virginia, p. 207; H. M. Calhoun, Sr., "Caverns of Pendleton are Described by H. M. Calhoun," The Herald, November 19, 1931, p. 2, hereinafter referred to as "Caverns of Pendleton."

[27]Davies, Caverns of West Virginia, pp. 208, 243; Faust, "Saltpetre Caves," pp. 30-40.

[28]Davies, Caverns of West Virginia, p. 235.

[29]Calhoun, "Caverns of Pendleton."

[30]Ibid.

[31]County Court, pp. 275-76. Morton erroneously attributes these events to early 1864.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Zornow, "Indigent Families," p. 455.

[34]Waddell, Annals of Augusta, pp. 479, 485-86.

[35]County Court, p. 277.

[36]Zornow, "Indigent Families," p. 458.

[37]County Court, pp. 284-86.

[38]Ibid., p. 288.

[39]Zornow, "Indigent Families," p. 456.

[40]County Court, pp. 293-95.

[41]Ibid., pp. 296-97.

[42]Zornow, "Indigent Families," p. 457.

[43]County Court, pp. 297-98.

[44]Ibid., p. 304.

[45]Ibid., pp. 303-04.

[46]Ibid., passim, pp. 232-309.

[47]"Marriages in Highland County," Pendleton Times, May 6, 1927, p. 1.

VIII. THE GUERRILLA WAR: MORE OF THE SAME

Eighteen Sixty-four

By 1864 the general nature of Pendleton's borderland conflict had become well established. The recurring clashes and excesses of both individual bushwhackers and bands of guerrillas, as well as the continual movements of cavalry scouts, had created a pattern of activity that would have seemed almost monotonous had it not been so potentially deadly, and therefore anxiety producing, for soldiers and noncombatants alike. Symptomatic of this civil disorder — the severity of which became increasingly aggravated as the conflict wore on — was the murder of Thomas McQuain, a civilian who resided in the Dahmer community. For a week or so in early February of 1864, McQuain provided food and shelter at his home for Granville C. Lake and another man named Harney. The two visitors claimed to be Confederate soldiers. During their sojourn in McQuain's dwelling, they learned that over the years their host had accumulated a sizable sum of money with which he expected to purchase a farm in Virginia. On the morning of February 9, 1864, McQuain, with his savings on his person, set out for the Shenandoah Valley to make his purchase. He was pursued by his recent guests, who overtook him on Little Fork at the western base of Shenandoah Mountain. There Harney and Lake evidently killed McQuain, in the language of Lake's indictment, "by shooting him divers times with revolving pistols or other fire arms." All of McQuain's money and the fine horse he had been riding were stolen.

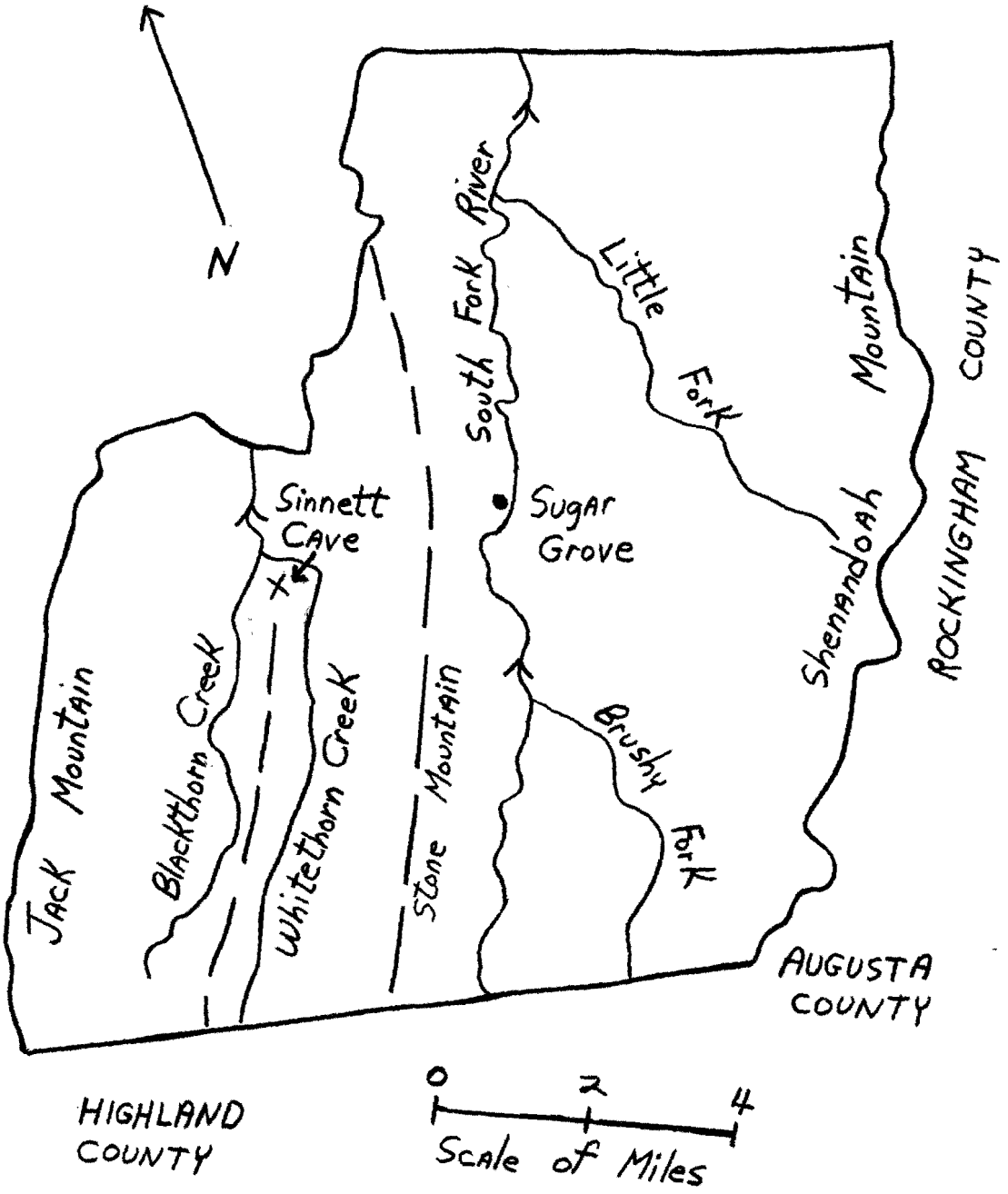

Plate No. 16. District No. 2 (Sugar Grove)

Harney and Lake were arrested in Virginia six months later and incarcerated in Richmond's Castle Thunder prison. George McQuain, Pendleton sheriff and brother of the murder victim, organized a posse to bring the accused men back to Pendleton. On the return journey Harney managed to escape, never to be tried and punished for his crime. However, Lake remained in custody and was returned to the county. At a preliminary trial at Sugar Grove on August 4, 1864, Lake was formally charged with murder and remanded to jail. But an encounter with Federals on the trip to Franklin caused such confusion that Lake also was able to get away. He was never again heard of by the people of Pendleton.[1]

During the winter of 1864, the Federals received numerous reports of a large Confederate force at Franklin. On February 21, General Kelley ordered Colonel Mulligan to communicate with Captain Harper, and if Harper had no information on Imboden, to send a scout of Home Guards to Crab Bottom and ascertain his whereabouts.[2] Three days later Kelley was informed that 7,000 Confederates under Echols, Jackson, Jenkins, and Imboden were at Franklin. A cavalry scout was sent to investigate, but on its return reported that only a strong picket from Colonel William L. Jackson's force was present in the town.[3]

On February 22, 1864, Imboden apprised General Jubal Early that he had a company in northwestern Highland County, cooperating with four additional companies in Pendleton "to clean out the 'swamps,' arrest deserters, conscripts, and all suspicious parties." A small force was also constantly scouting the roads of the two counties. Four more companies were foraging and collecting cattle for Imboden's brigade.[4]

On February 26, General Kelley reported that Captain Harper's State Troops had engaged 200 of Imboden's men at Mouth of Seneca. The Confederates had reportedly been rebuffed with six of their number killed. Kelley theorized that the Rebels were on their way toward the Rowlesburg railway bridge, but that Harper's Swamps had blocked their advance at the Seneca gap. General Imboden reported this skirmish somewhat differently. According to his information, Lieutenant Colonel Lang and a contingent of the Sixty-second Virginia had "a skirmish with and dispersed about 70 'swamps' on Seneca."[5]

With his force of 400 Federals, Lieutenant Colonel Root destroyed the Trout Rock nitre works in early March, as well as reportedly keeping a Confederate enrolling officer from his scheduled duties in Franklin. On the ninth of that same month, Robert E. Lee requested of the Confederate Secretary of War that conscript officers be sent into those counties bordering the Allegheny Mountain to organize companies of reserves or minutemen. Rockingham, Pendleton, and Highland together were expected to contribute one of the five regiments anticipated. General Imboden was placed in charge of this project, and although conclusive details are lacking, statements in subsequent communications suggest that it was being carried out.[6] It was possibly at this time that the Pendleton Reserves were organized.

On April 22, 1864, Imboden informed General John C. Breckinridge that one of his regiments was at Franklin, blocking the road to Monterey. Four days earlier Union Colonel Mulligan had transmitted reports that Imboden and McNeill were to arrive in Franklin on that day, and promised to ascertain the accuracy of this intelligence,

presumably by a scouting party. The next day two deserters from Imboden's force in Franklin arrived at the Federal camp at Beverly.[7]

Desertion plagued the Confederate army on such a scale that often mild or no punishment was meted out to the offenders. But at times the ultimate penalty was invoked, and this danger was very real in the border counties of divided sentiment, for here the chances of a Unionist being conscripted into the Rebel army were greatest. This peril is illustrated in the fate of Amby Harman. Sometime in 1864, or perhaps in late 1863, five Pendleton men were seized by the Confederates and taken to Harrisonburg for imprisonment. Four of these, including Joshua Harman and Joseph Hoover, had served in the Home Guards. The fifth, Amby Harman, was Unionist in sympathy but had not entered into any kind of military service.

The Confederate authorities offered these men the alternatives of incarceration or duty in the Southern army. All chose the latter option thinking that they could easily desert at some later, opportune time. All did escape shortly thereafter, but Amby Harman was subsequently recaptured by members of the Pendleton Reserves, or Pizarinktums, and again transported to Harrisonburg. There the unfortunate young man was court-martialed and sentenced to death before a firing squad. His father was somehow apprised of the son's predicament and immediately began the journey to Harrisonburg, arriving by the day fixed for the execution. Present at the scheduled time and place, Samuel Harman pleaded his son's youthfulness as a mitigating circumstance and begged that his life be spared. When his entreaty was refused, the father rushed between his son and

the twelve rifle muzzles of the firing squad. But, all his efforts to no avail, the grieving father was taken away and the execution was quickly concluded. Then Samuel Harman, with his son's body, began the melancholy journey back over the mountains to his home in Germany Valley.[8]

In late March or early April of 1864, Evan Harper's Home Guards made a foray into the Buffalo Hills. Finding George Harper visiting at the home of a friend, the Swamps took him prisoner. Too old for military service, Harper was nonetheless well-to-do and influential, and he ardently promoted the interests of the Confederacy. The captive was taken over North Fork Mountain to the home of Samuel Harman, situated near Schoolhouse Cave in the Harman Hills of Germany Valley. It was there that Stewart Bland and ten of his Dixie Boys found the Home Guards. Bland's principal objective was to effect the release of George Harper. He deployed his men in concealment along the road by which the Swamp Dragons would likely leave the Harman dwelling. Bland also assigned three other Rebels in addition to himself, all expert marksmen, the task of killing the two Swamps nearest George Harper. These were James Bland, Perry Hartman, and Wilson Summerfield.

When the party of Home Guards approached the position of Bland's concealed Dixie Boys, Henry Westfall and John Hartman, the two escorts who were riding alongside George Harper, were instantly killed, each with simultaneous bullets through the head and chest. Recognizing his opportunity, Harper spurred his horse and galloped to freedom. In the spirited skirmish that followed, Wilson Summerfield was fatally shot through the head. Elijah, Joseph, and Jacob Harman

of the Home Guards were wounded; Jacob, seriously. Prior to this incident Bland had courted one of George Harper's daughters, but Harper had discouraged the match. However, after his deliverance from the Swamps, he gratefully acquiesced in their marriage.[9]

One morning at daybreak, apparently on April 18, 1864, the Dixie Boys under Amos Warner and Stewart Bland attacked the Jesse Harper house on Smith Mountain near Onego. Just after their return to the dwelling from their concealed sleeping places, Evan Harper, his brother Perry, and brother-in-law Eli Harman were quickly killed. The latter two men had not participated in the military service of either side. Evan's father, Jesse, and the hysterically screaming women were spared. Jacob Harman, recovering from his wound inflicted in the skirmish in the Harman Hills a few weeks earlier, had donned a bonnet, was mistaken for a sick woman, and thereby escaped the fate he would have otherwise shared. On May 1, John Boggs succeeded Evan Harper as captain of the Seneca Home Guards.[10]

In a communication to Lee on May 2, General Imboden referred to Harper's recent death and Confederate operations on Pendleton's North Fork. A Captain Hill and his men of the Sixty-second Virginia had been fighting the Swamps and foraging in that valley. Over 130 cattle had been collected and were then being driven to Imboden's camp. Two weeks earlier fifty odd cattle had been expropriated. Imboden noted that these items, when considered with the flour and bacon taken from the Home Guard camp when Captain Harper was killed, would leave the Seneca "band of outlaws" ill-provisioned if they were not subsidized by the U. S. government.[11]

Captain Snyder reported on May 3 that a Rebel deserter had come to him with the information that Colonel Jackson was then at Crab Bottom with 500 men, while 400 of Imboden's command were in and about Franklin, and 200 others were near Circleville. A Federal scouting party returning to Beverly a week later confirmed Jackson's presence in Highland, but it was reported that Imboden had moved his men to Staunton.[12]

June of 1864 was an eventful interval, typical of the relatively small unit activity and movement that characterized Pendleton for much of the war. During the first few days of this month, General Kelley dispatched scouts to Seneca and Franklin from New Creek, as did Colonel T. M. Harris to Crab Bottom from Beverly, but no Confederates were found. On June 6, Kelley ordered another cavalry scout to Seneca to contact the Home Guards. The Swamps were requested to apprehend Rebel guerrillas, reputedly 100 strong, who had stolen numerous horses in western counties and were believed to be proceeding eastward over the Alleghenies.[13] One day later Kelley ordered a detachment to march from Beverly to Greenland Gap via Mouth of Seneca. One week subsequent a mounted force from Jenkins' command was reported in Franklin, and on June 27, parts of Jackson's and Imboden's forces at Crab Bottom. The next day Kelley advised his superiors that he had sent a scout of Swamp Dragons to Crab Bottom and Monterey by way of Seneca. He also noted that great numbers of dismounted Confederates had returned home for horses in Highland, Pendleton, and Hardy counties.[14]

On June 18, 1864, while returning from New Creek with supplies, Captain Bond and about thirty Pendleton Home Guards were attacked by sixty of McNeill's Rangers south of Petersburg on the road to Franklin. Although driven from their wagons, the Swamps rallied, recaptured their train, and drove off the Confederates, wounding several and killing their leader, Lieutenant Bernard Dolan. The party of Swamps suffered four fatalities, among whom were Alt's men, Arnold Kimble and Henry Harman, as well as John Ours and Godfrey Kesner of Bond's company. Nimrod and Ezra Borror of Alt's force and Isaac Murphy of Bond's were captured and fated to die in captivity. The following day the fight was resumed at the same location south of Johnson's Run. By stealthily coming upon the rear of the Home Guard position, the Rangers were able to kill William B. Shreve of Alt's company and John Yocum of Bond's without any loss to themselves.[15]

On the day following this last skirmish, about 100 of McNeill's Rangers invaded the Smoke Hole canyon in retaliation for the death of Lieutenant Dolan, their highly esteemed officer. Overwhelmingly Unionist in allegiance, many of the Smoke Hole inhabitants were members of Captain Isaac Alt's Home Guard company. While hunting atop Cave Mountain, Alt himself had observed the Confederates approach. He was able to spread the alarm throughout the settlement, permitting the concealment of some livestock and other valuables in the forest. Near where the South Branch crossed the Hardy (now Grant) County line, the Rangers, commanded on this foray by a Captain White, were fired upon by members of Captain Alt's company. In the ensuing skirmish, Isaac Kimble and his elderly uncle, John Kimble, were killed, McNeill's men

apparently suffering no losses. Taking the horses gathered from the Unionist citizens, the next day the Rangers rode out of the gorge toward Moorefield.[16]

Sometime in 1864, Joshua Harman was killed near Mouth of Seneca by a band of Rebels led by Job Parsons of Tucker County. Harman was living with the Michael Mouse family at the time. Learning of the imminent approach of the Confederates, Harman immediately fled the Mouse dwelling but was fatally shot before reaching cover. A brother of Jacob and a member of the Seneca Home Guards, Joshua Harman had previously served as a Confederate cavalryman for a brief period. He had joined the Southern army under duress with Amby Harman and three other Pendleton men to avoid imprisonment in Harrisonburg. Joshua had deserted just prior to a scheduled Rebel raid into the county and had alerted the Unionist communities there to the impending peril. Believing that the element of surprise had been lost, the Confederates abandoned the planned foray. It may have been this transgression that led to Harman's death.[17]

Also during 1864, sometime after Captain Boggs had assumed command of the Seneca Home Guards, some members of this company, plus a portion of Snyder's company, raided the homestead of Elijah Bennett in the Bland Hills of Germany Valley. Captain Snyder commanded the combined force. Upon arriving at the Bennett house, the Unionists fired upon Isaac Bland and a man named Allen, both of whom were in the yard. Allen was mortally wounded, but Bland escaped. George Bennett, having made his speedy exit through a window of the house, ran and might have gotten away but for his misfortune of encountering another

squad of Home Guards, who shot at and wounded him. Bennett surrendered, but the minimal civilities accorded prisoners of war were not to be his. Captain Snyder subsequently claimed that he had tried but was unable to prevent the killing and mutilation of the captive at the hands of the Swamps. Elijah Bennett, his aged father, erected a headstone on his son's grave. On it was inscribed, "Here lies George Bible Bennett. Killed by the Swamp Dragons. Murdered I Say."[18]

A skirmish took place at Franklin on August 19, 1864, but no details of the episode appear in the published official reports. A second incident at Petersburg occurred between the Swamps and Rebels on October 11, 1864. In this skirmish, taking place two miles south of the town and lasting three hours, Captain Boggs commanded nearly 200 Home Guards. The outcome of this engagement was not reported.[19] The next day General Kelley received intelligence that General Thomas Rosser had sent about 500 Confederate cavalrymen to attempt the annihilation of the State Troops on Pendleton's North Fork. In response Kelley ordered that a mounted patrol of 100 Federals be dispatched to the Swamps' support.[20] Sometime during the same month, the Franklin jail was burned by the Home Guards, requiring county Confederates to transport their prisoners to Staunton thereafter.[21]

The role of the Home Guards in relation to Union regulars is further illustrated by events incidental to Confederate General Rosser's raid on New Creek in November of 1864. On the twenty-fifth of that month, Kelley sent Federal cavalry from Colonel Latham's New Creek command to capture McNeill and Woodson, Rebel partisans believed to be operating in the vicinity of Moorefield. About the same

time 150 Pendleton State Troops were engaged to occupy the South Fork Valley four miles upstream from Moorefield to prevent a Confederate escape via Brock's Gap. The Swamps were to have assumed their position by the morning of November 28. That same morning Rosser surprised and captured the Federal garrison at New Creek. Colonel Latham had reported on November 24 that Rosser's force was foraging on the South Fork, but despite this knowledge the attack on New Creek was obviously unexpected. Rosser's Confederates did escape through the South Fork and Brock's Gap, but no report of an encounter with the Pendleton State Troops could be located.[22]

For a time Kelley believed that Rosser was retreating by way of Franklin. On November 30, Kelley advised his superiors that Colonel Moore and a contingent of the Eighth Ohio Cavalry had been dispatched to Mouth of Seneca. In the course of this scout, Moore was to determine if Rosser had moved through Franklin. If the Colonel, who was apparently unfamiliar with the terrain, decided to lead his force to Beverly, Kelley's counsel was that Swamps from Captain John Boggs' company would guide him through the mountains. Thus, the Home Guards functioned not only as auxiliary troops, but also as scouts and guides.[23]

By late 1864 the Shenandoah Valley north of Staunton had become stripped of sustenance that the South Branch and its tributaries assumed even more critical importance as a Confederate source of food and provender. In virtually every message to Imboden, Lee urged the necessity of gathering all possible livestock and forage in Pendleton, Hardy, and Hampshire counties. Nearly as often Kelley defended his policy of occupying Petersburg to hinder the Confederates in drawing

supplies from the South Branch Valley, despite the vulnerability of his wagon trains to the depredations of McNeill's guerrillas. Kelley reported on December 16 that a Rebel force of 1,000 men had recently driven all the livestock that could be found on the South Branch over the mountains toward the Shenandoah Valley. He promised to keep Federal scouts continually patrolling the counties of Hardy and Pendleton to frustrate Confederate foraging parties. Three days later a Federal scout from Beverly learned of a Southern cavalry force in the neighborhoods of Franklin and Crab Bottom. Numbering about 1,800 men, these also had been collecting livestock in the valley.[24]

Captain John Bond's Home Guard company was attacked between Franklin and Petersburg by a force of 600 Confederate cavalry on December 21. This incident cost the Swamps five dead and a number of wounded.[25] On December 28, Captain French and his Ringgolds returned to New Creek after a four day scout to Petersburg and Seneca. No Rebel force was encountered, but the Swamp Dragons informed the Federals that a command of Confederate cavalry was gathering livestock and supplies in the vicinity of Franklin.[26] At some point in the autumn or early winter of 1864, there occurred a skirmish between a force of Dixie Boys and Pendleton Reserves under Amos Warner and a party of Home Guards, the latter composed mostly of Boggs' men though commanded in this instance by Sampson Snyder. This encounter in Germany Valley resulted in the deaths of Rebels Henry Mowery and Henry Swadley, both of whom were members of the Pendleton Reserves.[27]

Eighteen Sixty-five

Throughout 1864 the operations of small regular units and local guerrillas continued without abatement in Pendleton. But the reports and communications of the Official Records indicate a decline in the conflict involving regulars during 1865. This apparent subsidence of organized hostilities within the county was probably a consequence of winter weather, the impending Confederate surrender, and Sheridan's successful Shenandoah Valley campaign. Subsequent to Sheridan's victory over Early at the battle of Cedar Creek in October of 1864, no further military operations of major scope were carried out in the Valley, except that the Federals systematically destroyed virtually all its food resources north of Staunton.[28] With the end of the war in sight and the Valley of Virginia lost to the Confederacy, there was naturally a commensurate reduction in the importance of the South Branch, the usual wartime roles of which had been to provide sustenance and create military diversions in aid of Confederate armies maneuvering in the Valley.

The last notable raid of Federal regulars into Pendleton prior to Appomattox occurred in January of 1865. A patrol of 200 men was ordered to be sent from New Creek to Mouth of Seneca, where Captain John Boggs was to be contacted. If Boggs so advised, the Union troops, plus a contingent of Home Guards, were to attack the Confederate force then at Franklin. Two to six of the most prominent of Pendleton's Southern sympathizers were ordered to be arrested and held as hostages for Northern political prisoners. In compliance with these instructions,

Major Elias S. Troxel and 200 men of the Twenty-second Pennsylvania Cavalry arrived at Mouth of Seneca on the evening of January 13. Joined by Captain Boggs and forty Pendleton men, the force experienced a "toilsome" march over North Fork Mountain that night, reaching Franklin at five o'clock in the morning. Expecting to find four Rebel companies with two artillery pieces quartered in the courthouse, the Federals charged into the town. But, as Troxel complained in his report, the Confederates had been apprised of their enemy's approach and had left a few hours earlier.[29]

According to Calhoun, the North Fork inhabitants guessed Franklin to be the ultimate destination of Troxel's command when the Federals turned off the main valley thoroughfare at the Mill Creek Gap, and started over the North Fork Mountain toward Reeds Creek and Ruddle. It was decided that the Confederate soldiers at the county seat as well as the farmers of the South Branch should be warned of the Federals' approach, both to aid the defense of the town and permit time to secrete valuables and drive livestock into the hills. However, there were few able-bodied Southern men on the North Fork. Most of these were serving in the Confederate army, and Amos Warner's Dixie Boys were in the vicinity of Franklin. Two girls — one of whom was Phoebe C. Harper — carried the message from Macksville to the homestead of Zebedee Warner in the Bland Hills of Germany Valley. To reach this objective several miles distant, it was necessary for the girls to wade North Fork River and hike through a deep blanket of snow. About eleven o'clock that evening, the girls arrived at the Warner dwelling, but no men were there to carry the warning onto Franklin.

Phoebe Warner, the past middle-age wife of Zebedee Warner and mother of Amos Warner, was finally persuaded that she must attempt this unpleasant and hazardous journey. Accompanied by her fourteen year old daughter, Mary Jane, Mrs. Warner set out on foot since all the family horses had already been taken. The mother and daughter crossed the lofty North Fork Mountain in the snow and darkness via the rocky Dolly Path, a much rougher but more direct route than the one taken by the Federals. On the east side of the mountain, the high waters of Friends Run had to be waded at each of the three fords. Leaving her exhausted daughter at the home of John Bowers on Friends Run, Mrs. Warner then rode the final four miles into Franklin on a horse provided by Bowers.

Warned of the Yankees' approach, those townspeople who still had horses hid them. According to the sources of Calhoun, the Dixie Boys, Pizarinktums, and some Confederate regulars congregated at "Rebels' Retreat" on the east side of the river at the southern end of town. When the Federals made their early morning charge into Franklin, the town was empty. But they did skirmish vigorously for a time with the Rebels on the opposite side of the South Branch. Neither side suffered any loss. The day before at Petersburg, Troxel had found the South Branch to be "impassable from recent rains." The likelihood of a similar circumstance at Franklin as well might have dissuaded the Federals from trying to cross the river and dislodge the Rebels. In his report, Troxel did not specifically mention such an encounter at Franklin, a strange omission unless the exchange was very brief, or subsumed under his complaint of "rebels firing on me at every convenient point" as the Federals retraced their route back to Seneca.[30]

On the return march down the South Branch, Troxel arrested Jacob F. Johnson, a civilian too elderly for military service. George W. Hammer, Benjamin S. Hammer, and Henry Snyder, members of the Sixty-second Regiment at home either on furlough or detached duty, decided to attempt the rescue of Mr. Johnson. Hiding themselves on a bluff five miles north of Franklin, the three Confederates opened fire with their muskets and Colt revolvers as the Federals neared. After a brief exchange producing an abundance of noise but no casualties except for a wounded horse, the Union column left the public road and thereby skirted the obstacle imposed by the ambuscade. However, the resulting commotion afforded the opportunity for Mr. Johnson's escape, a departure which he accomplished with celerity. Perhaps to avoid explaining Johnson's escape, Troxel made no allusion in his report to a civilian taken captive. Indeed, he stated that no private citizens were arrested because no definite information incriminating any specific person could be obtained.[31]

Until the last months of the war, Confederate units continued to forage in Pendleton and threaten the Home Guard units there. Although no report of a subsequent attack could be found in the Official Records, on January 28, 1865, Isaac P. Boggs, clerk for Captain John Boggs, appealed to the Federals at New Creek for assistance against Imboden's command, then foraging on the South Branch and presently expected to move against the Seneca company of State Troops.[32] The presence of Rebel troops was revealed on February 9 by a request of the county court that Imboden's wagon train be removed from the courthouse yard.[33] Numerous Federal communications

take note of Confederate forces stationed in the Crab Bottom vicinity of Highland and on the South Fork and South Branch of Pendleton during the winter and spring of 1865.

On February 22, a detachment of the McNeill Rangers, with Union Generals George Crook and Benjamin Kelley as prisoners, rode up the South Fork to the environs of present-day Brandywine, and then across the Shenandoah Mountain on the Harrisonburg road. The party's ultimate destination was Richmond. Early in the morning of the previous day, sixty-three Rangers had snatched the two generals from their warm beds in the midst of 6,500 Federal troops stationed in Cumberland, Maryland.[34]

As the collapse of the Confederacy approached, the lawlessness and disorder within the county naturally worsened. On the evening of March 31, 1865, three Home Guards intruded into the Reuben Hedrick home situated several miles west of Ruddle. The Swamps were John Middleton of Snyder's company, Wells Custer of Boggs' company, and Harvey Hylton, a Confederate deserter who had joined Alt's company. The Hedricks had two sons in the Confederate service. Just before the Swamps had arrived, the Hedricks had been able to hide their horses. The three unwelcome interlopers were very intoxicated, and soon after entering the Hedrick dwelling, John Middleton shot fourteen year old George Washington Hedrick through the head, instantly killing him. Young George had been sitting quietly on a chair before the fireplace, and had done nothing whatsoever to provoke his fate. Middleton's impulsive shot might have resulted from his disappointment in missing the chance to steal the Hedrick horses, his pique magnified by the

effects of alcohol on his mind. Hylton and Custer were never prosecuted; but in October of 1867, despite legislation exempting members of Home Guard companies from punishment for acts perpetrated during the war, John Middleton was tried for his crime at Beverly, Randolph County. Sentenced to eighteen years in prison for second degree murder, he served only part of his sentence before being pardoned. The presence on the jury of another former member of Snyder's company possibly saved Middleton from the death penalty.[35]

An unfortunate incident in April further illustrates the depths of the division in sentiment within Pendleton, where families were not uncommonly split in their political and military loyalties. One such family was the Harper clan. Just before the conclusion of the war, a small party of Confederates set out from their camp in Augusta County and proceeded to Pendleton. These included DeWitt Harper and Abraham Lantz of Company A of the Eighteenth Cavalry, and James Hedrick of Company I of the Sixty-second Mounted Infantry. Their mission was to collect as many horses as they could for their two regiments. Should Lee be compelled to surrender, fresh mounts would more readily permit members of these units to ride southward to North Carolina, and to continue the fight by joining the army of General Joseph E. Johnston. On April 4, 1865, the detail arrived in the Harman Hills and accompanied DeWitt Harper to the home of his uncle, Simeon Harper. His uncle had taken no part in the war, but Simeon's sons, Perry and John Ad, were members of the Seneca company of State Troops.

Rushing into the kitchen of his uncle's dwelling, DeWitt demanded the surrender of the room's occupants, who included Simeon, his two sons, and Swamp Dragons Henry Harman and Wells Custer. Immediately thereafter DeWitt began shooting, killing his uncle whom he might have mistaken for one of his Home Guard cousins. The Swamps returned the fire. Perry Harper wounded his cousin DeWitt mortally and Abraham Lantz slightly. Unsupported by the remainder of the party, DeWitt quickly departed from his dead uncle's house and, leaving a trail of blood, proceeded through Harper Gap to the McDonald home in the village of Macksville. Here his wound was nursed, but his injury was too severe to expect recovery and he died that night.[36]

Operating under the authority of the Richmond government, the county court continued to transact its business to the very end of the war, although with ever-diminishing effectiveness. The three justices in attendance at the January 5, 1865 session ordered the sheriff to sell the iron within the ruins of the burned jail and deposit the proceeds with the county treasurer.[37] On the following day an appeal to Governor William Smith was composed, requesting that Dr. John D. Johnson, a physician in Imboden's brigade, be permitted to remain in the county for the practice of medicine. The court noted that Pendleton's people urgently required the services of Dr. Johnson. While the county had supported from four to six doctors in more normal times, as of that date Pendleton possessed only one other practitioner of advanced age and precarious health. The court records do not state whether this request was granted.[38]

On February 9, three justices ordered

> That the sheriff be notified that the windows belonging to the Court-House be returned . . . That the house be cleaned up & that he requests that the wagon train belonging to Imboden's Brigade be removed from the Court-House yard. Soldiers who will pledge their honors that they will not in any way deface the property belonging to the Court-House, will be allowed the privileges heretofore granted them. If the aforesaid wagon train is not moved out upon request, he will cause the same to be removed.[39]

That same day it was also ordered that the magistrates of the county's six districts carry out the order of the prior August, the compilation of lists of deceased soldiers and notable actions, both honorable and disgraceful, occurring within the county. The last session of the county court under the laws of Virginia took place on April 6, 1865, three days before Lee's surrender at Appomattox. The court approved petitions to the Secretary of War asking that William Hoover and David Propst be detached from the regular army to serve the people of Pendleton as miller and shoemaker.[40]

Civil order did not return to the county immediately following the official cessation of hostilities between North and South. The lawless atmosphere of hatred and vengeance spawned by four years of bitter civil war could not be dissipated overnight. An example of the continuance of unsettled conditions can be seen in the murder of Absalom H. Nelson, formerly captain of Company C, Sixty-second Virginia Regiment. After several years of duty with the Confederate army, Nelson had resigned his commission to return to his Dry Run farm and provide for his large family.

Nelson had been relieved of all his horses by Snyder's Swamp Dragons in one of their raids into that neighborhood. Given to believe that he could recover his horses if he traveled to Harman, Randolph County, and urgently needing them for his spring plowing, Nelson set out in April of 1865, following Lee's surrender. He was accompanied by John Bennett, a Unionist who hoped to be of aid in the procurement of the horses. Nelson was said to have been carrying a sizable sum of money on his person to purchase his horses if they could not be had otherwise. A number of persons tried to dissuade him from making the trip, citing the peril to his life. Home Guard leader John Boggs at Mouth of Seneca was one of these. At Harman, Nelson learned that his understanding concerning his horses was unfounded, for the persons in possession would not part with them on any terms. Unable to transact their intended business, Nelson and Bennett began the homeward journey over the same route.

In the meantime, Mathias Helmick and George Arbogast had concealed themselves by the road along Horse Camp Run approximately one mile east of Harman. As the two men passed their position, these renegades shot Nelson in the back, killing him, but not injuring Bennett who fled. Helmick and Arbogast had once been members of Captain Nelson's company, but had deserted the Confederate service and joined Snyder's Swamp Dragons. Both had participated in the killing of Bill Harper and the plundering of the Leonard Harper home on the Upper North Fork in December of 1863. Several years later they were indicted in Randolph County for Nelson's murder, but the state never got around to trying them.

On at least one earlier occasion Captain Nelson had experienced the treachery of one of his former soldiers. While at his farm on furlough from the service and at labor in a field, he was shot from ambush by Sampson Mick, also a former subordinate in Nelson's company who had deserted to Snyder's band. It seems that Mick held a grudge against Nelson because his son, John Mick, once in the same Comapny C but emulating his father's vacillations of loyalty, had been captured by the Confederates and executed as a deserter. Evidently Sampson Mick mistakenly believed that Nelson approved of his son's execution. In fact, Nelson had tried to prevent the application of the death penalty.[41]

From April 15 to 23, 1865, Captain Joseph Badger and 150 men of the Eighth Ohio Cavalry scouted through Randolph, Pocahontas, and Highland counties. While apparently not entering Pendleton, Badger's detachment covered parts of Highland next to the Pendleton line. He reported a "spirit of submission" among the people, as well as a great number of stragglers and deserters trying to elude his troops. Similar conditons presumably obtained in Pendleton as well.[42]

Pendleton and the neighboring counties of Pocahontas and Highland were again toured by a contingent of the Eighth Ohio during the first thirteen days of June, 1865. Colonel Wesley Owens, who commanded 400 cavalrymen on this scout, was to investigate reports of horse stealing and search through the mountains for United States government property, particularly horses and arms. He found little more than thirteen horses and eleven carbines, for preceding him had been a party of West Virginia troops "robbing the people . . . under the pretense of

gathering up United States property." Having thus been warned, the vicinity's inhabitants had concealed their possessions and driven their horses into the mountains. Otherwise, Owens observed that the citizens of the region were "well-disposed and quiet," and that returning Rebels were back at work and conducting themselves properly.[43]

The war in Pendleton ended in essentially the same context in which it had been fought during the preceding three years. A no-man's land between the lines of the contending forces, it was never consistently occupied by a sizable army of either the Union or the Confederacy, and thereby consigned to a vicious and enervating guerrilla warfare. After Appomattox most of the county's Confederate veterans, weary of war and knowing that the South had been thoroughly and hopelessly beaten, wished only that they might get on with the pursuits of peace. But the restoration of normal life and activity would not be accomplished so easily or directly. Although the cessation of hostilities could herald no less than a vast improvement in the personal safety and material fortunes of all Pendleton inhabitants, the wartime conflict was to leave a legacy of enduring enmity between the two factions and, more immediately, spawn further frustrations for the erstwhile soldiers of the Lost Cause.

Notes

[1]County Court, p. 301; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 85-89. Calhoun places this incident in 1862, but the court records conclusively show these events to have occurred two years subsequent. For an account differing markedly with respect to Lake's escape, see "Visits Old Home," Pendleton Times, November 7, 1924, p. 1.

[2]Official Records, I, Vol. XXXIII, p. 583.

[3]Ibid., pp. 591-92, 607.

[4]Ibid., p. 1195.

[5]Ibid., pp. 601, 1199.

[6]Ibid., pp. 1212-13.

[7]Ibid., pp. 1306, 902, 913.

[8]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 122-24.

[9]Ibid., pp. 105-07.

[10]Ibid., pp. 108-09; H. M. Calhoun, "Seneca and Thereabout," Pendleton Times, September 30, 1927, p. 1. Calhoun attributes these events, both the Harman Hills fight and the Harper killing, to the spring of 1863. But they must have occurred one year later, for there are numerous references to Captain Harper in the Official Records well into the spring of 1864. Judy, Grant and Hardy, pp. 248, 250. Judy lists April 18, 1863, as the date of Harper's demise. He probably correctly copied the month and day, but not the year, from the tedious handwriting of the original records.

[11]Official Records, I, Vol. LI, Pt. II, p. 885.

[12]Ibid., Vol. XXXVII, Pt. I, pp. 374, 419.

[13]Ibid., pp. 582, 584, 600-01.

[14]Ibid., pp. 605, 641, 682, 687.

[15]Ibid., p. 656; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, p. 126-27; Judy, Grant and Hardy, pp. 248-49, 255-56; Alt, Kimble and Alt Families, pp. 72-81.

[16]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 127-30. Calhoun renders a more detailed account in "Tales of Historic Smoke Hole and Seneca Rocks Interestingly Told," The Herald, December 11, 1930, p. 2. Differing in many aspects is the version of Andrew Ayers, "Smoke Hole Sagas," The Herald, April 9, 1931, p. 3.

[17]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 137-38.

[18]Ibid., p. 125.

[19]Official Records, I, Vol. XLIII, Pt. I, pp. 1, 645.

[20]Ibid., Pt. II, pp. 351-52.

[21]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 115.

[22]Official Records, I, Vol. XLIII, Pt. I, pp. 655-57, 668, 743.

[23]Ibid., Pt. II, pp. 712-13.

[24]Ibid., pp. 796-97, 816.

[25]Ibid., p. 826.

[26]Farrar, Ringgold Battalion, p. 442.

[27]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 131-34; Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 421, 427.

[28]Boatner, Civil War Dictionary, pp. 745-46.

[29]Official Records, I, Vol. XLVI, Pt. II, pp. 92-93; Pt. I, p. 451.

[30]Ibid., Pt. I, p. 451; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 148-51. Troxel did refer to a situation at Petersburg where his force and about 100 men of McNeill's and Woodson's command were on opposite sides of the rain-swollen South Branch.

[31]Official Records, I, Vol. XLVI, Pt. I, p. 452; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 151-53. Troxel's failure to mention the arrest of Mr. Johnson constitutes the most important discrepancy with Calhoun's account. The major's statement flatly to the contrary, that no arrests were made, is difficult to reconcile with the recollections of Pendleton people as recorded by Calhoun. Yet Calhoun's version must be taken seriously. He interviewed those involved in the 1920's and earlier, when many of the participant — observers were not only still alive but mentally vigorous. It seems highly improbable that these persons would be collectively in error on such a salient point. Such errors as have been definitely established in the Calhoun version are

relatively insubstantial. The incident was incorrectly remembered to have taken place in February instead of a month earlier. The major's name was recalled as "Croxwell" rather than Troxel. But considering that the participant-observers were drawing these events, not from a written record, but from memories dulled with time, these errors seem not only minor but approximate the truth closely enough to be actually reassuring with respect to the accuracy of the principal occurrences, if not always the details.

[32]Official Records, I, Vol. XLVI, Pt. II, p. 285.

[33]County Court, p. 307.

[34]Bright, "McNeill Rangers," pp. 371, 383; Mark Joseph Stegmaier, "The Kidnapping of Generals Crook and Kelley by the McNeil Rangers," West Virginia History, XXIX (October, 1967), p. 42.

[35]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 158-62; Judy, Grant and Hardy, pp. 248, 251; Alt, Kimble and Alt Families, pp. 78, 81.

[36]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 154-56; Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 417, 420.

[37]County Court, p. 305.

[38]Ibid., pp. 306-07.

[39]Ibid., p. 307.

[40]Ibid., pp. 308-09.

[41]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 171-76.

[42]Official Records, I, Vol. XLVI, Pt. I, pp. 1310-14.

[43]Ibid., pp. 1325-26.

IX. RECONSTRUCTION AND BEYOND

The Confederacy defeated, Pendleton's Southern soldiers returned to neglected and plundered homes and farms. But physical reconstruction was soon underway, and within a few years much of the material damage had been repaired. By 1868 the aggregate taxable value of the county's lands and buildings had risen to $1,187,987, somewhat above the comparable 1860 figure of $1,064,994. The inconsequential loss of the labor of the county's few former slaves was no hindrance to the rebuilding process, for Pendleton's mountaineers were accustomed to toil with their own hands.[1]

As a state aligned with the Union at the close of the war, West Virginia escaped the harshest aspects of political reconstruction. However, the state's secessionist citizens were compelled to suffer a transitional period of political disability similar to that imposed upon other Southerners. Moreover, the recent guerrilla warfare in the border counties had inflamed the feelings of ill-will between neighbors in a manner less in evidence in regions more solidly ex-Confederate.

The West Virginia legislature had enacted a "voter's test oath" in February of 1865, requiring a prospective voter to affirm under oath that he had never voluntarily supported the rebellion, and giving any voter the authority to challenge the fitness of any other at the polls. But tensions between West Virginians of opposing political persuasions eased after Appomattox. The test oath — the single bar to

political participation — was ignored or laxly enforced in many counties during the autumn election of 1865. Contending that the oath was unconstitutional, many erstwhile Confederates won election to public office and engaged themselves with governmental reorganization in the border counties.[2]

To the Radical Republican members of the legislature convening in January of 1866, it appeared that the former Rebels were too eager to resume the powers and privileges that they had enjoyed prior to the war. As a disfranchising measure, the test oath seemed inadequately stringent in its substance and enforcement. Fearful that the oath might really be unconstitutional, as its detractors argued, the 1865 legislature had proposed an amendment to the state's basic law which would strip of his citizenship any person who had voluntarily aided the rebellion since June 1, 1861. Reinforced in this objective by the 1865 election results, the 1866 legislature approved the "decitizenizing" amendment for the second time as required by the amendment procedure of the 1863 constitution. It was ratified by a majority of West Virginia voters on May 24, 1866.[3]

In February of 1866, the legislature had also enacted a registration law, authorizing the governor to select three Unionist citizens from each county who would constitute the county board of registration. This board would in turn appoint registrars to administer the loyalty oaths. However, the amendment and registration law were difficult to enforce in certain counties with an ex-Confederate majority. In the nearby counties of Barbour, Randolph, and Tucker, election registrars were so intimidated that it became difficult to

find officials who would assume responsibility for the execution of the law. In response to this defiance, Governor Boreman requested United States troops, which were quickly supplied and posted at Philippi.[4] Although the ex-Confederate majority in Pendleton was sufficiently large to offer resistance to the registrars, it appears that most of the county's former Rebels really were disfranchised and accepted their misfortune quietly.

With the restoration of the civil courts, many suits stemming from wartime incidents were naturally planned or instituted. Much of this litigation was directed against alleged depredations of the Home Guards. However, in February of 1866, the West Virginia legislature passed an act prohibiting civil suits or criminal prosecutions against any persons for their deeds performed in the suppression of the rebellion. Similar measures were reenacted in February of 1867 and March of 1868. These acts, in effect, made lawful all the excesses of the Home Guards, and actions brought against them were therefore dismissed at plaintiffs' costs.[5] Additional proscriptive measures were also imposed. In the half dozen years immediately following the war, the former Southern soldier in West Virginia was denied

> . . . citizenship in the place of his birth; he could not hold office; he could not vote; he could not practice law; he could not sit as a juror; he could not teach school; he could not sue in the courts; he could not make defense to suits brought against him in his absence, and at least one of the circuit judges held that he could not qualify as an executor or administrator.[6]

Since all ex-Confederate lawyers had been disqualified from practice or public office, Pendleton's first prosecuting attorney after the restoration of peace was a "carpetbagger." William Henry Harrison Flick, an Ohioan who had fought in his state's Forty-first Infantry, became a resident of Franklin in 1867. The four-hundred-pound Union veteran had been lured to the South Branch by its unexcelled fishing waters, not by opportunities to exploit the political impotence of his defeated enemies. He quickly established an easy rapport with the county's former Confederates. While the measures of the Radical state legislature exonerated the actions of Unionists committed during the war, the massive Flick used his office to discourage suits or prosecutions against the onetime Rebels for their wartime activities. He helped immeasurably to establish a climate wherein the bitterness of the war could begin its slow subsidence.[7]

After the passage of the "decitizenizing" amendment of 1866, and the enactment of the vindictive proscription laws of the 1867 and 1868 legislative sessions, public opinion throughout the state became increasingly opposed to the political disabilities that burdened ex-Confederates. When the state legislature ratified the Fifteenth Amendment on March 3, 1869, this conviction manifestly became the predominant one among West Virginians. Most citizens who had remained loyal to the Union and opposed slavery were just as intensely against the enfranchisement of blacks, especially when at least one-fourth of the state's white voters had been disqualified. The registration laws could not be strictly enforced everywhere in the state; but it is clear that the majority of Pendleton men, whether from compulsion, pride, or

disgust, were effectively barred from their exercise of the suffrage. In 1868 there were 1,195 males twenty-one years or older residing within the county. Only 414 of these cast ballots in the 1868 presidential election, compared to 1,076 votes recorded in the secession referendum of 1861.[8]

The election of October, 1869 was vigorously contested over the registration and test oath issues. Opponents of proscription argued that in certain counties only the conscientious and law abiding ex-Confederate soldiers and officials were in fact disfranchised. Unscrupulous ex-Rebels defied the registration law and voted, especially in those areas where Federal troops or state officials determined to enforce the law were absent. Many liberal Republicans as well as Democrats advocated an easing of the proscriptive policy. This widespread sentiment, combined with the generally negative reaction to the Fifteenth Amendment, enabled many anti-Radical candidates to win election to the legislature even though the citizenship rights of the ex-Confederate element had not yet been reinstated. Pendleton voters still possessing the franchise selected W. H. H. Flick as the county's delegate to the state's lawmaking body.[9]

Those legislators who were intent on restoring the prerogatives of the former secessionists chose Flick, a liberal Republican, to introduce the constitutional amendment that would accomplish that objective. Known as the "Flick Amendment," it was a compromise that extended the ballot to both blacks and Confederate veterans. In February of 1870, the same month that the test oath requirement for attorneys and teachers was repealed, the legislature passed the

resolution which embodied the Flick Amendment. The measure was approved for the second time in January of 1871.[10]

But the tide away from proscription and the Radical Republicans was so strong that in the October, 1870 election, prior to the final approval of the Flick Amendment, the Democrats elected John J. Jacob as governor and won control of both houses of the state legislature. The disfranchisement of many Pendletonians is again evident in the results of this election. William E. Stevenson, the Republican candidate, carried the county with 236 votes, while Jacob received 212 ballots.[11]

On April 17, 1871, the Flick Amendment was submitted to West Virginia voters for ratification or rejection. The proposal carried over the entire state by nearly a four-to-one margin, 23,546 votes in favor compared to 6,323 against. In Pendleton the measure received 324 votes in the affirmative and 161 in the negative. The county returns are difficult to interpret because the amendment split both parties. Although moderates in each party recognized the injustice and inexpedience of further disfranchisement, Radical Republicans wished to continue the proscription policy while conservative Democrats opposed black suffrage. Persons in either category could be expected to vote against the amendment. Pendleton's smaller majority in favor, proportionally about one-half that of the state at large, may reflect lingering animosities generated by the county's recent guerrilla warfare. In some counties, ex-Rebels ignored the registration law and swelled the vote totals to levels several times greater than those recorded in 1868 and 1870. Thus, many Confederate

veterans, in anticipation of the final result, voted for the measure legalizing their own right to the franchise. However, in Pendleton the total number of ballots cast had increased only from 414 in 1868 to 485 in 1871.[12]

The first election in which the newly enfranchised ex-Confederates could legally participate took place in October, 1871. James L. Mauzy was elected as Pendleton's representative to the lower house of the West Virginia legislature, succeeding John L. Boggs who had served during the 1871 session. George A. Blakemore was elected to the state senate. Dr. Charles D. Boggs was selected as the county's delegate to the constitutional convention of 1872. The new constitution of that year was conservative in tone. It attempted to erase the forms and influences reminiscent of Radical Reconstruction, and it endeavored to restore local government to its status prior to the implementation of the constitution of 1863. The alien township system was replaced not only by the familiar magisterial districts, but also by the traditional county courts wherein administrative and fiscal powers concerning schools, roads, and poor relief were lodged. Despite the ex-Confederate voting majority following the abolition of proscription, a former Home Guard was elected sheriff of Pendleton in the fall of 1873. Isaac P. Boggs succeeded Joshua Day, who had in 1869 supplanted John Boggs, former captain of the Seneca Home Guards and father of Isaac P. Boggs.[13]

In the wake of the Flick Amendment and the conservative constitution of 1872, Democratic hegemony in West Virginia became so pronounced that the state comprised a part of the "Solid South" for the

next quarter century. The new majority was forged from an alliance of the ex-Confederates and conservative Unionists. The latter favored the Union as it had existed in 1860, without the erosion of states' rights consequent to black equality and Federal dictation imposed by the war amendments. Increasing industrialization — mostly implemented by the exploitation of timber and coal resources — paved the way for the Republican ascendancy in the state after 1897, and only in the early years of the Great Depression did the state as a whole return to the Democratic fold.[14] However, despite contrary trends elsewhere in West Virginia, Pendleton remained agrarian and traditional in outlook. Molded by the wartime and disfranchisement experiences, the county has continued its stalwart adherence to the Democratic Party from 1871 to the present day (1974). The county's Republican minority is yet concentrated near the northern border in areas once Unionist.

In certain counties of southwestern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, family feuds developed from the animosities born of the war and its aftermath.[15] Pendleton escaped these horrors, aided perhaps by the enlightened views of W. H. H. Flick. Of even greater importance were the county's more civilized cultural traditions, and a public opinion that would not have tolerated such outrages. Nevertheless, the restraints necessary for a coherent, orderly social fabric were predictably strained by the war. There was a definite increase in the incidence of assault and illegitimacy within the county, although no murders are recorded as having taken place after the re-establishment of civil order. Still, Pendleton had suffered a true civil war, with neighbor against neighbor, and the hatreds and

bitterness subsided slowly. This is certainly the reason that, as late as 1910, the county historian made "no attempt to enumerate the details of the guerrilla war in Pendleton. No good purpose could be served in doing so."[16]

Notes

[1]Morton, Pendleton County, p. 117.

[2]Milton Gerofsky, "Reconstruction in West Virginia," Part I, West Virginia History, VI (July, 1945), pp. 302, 305, 307.

[3]Ibid., pp. 304, 310-11.

[4]Ibid., pp. 312, 320-21.

[5]Ibid., pp. 318, 324; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 178-80.

[6]Cometti and Summers, Thirty-Fifth State, p. 448.

[7]Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 180-81; Jake Fisher, "Flick and His Amendment," West Virginia Review, 23 (January, 1946), pp. 18-19.

[8]Gerofsky, "Reconstruction in West Virginia," pp. 327-29, 349-50.

[9]Ibid., pp. 330-31, 355.

[10]Ibid., pp. 333-34, 349-50; Fisher, "Flick and His Amendment," p. 20.

[11]Gerofsky, "Reconstruction in West Virginia," pp. 350, 352.

[12]Ibid., pp. 357-60.

[13]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, pp. 272, 274-75; Calhoun, 'Twixt North and South, pp. 184-85; Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 183, 365, 373.

[14]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, pp. 281, 376; Curry, House Divided, pp. 10-12.

[15]Ambler and Summers, West Virginia, p. 268.

[16]Morton, Pendleton County, pp. 110, 120.

X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Pendleton's mountainous terrain and small slave population militated against her support of secession in the spring of 1861. Indeed, the stance of the preponderance of her voters in the presidential election of 1860 could be interpreted as an expression of moderate Unionism. The county delegate to the Virginia convention of 1861 steadfastly opposed disunion. When county voters later ratified the secession ordinance by a large majority, the issue of Federal coercion of the states was probably an influencing factor. But the most compelling motivation seems to have been Pendleton's traditional ties to the Shenandoah Valley and Old Virginia, and her lack of significant common interests with the socially and economically alien northwestern counties.

Even prior to the anticipated ratification of the secession ordinance by the people of Virginia, the county court took vigorous measures in support of the Confederacy. The court authorized a home defense company for each of the six magisterial districts, issued bonds to finance the raising and equipping of volunteer companies for the service of Virginia, and took steps to provide for the economic needs of the families of soldiers. Three volunteer companies were mustered: The Franklin Guards, the Pendleton Minute Men, and the Pendleton Rifles.

County civilians did not experience the horrors of war on their own soil in 1861. But Pendleton's three companies did participate in the campaigns of western Virginia in the summer of that year. The Rifles and a portion of the Guards surrendered at Beverly following the Confederate defeat at Rich Mountain. These were paroled and later exchanged. About forty of the Guards escaped back to Pendleton before the capitulation. The Minute Men retreated with Garnett's force, suffering illness and demoralization as a result.

McClellan's victory at Rich Mountain in July of 1861 possessed both local and national implications. Coupled with the Union disaster at Bull Run, it caused his selection as the new leader of the Army of the Potomac, whereupon he transferred much of the Federal force in western Virginia to his command at Washington. Although the magnitude of the immediate Northern threat along the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike was therefore greatly reduced, Union control of the Tygart Valley, never successfully contested thereafter by the Confederates, assured the ultimate success of the Reorganized Government of Virginia and the West Virginia statehood movement. In large measure, Pendleton's future inclusion in the embryonic state of West Virginia was determined during the summer of 1861.

Following the reorganization of the Southern forces in Highland County, several conflicts occurred that autumn along the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike, a thoroughfare traversing the adjacent counties of Highland, Pocahontas, and Randolph. Both sides considered this highway to be important strategically. Traveling eastward, it led to the Virginia Central Railroad at Staunton; and westward, to the

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Grafton, junction of the rail lines to both Wheeling and Parkersburg. In September of 1861, the Confederates were repulsed by the Federals at Cheat Mountain. In October and December the Southern force repelled Union attacks at Greenbrier River and Allegheny Mountain. Pendleton soldiers participated in the latter engagement.

Initially serving with the Twenty-fifth and Thirty-first Virginia infantries and Imboden's Partisan Rangers, the county's regular Confederate soldiers were eventually reorganized into companies of the Sixty-second Virginia Infantry and Eighteenth Virginia Cavalry of Imboden's brigade, as well as the Twenty-fifth Virginia Infantry. With a few exceptions, the first two regiments fought in the Shenandoah Valley and western Virginia, including Pendleton. The Twenty-fifth was engaged in many of the major battles of the war, nearly all of which occurred far beyond the county's borders. Many members of Pendleton's militia regiment, the Forty-sixth, joined the regular army after the militia disbanded in the spring of 1862. Other county men of Southern sympathies served in the Pendleton Reserves and in the irregularly constituted company of Dixie Boys. A few associated themselves with the McNeill Rangers. More than 700 countians served the Confederacy in a military capacity, and over a fifth of these perished from disease or wounds.

A significant role in the war for Pendleton was assured by the county's proximity to the Shenandoah Valley, immediately to the east. The Valley's geography was admirably suited to the purpose of the Southern strategists, especially to threaten Washington, compel the

concentration of enemy troops for that city's defense, and thereby relieve the Federal pressure upon other points. Just as operations in the Valley were often subordinate to events in eastern Virginia, in a roughly similar manner the role of the South Branch was frequently dependent upon or supportive of happenings in the Valley. The South Branch supplied foodstuffs and served as the locale of diversionary maneuvers — such as attacks on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad — for the benefit of Confederate armies operating in the Shenandoah Valley. It also provided an avenue for Federal attacks upon objectives in the Valley, such as forays against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, one of the South's most essential transport systems.

The occurrences in Pendleton of greatest consequence for developments in the Valley of Virginia, as well as the war as a whole, were those surrounding the engagement at McDowell in May of 1862. The battle and subsequent Federal withdrawal to Franklin were of major strategic significance and constituted a victory for the South. Although the Confederates suffered twice the casualties of their blueclad opponents during the battle itself, Jackson, by obliging the Federals to retreat northward, thwarted the plan of Lincoln and Fremont which envisioned a Northern march via the South Branch Valley upon the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. These maneuvers also prevented Fremont from reinforcing Banks in the Shenandoah Valley, and, in conjunction with the forces of McClellan and McDowell approaching from the east and north, from effecting the encirclement of Richmond.

Having precluded the juncture of Fremont and Banks, Jackson was able to return to the Valley and drive Banks' army to the Potomac

River. Lincoln and Stanton, alarmed over Banks' reverses, directed McDowell to move his corps to the protection of Washington rather than join McClellan in the drive on Richmond. Without the aid of McDowell's corps, McClellan was apprehensive concerning his chances of capturing Richmond and defeating the large Southern army opposing him. Lincoln believed that McClellan was conducting a dilatory campaign. For this reason, and also because of his fear for the safety of Washington after Jackson's demonstrations in the Valley, Lincoln recalled McClellan and his army back to the Northern capital. Thus was Richmond saved from probable capture. It can be argued that the war was consequently protracted for as much as two years; it took that long for the Union army again to get as close to the capital of the Confederacy.

Fremont's command, plagued by illness and deficiencies in supply, became immobilized in the county seat for two weeks immediately following Jackson's departure from that place. Franklin residents sustained large losses as the vicinity's livestock, grain, and forage were consumed by the occupying Federal army. But the hardships shared by the townspeople delayed Fremont's advance, contributing to the success of Jackson's Valley Campaign and the relief of Richmond.

The South Branch counties, including Pendleton, provided a base for Confederate attacks upon the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the most direct route for the transport of Northern troops and supplies between eastern and western theaters of the war. The constant menace of Rebel forays diverted approximately 25,000 Union soldiers for the defense of the railroad, troops that consequently could not be used against the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley or elsewhere.

Through the frequent dispatch of cavalry scouts and patrols, the Federals attempted to counter these attacks but met with dubious success. However, despite the destructive raids, increasingly proficient repair procedures enabled the railroad to carry its freight with only brief interruptions.

Particularly in the latter part of the war, several Federal expeditions against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad moved up the South Branch on their way to Salem, situated in the Valley of Virginia and constituting the most exposed point on the line. The most spectacular of these incursions traversing Pendleton was Averell's Big Salem Raid in December of 1863. By devastating a section of the railroad, the Federals severed the supply lines of a Confederate army besieging a Union force in Knoxville, Tennessee. In part because they were cut off from their sources of supply, the Confederates were compelled to lift the siege, and the beleaguered Union army was delivered from its predicament. In the meantime, a Federal force in Highland County had feinted toward Staunton, tied down a sizeable Southern command in that town's defense, and thus succored the accomplishment of Averell's mission.

Yet another example of Pendleton's supportive relationship to the Shenandoah Valley can be found in the county's provision of food and provender. As the operations of large armies ever more thoroughly stripped the Valley of its food resources, the agriculturally rich South Branch and its tributary valleys assumed an increasingly critical importance for the Confederates. Rebel foraging parties, usually companies of Imboden's brigade, regularly combed Pendleton and

neighboring counties in search of provisions. The importance of the South Branch in this regard reached its zenith in late 1864 as Sheridan was engaged in the destruction of the Shenandoah Valley. Federal patrols were repeatedly directed to impede Rebel foraging activities, but generally seem to have achieved only limited success. To prevent its falling into Rebel hands, the Federals frequently attempted to gather up the surplus means of subsistence, exchanging certificates for the items collected. After submitting the certificates to the proper Union authorities and demonstrating his loyalty to the United States, the donor could receive payment. Of course, there could be no compensation for suppliers who were also ardent Southern sympathizers, the category of most Pendletonians. To escape this misfortune, it became common practice for county inhabitants to drive their livestock into the mountains and hide their valuables if given timely warning of the approach of a hostile force.

Federal patrols to Pendleton were routinely sent out from Union commands stationed at New Creek and Beverly, and sometimes from Petersburg, Moorefield, and Greenland Gap. These parties were intended to discover and parry threats against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, aid Home Guard units menaced by large Confederate forces, interfere with Rebel foraging efforts, destroy the various saltpetre operations, disrupt the administration of the county government, capture the most zealous Southern civilians to exchange them for Unionist political prisoners, and, perhaps most important, secure intelligence of Confederate troop movements. So important did General Kelley consider these activities on the South Branch that

Union outposts were sometimes maintained at Moorefield, and especially at Petersburg, despite the vulnerability of the garrisons and their wagon supply trains to the Rebel marauders. These scouts not infrequently reported the presence of sizeable Southern forces in Highland and Pendleton, usually in the proximity of Crab Bottom, Franklin, and the South Fork.

Mennonites and Dunkards of the Shenandoah Valley, whose religious tenets forbade participation in war, resisted Confederate conscription by flight across the mountains of Pendleton to the Federal lines. Employing an extensive system of guides and hideouts, nearly all these bodies of draft-age fugitives made the journey safely, although at least two such groups were captured. The labors of one refugee resulted in the establishment of the first Mennonite church in West Virginia, near Mouth of Seneca.

Soon after the war's inception, the Federal naval blockade cut off the South's external sources of nitrates. To supply the pressing need for this essential material, an ingredient in the manufacture of gunpowder, saltpetre earth was extracted from natural limestone caverns throughout the southern Appalachians. Operations at six caves comprised Pendleton's Confederate nitre industry; one other was mined by Unionists. The largest of the county's nitre works, located at Trout Rock, was raided several times by Averell on his expeditions to southern Virginia and West Virginia.

Under Virginia law the county courts held the primary responsibility for the care of persons rendered indigent by wartime conditions, particularly the families of soldiers. Apart from

humanitarian concerns, such relief was essential if the severe problem of desertion from the Confederate ranks was not to be aggravated further, for Southern soldiers were known to return home without leave to ensure the welfare of their families. The court worked hard to relieve the economic stress occasioned by the Federal blockade and the war's neglect and destruction, a task made more difficult by the less than total control of the county's territory by the Confederates, and the corresponding menace posed by the Home Guards.

On numerous occasions the court appropriated sums for the relief of the destitute. To combat inflation, which had assumed serious proportions as early as the spring of 1862, the court issued small denominations of county treasury notes, redeemable in larger bonds, to provide a safer, more stable currency. The court voted funds for the purchase of an adequate supply of salt for the county, and promulgated a formula for its distribution among the people. The justices also authorized the procurement of cotton yarn and cloth for the county's citizens. A list of the needy families in each magisterial district was compiled, and the justices appropriated funds and appointed agents to purchase or impress those supplies necessary for the support of indigents and the families of soldiers. But the court could not maintain a consistent rule of law in an area of divided sentiment and guerrilla warfare. Although it managed to function under the Richmond government right up to Appomattox, with the worsening military and economic chaos, especially during the last two years of the war, the court naturally administered county affairs with diminishing effectiveness.

As an essentially Confederate county, Pendleton exercised virtually no influence in the formation of the state of West Virginia. Federal military dominance in western Virginia, achieved during the summer of 1861, enabled the northwestern Unionists to impose the new state on border counties Southern in sentiment. Their intent was to make West Virginia as large as practicable, without incorporating so many Confederates that the latter would control the state's postwar destinies. Pendleton was included because of the flow of her rivers, and presumably her future commerce, toward the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, because her slave population was small, and also because no Virginia-financed internal improvements that would burden the new state with debt existed within her boundaries.

The county's sparse population, dearth of crucial industries or turnpikes, total lack of a railroad, forbidding terrain, and roads that were generally narrow and rough, all militated against the convenience or necessity of large-scale military operations. Most actions involved small units, either guerrilla bands or patrols comprised of regular troops. Excepting the 15,000 Federals and 9,000 Confederates concentrated about Franklin in May of 1862, forces larger than several thousand men rarely operated in Pendleton, and usually these numbered several hundred or fewer. Many forays by the various irregulars involved a mere handful of men.

The mountainous topography and population of divided sympathies were factors exceedingly conducive to the development of the guerrilla warfare waged by both sides. The collapse of law and order exposed the county's inhabitants to a veritable civil war, where neighbors

and even family members were arrayed bitterly against one another. Opportunities abounded for pillage and the use of deadly force in the settlement of private grudges, perpetrated, of course, under the cloak of patriotism. The ubiquitous presence of the lethal bushwhackers created an atmosphere of fear both for civilians and patrolling regular troops. Mountaineers who valued their lives over their comforts slept in the woods during even the most inclement weather to avoid being slain in their homes by hostile neighbors. On occasion, Unionists were conscripted into the Confederate army, in a few instances with ultimately tragic consequences. For if they escaped and were captured a second time, they were subject to execution as deserters. Life in the county these four years represented existence on the border between North and South, a vacuum or no-man's-land between the lines.

To combat the menace of bushwhackers and guerrillas, the Federals resorted to the arbitrary arrest of suspected persons. The apprehension of civilians, against whom there were frequently no specific charges or definite proof of overt acts in support of the rebellion, was permitted by Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. A number of Pendleton's Southern civilians were arrested throughout the war, and, refusing to swear allegiance to the United States, were transported to Northern prisons, principally Camp Chase, Ohio. Some took the oath to secure their freedom. Others, the charges against them lacking substance, were released prior to the conclusion of the war. The policy of arbitrary arrest was just another addition to the manifold forces of lawlessness buffeting the lives of Pendletonians.

Initially slow to organize, the county's Unionist element supported its cause with little militancy during the first year of the war, in contrast to the energy and zeal of the majority who advocated Southern independence. But by the autumn of 1862, Unionists of Pendleton and nearby counties began to organize informally into Home Guard companies for the defense of their homes and farms against hostile bushwhackers and guerrilla bands. This tendency was markedly accelerated upon the admission of West Virginia to the Union in June of 1863. About that time two companies composed exclusively of Pendleton men were established. Numerous county Unionists already had been serving in each of two additional units formed in adjacent Hardy and Randolph counties. From their earliest informal existence, the Home Guards — who also came to be known as Swamp Dragons or State Troops — engaged in frequent combat with contingents of the Dixie Boys, the Sixty-second Virginia Infantry, the Eighteenth Virginia Cavalry, and the McNeill Rangers, all of whom were unremitting in their efforts to inflict every possible injury on the Unionist companies.

Certain writers have emphasized the role of the Confederate irregulars in prolonging the war. Rebel guerrilla activities definitely diverted large numbers of Union troops from significant offensive action, particularly in the protection of the railroad, wagon supply trains, and Unionist communities. However, the effectiveness of Southern guerrillas declined sharply after the spring of 1863, when new Federal military commanders in West Virginia adopted tactics stressing greater mobility and aggressiveness. For

example, later in the war the most spectacular railroad raids were directed against the Virginia and Tennessee, not the Baltimore and Ohio as had been the case earlier in the conflict.

A second, concurrent development complementing the new militancy of the regulars was the authorization of Home Guard companies by the first legislature of West Virginia. Not only did the Home Guards defend the county's Unionist districts and thereby release regular Federal troops for offensive operations, but they posed a constant threat and annoyance to local Rebels. During the last half of the war, their existence and activities reduced the control of the county court over Pendleton territory. Moreover, their services as scouts, guides, and auxiliaries enhanced the capabilities of the Union regulars.

The war in Pendleton ended much as it had begun, characterized by small unit regular and guerrilla operations between the lines of the Union and Confederacy. The county had continued in the supportive role of furnishing food, forage, and military diversions for Southern forces in the Shenandoah Valley, until the devastation wreaked by Sheridan's army in late 1864 effectively knocked the Valley out of the war. Thereafter, Pendleton's importance to the larger struggle, always secondary, plummetted to insignificance. Unfortunately, despite this eclipse, the tragic lawlessness within the county continued without abatement to the official cessation of hostilities, and somewhat beyond.

Although West Virginia's emergence from the war as a member of the victorious Union precluded a reconstruction experience dictated from without, the state's Radical Republicans imposed a six year period of political proscription upon their former adversaries in gray, a ban which applied to the majority of Pendleton males of voting age. Few if any countians voted illegally in defiance of the Radical test oath and registration law, unlike the disfranchised inhabitants of certain other districts of the state. W. H. H. Flick, notwithstanding his Unionist background and carpetbag status, warmly advocated the cause of his proscribed neighbors. As prosecuting attorney he discouraged litigation against ex-Rebels arising from wartime incidents. As Pendleton's delegate to the state legislature during the 1870 session, he introduced the constitutional amendment which revived the citizenship rights of Southern veterans. Under the conservative constitution of 1872, which embodied an effort to erase the reminders of Republican rule in West Virginia, the traditional forms of county government were restored throughout the state.

The county was, of course, profoundly affected by the Civil War. The decision in favor of the North ended the modest manifestation of slavery which had existed within her borders. Pendleton began the conflict as a part of Virginia, and concluded it as a subdivision of the new state of West Virginia. In spite of the moderating influence of Flick, and the fortunate absence of postwar feuds, the malignant memories of the wartime struggle, plus the exacerbations of its aftermath, sustained a bitterness that was not to be entirely

dissipated until well into the present century. With the exceptions of Republican dominance in several neighborhoods once Unionist, these experiences also cemented Pendleton's allegiance to the Democratic Party.

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