

SETTING THE SCENE – THE LAST DAYS OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

In presenting this paper, the author wishes to acknowledge the considerable assistance provided by access to the recently published book Lee's Last Retreat – the Flight to Appomattox by William Marvel. This book is a scholarly and thoroughly researched work that addresses many of the deliberate myths that have arisen around the final days of the Civil War and provided the basis for much of this paper. In particular, the maps of the Confederate and Union movements in the last days of the War provided a basis for understanding more fully what happened in the days leading up to Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9, 1865.

Contrary to generally held opinion, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had many more soldiers than history has generally accorded it as it fled westward from Petersburg and Richmond. The main reason for this has become part of the so-called Lost Myth of the Confederate States, which, in this case, was instigated by Colonel Walter Taylor of Lee's staff. As Marvel ¹ notes, Taylor's post-War recollections grossly understated Lee's available manpower, presumably to underline the state that the Confederacy was in and to supplement the generally held opinion of the greatness of the Army of Northern Virginia - the supposed "...heroic struggle against insurmountable odds"

Unfortunately, for many years Taylor's figures had been accepted as the truth – yet the true story was readily available from the Confederate muster rolls. Recent research by William Marvel, in his fine book "Lee's Last Retreat" has remedied this situation. Taylor, "...by manipulation, deceptive implication and omission" ² managed to *underestimate* Lee's real army figures by approximately 43 percent. It is correct to say, however, that the Confederacy was in serious trouble. Many of the men Taylor omitted from his count were unarmed, and in some cases had only minimal training – bureau clerks, ordinance officers and quartermaster staff all of whom had been part of the Richmond Home Guard. As well, there was Commodore John Randolph Tucker's naval brigade – now forced to march along with the fleeing army.³

Taylor's figures were basically the effective strengths of each unit, rather than the aggregate "present for duty" which therefore discounted officers, those sick, detailed for other duties, or non-combatants.⁴ Lee's total available force was in the region of 77,000 in the second week of March, yet Colonel Taylor has only 28,000 leaving Richmond and Petersburg less than a month later.⁵ Lee's losses in that month were considerable, however, with desertion, a dirty word so far as the Lost Myth is concerned, together with accumulated losses and prisoners taken from the continual day-to-day fighting, especially at Dinwoodie Courthouse and Five Forks.

¹ Marvel, William, *Lee's Last Retreat - The Flight to Appomattox*: Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2002, p 4.

² *ibid*, p 201.

³ Wensyel, James W, *Appomattox: The Passing of the Armies*: Shippensburg PA, White Mane Books, 1999, p 52.

⁴ Marvel, *op cit*, p 201.

⁵ *ibid*, p 202

Still Lee should have had about 55,000 - 57,000 in the ranks as the retreat across Virginia began and had about 45,000 men at Amelia County. It is worth noting also, to further reinforce his position, that Taylor significantly *overestimated* the Union strength. Taylor suggested the Union forces' strength was in the region of 162,000 but, in fact, it was about 120,000.⁶ In Taylor's defence, it is worth noting that nearly all of Grant's Army was fully trained fighting men whilst many of Lee's Army were not. But in the pursuit, however, Grant did not take along IX Corps or about half of the Army of the James leaving about 80,000 to chase Lee's army.

In his recollections Taylor implied that as few as 8,000 surrendered at Appomattox. Yet in 1887 when the Southern Historical Society published the names of the parolees, there were 28,321 names. There was understandably some duplication here, but it seems reasonable to suggest that a true figure would have to be in the vicinity of 25,000. Furthermore, these figures do not include much of Lee's cavalry who simply rode away, or his artillery that also just started making their way home.⁷

Each passing week, more and more troops gave up and tried to make their way home. There was pressure from loved ones at home with the need for crops to be planted for the coming season. Others simply crossed to Union lines. What awaited them there they did not know, nor did they seem to care. Each night, despite Lee's best efforts, these soldiers who had bravely borne so much gave up, capitulated to their enemy who they had fought on all fronts for so long. All that the Confederacy and their Robert E. Lee stood for was lost on these men. They had suffered enough and simply wanted to get on with their lives as best they could.

A further part of the Confederate myth concerns the lack of food – certainly most who had just left Petersburg and Richmond could hardly be described as starving. Even if they had some rations as they left, it was soon apparent that they only had enough for a few days. The fact that Lee did, in fact, temporarily halted the retreat for a day and sent out all available wagons for food would indicate that things were not good.

In the Confederate Congress there was serious debate about admitting Negroes into the army as soldiers and by the end of March, a small number of Negroes were drilling in camps on the outskirts of Richmond. This really was the end of the Southern ideal. It was against everything that the South stood for before the War. Surely now, all was lost!

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

With the fall of Fort Fisher, North Carolina on February 25, 1865, the Confederacy lost its last remaining port having access to the world. At Petersburg, Lee's line was stretched over nearly thirty miles. When the weather started to clear and the roads dried, Lee knew Grant would attack. The question was where. Holding the interior line was all well and good, but 30 miles was a long way to cover.

In the weeks that followed, Longstreet put forward to abandon Petersburg, have a relatively small force to defend Richmond using their advantage of interior lines, and send a substantial detachment of the Army of Northern Virginia to join Joseph Johnston's army in North Carolina, defeat Sherman and then all would return to Virginia to reinforce the Richmond garrison and defeat Grant.^{8 9}

⁶ *ibid*, p 203.

⁷ *ibid*, p 204.

⁸ *Ibid*, p 9.

On March 19, however, Sherman forced the badly outnumbered Confederate forces from the field near Bentonville, NC, and any hope for this plan was gone. Lee began to consider having his whole Army of Northern Virginia withdraw to the west and join Johnston to fight as a consolidated force. In considering this revised plan, Lee was aware that the desertion rate of his forces was around 100 soldiers a day and was increasing, thus depleting his once invincible army. Against this was the impact that withdrawal from the Confederate's capital, Richmond, would have on the morale of the army and the population in general. Furthermore, Lee knew that eventually Grant's tactics must be successful. He decided, therefore, to attack first Fort Stedman, one of the Union strong-points. As one South Carolina soldier remembered it:

"...Either every southern civilian would have to join the fight, and mighty soon, or all would be lost."

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

In the early morning of March 25, Gordon's Second Corps and six other brigades attacked Fort Stedman. Initially, this attack had overwhelming success in capturing the fort and taking some 500 prisoners from the first Union forces that rushed to its defence. As in so many other occasions for both sides during the War, however, the Confederates were unable to hold what they had won and eventually were forced back into their lines with the loss of around 1,000 dead or wounded and some 2,000 prisoners captured. The events at Fort Stedman concluded any hope of sending a detachment to support Johnston and Lee began planning the withdrawal of his troops from Richmond and Petersburg

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

On April 1, Warren's Union V Corps and Sheridan's Cavalry finally managed to outflank the Confederate line near Five Forks and the defence of Petersburg and Richmond became untenable. The following day Grant ordered a push on the length of his whole line. Only a desperate rearguard action, which saw the death of Lieutenant General A P Hill, gave enough time for the evacuation of Petersburg. This also meant that the defence of Richmond was untenable and messengers were immediately dispatched to President Jefferson Davis advising him of the situation.

Lee's decision was now to push on in the hope of joining Johnston, although it might have been better to surrender then. Lee had already forsaken his country in favour of his native state; to acknowledge now that he, along with so many others, had made the biggest mistake of their lives was a giant "about-face". He had already been pushed back through Virginia by Grant and now he must sacrifice Richmond, his new Government's capital, and Petersburg. To continue to fight was surely a losing option, but what would happen if he surrendered and what fate awaited him personally? Lee, who had decided on an act of treason against his then government in 1861 must have wondered if his future was to be death by hanging or imprisonment possibly for life. The future either way, to fight on or surrender, was bleak!

Lee's plan was to try and join Johnston in North Carolina. To do so he would have to travel to the west to get around Grant's flank, before moving south into North Carolina. Rations were not a major concern at this stage since warehouses at both Danville on the Richmond and Danville Railroad, and Lynchburg on the Southside Railroad were full. The problem was getting them to Lee's army.

⁹ As Marvel points out, Longstreet put this plan was put to Johnston also, because Johnston, an old friend of Longstreet's, asked Lee about it some weeks later.

Lee's aide Walter Taylor had one important thing to do before Richmond was evacuated: he wanted to marry his girlfriend who was in the Confederate capital and around midnight on April 3, 1865, the service was held. In the meantime, Jefferson Davis, his cabinet and a host of clerks had to evacuate the city with the Richmond and Danville RR being their only hope for safety. At 11pm a train pulled out carrying these people, together with all of the Confederate war records and the entire gold supply reserve of the Confederate Government. The Davis train passed Burkeville Junction about dawn and was relatively safe in its journey from thereon. The track was in such poor condition, however, that going was terribly slow and the trip to Danville took 16 hours at an average speed of less than nine miles per hour.¹⁰

The morning after Davis's departure, the evacuation of Richmond took place, although many of the civilian population opted to stay, presumably having nowhere else to go and no means of leaving anyway. The city was soon in flames as the giant warehouses were deliberately set ablaze by Richard S Ewell under orders from Davis.¹¹ By 8am countless Union soldiers were at the eastern entrances to the Confederate capital and, in nearby Petersburg, Abraham Lincoln, accompanied by Admiral David Dixon Porter, arrived.

As the army retreated, Captain John Gorman of the 2nd North Carolina noted the eerie glow over Richmond and Petersburg. Fires had been set in the Richmond warehouses to prevent their contents falling into Union hands and, similarly, munitions in the many Confederate River batteries were set off. Gorman confided to his diary

*"...at each step we took some new explosion would occur...
(and)... the whole heavens were lit up in a weird glare."*¹²

As Lee's army retreated towards Amelia Court House, where they hoped to receive rations from Danville or Lynchburg, the Union chase was led by Custer's cavalry brigade, under the overall command, much to Custer's chagrin, of newly promoted Wesley Merritt. Merritt was the nominal head of Sheridan's cavalry corps, which Grant had entrusted with the chase. Also under Sheridan's immediate command was the Army of the Potomac's V Corps, under newly promoted Charles Griffin, who had replaced Gouverneur K Warren after he the temerity to upset Sheridan at Five Forks. Basically, as the cavalry followed the tracks of the retreating rebels, V Corps marched to the south towards Amelia Court House. Following were George Meade's II Corps under Andrew Humphrey, and VI Corps under Horatio Wright, both of whom were pressing toward Jetersville and further to the south, Edward Ord, with three divisions from the Army of the James, moved west toward Burkeville Junction to prevent Lee's army heading south.

Many Confederate soldiers in the rear, mainly those troops who had been defending Richmond, were just "gobbled up" by the advancing Union forces. As well, the Confederate desertions to the Union lines were increasing with possible reasons for the desertions being fatigue, disloyalty or discouragement. In general terms, however, morale remained at a reasonable level amongst the remaining 50,000 or so troops, even though many lacked arms. They felt they could regroup at Amelia Court House and again present a united front to Grant.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4

On the night of April 4, the first of Lee's army comprising Cadmus Wilcox and Charles Field's brigades, arrived at Amelia Court House and entrenched themselves in defensive positions where

¹⁰ *ibid*, p 33.

¹¹ *ibid*, p 39.

¹² *ibid*, p 32.

they were harassed by Union cavalry under Ranald Mackenzie, known as the “boy brigadier”. This was, perhaps, Lee’s last chance to breakthrough the Union lines and head south. His Army was spread over way too many miles, and the rearguard under the defender of Richmond, Richard S. Ewell, would almost certainly be sacrificed.¹³

Lee’s staff telegraphed down the Railroad line for 200,000 rations, but Union cavalry has taken possession of the Jetersville station and Lee’s message got no further. In fact, the Union forces are there in number and have foraged plentifully from the surrounding area. Rations are not a real problem at this time for Lee either, although he is rapidly exhausting his supplies. There are a number of reports from soldier’s diaries of the lack of rations being a problem at Amelia Court House and some even griped of having to do extra cooking details. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that Lee chose to wait an extra day there. This was a day that he knew he could not afford. The reason almost certainly is that he knew another battle would soon take place and must take place if the Confederacy was to survive. His army was still too widely spread to even consider an engagement and disaster beckoned if the Union attacked his widely separated brigades. The major problems facing much of his army as it made its way to Amelia Court House were rising water levels in the Appomattox River, and the lack of sufficient pontoon bridges. It was pointless going on until his army was reasonably together and be able to once again present a united defence to Grant. From Amelia Court House onwards, the ration problem would exacerbate due to the intercepted telegram at Jetersville. Although Lee’s army is suffering from fatigue, and perhaps a feeling of hopelessness, morale is still relatively high. Those who were going to desert had already done so before the march across Virginia began.

Sheridan realising Lee’s plight was rapidly closing and wanted to bring on an engagement as soon as practicable. He sent messages to the 35,000 strong II Corps and VI Corps, and to Ord’s 10,000 troops to push on as quickly as possible.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

Lee started Longstreet’s Corps on the roads towards Deatonville hampered by heavy rains in the middle of the day and he rest of the army follows. Meanwhile, General Meade and II Corps have arrived at Jetersville, but, the ever cautious Meade, refrains from attacking until Wright’s VI Corps is up. Wright doesn’t arrive until 6pm and Meade orders an attack for 6am the next morning, not knowing that Lee is again already slipping away. At midnight, whilst Meade’s men sleep, Gordon, now the vanguard of Lee’s army, pulls out of Amelia Court House.

THURSDAY APRIL 6

The Confederates know that the only way that they can distance themselves from their foe is to march whilst their enemy sleeps. Longstreet allows only one hour’s rest on the march and as he nears Rice’s Station on the Southside Railroad, having passed over the steep banks of Sailor’s Creek, he is startled by news from the locals at Rice Station that Union troops have already passed through on their way to High Bridge on the Appomattox River. If the Confederate army is to have any chance of survival, the bridges their must be saved. He dispatches Rosser and Munford’s cavalry to save it, which they manage to do after a bitter fight, taking 800 prisoners.

Early on this morning, Grant and Meade find that Lee has left Amelia Court House. By then, Lee’s army is now spread out from Rice’s Station to Amelia Springs. Humphrey’s II Corps is soon snapping at the Confederate rearguard, this time Jubal Early’s old command under James Walker.

¹³ *ibid*, p 49.

Walker gains valuable time for the army as it moves towards Farmville. Appomattox Station, known to the locals as Nebraska, is the destination and here Lee again expects to find rations. Confederate Ordinance Sergeant James Albright noted in his diary:

“...Great straggling...will ruin us.”¹⁴

Those who had been in Richmond, however, had started the retreat later and had travelled further. Creed Davis of the Richmond Howitzers recalled he was:

“...quite worn out and broken down.”¹⁵

At Double Bridge, there was a large build up of men and equipment waiting to cross. This left the rear part of the army vulnerable, and on the steep slopes of Sailor’s Creek the first sign of trouble began. Kershaw’s South Carolina Brigade was on rearguard duty, but he was expecting support from John Gordon. Gordon’s soldiers, however, due to a misunderstanding, were following the army wagons towards Jamestown. Thus, when Union cavalry, 6,000 strong, fell on Kershaw, he was in deep trouble. The Union cavalry had artillery with them, to which Kershaw had nothing to oppose and at one stage the Union gunners were able to move within a half mile of the South Carolinian forces.

As Union infantry came up, they were able to split the Confederate retreat, leaving most of Richard Ewell’s Corps, together other Confederate troops; surrounded. Atmospheric conditions prevented the noise of the battle reaching the fleeing army and, as a consequence, no help was forthcoming. Although fighting continued for some time, it soon became obvious that surrender was the only sane option. Altogether, 6,000-7,000 Confederates, including six Generals, were forced to lay down their arms and a further 1,000 troops were killed or wounded. The morale of the rest of the army plummeted sharply as news of the disaster spread.

Grant was soon aware of the situation as well, as Sheridan apparently gave the news mainly in the person, making it appear that he had single-handedly won the battle. As usual, George Meade had his nose out of joint, as none of the credit was given to his Army of the Potomac.¹⁶

Further bad news for Robert E Lee was that the bridges at High Bridge had not been fired in time to prevent them falling into Union hands. Those Union troops directly following the trail were not delayed at all in their pursuit. This followed another misunderstanding in the upper echelons of the Army of Northern Virginia. No doubt the fatigue of the march was playing havoc with the thinking processes of the commanders. On this occasion the fault seems to lie at the feet of “jockey-sized” Major General William Mahone.

FRIDAY APRIL 7

Lee, rather than passing orders down the line about the Farmville bridges which now had to be destroyed after the army had passed, called General E. Porter Alexander to him, and gave him personal instructions to make sure the bridges were burnt. There was a bitter cavalry battle near the bridges to make sure the Union didn’t arrive in time to douse the flames. Union General John Irvin Gregg was captured and Confederate General William Lewis was severely wounded and taken prisoner. The bridges did burn and the immediate pressure of the Union forces following

¹⁴ *ibid*, p 74.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p 75.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p 92.

was interrupted. The writing on the wall was becoming increasingly ominous for the Confederate leader and as night fell, Union troops from Meade's and Ord's armies travelling to the south were closer to Appomattox Station than Lee and, now, the Confederate forces needed further rations.

Following the crushing victory at Sailor's Creek, Grant sent the first of several messages to Lee appealing for the surrender of his army. Lee and Longstreet looked at the message, to which Longstreet laconically responded:

"Not yet"

This view apparently mirrored his commander's view. Elsewhere in the Confederate encampments others weren't so sure. Some of Lee's division commanders, including John Gordon and William Pendleton, Lee's nominal Chief of Artillery, had decided that further resistance was useless, and that Lee should be prompted to surrender. They decided that Pendleton, a personal friend of Lee's, and a man often mistaken in appearance for the leader, would be the one to undertake the delicate mission. Furthermore, it was decided that first they should get Longstreet "on-side" with the idea.

At this time it was observed that many in the Confederate army seemed spirit-broken. At High Bridge one soldier remarked

"Everyone knows and feels we are fighting against hope itself..."¹⁷

Union cavalry continually sniped at the tail of the Confederate army and heavy rain did not help the Confederate situation. The roads north of Farmville were a quagmire and progress became increasingly slow. Teamster's wagons and artillery that could not keep up were simply abandoned.

Grant was now at Farmville, still a little behind his army. Sheridan had continually prodded the cavalry forward, but at Prince Edward Court House, both horses and men had had enough and needed to rest. Meanwhile, 80,000 rations for Lee's army were at Pamplin Station, being held for orders from Lee where to send them. On the night of Friday, April 7, Union cavalry were just 10 miles away at Prospect Station. That night, Grant's infantry slept at Farmville and Cumberland Church.¹⁸

SATURDAY APRIL 8

Longstreet for the first time on the march became aware of straggling in his corps, and issued an order against it. The Confederate's only hope now was to outdistance the Union in a race to Appomattox Station, where belatedly the rations were heading. Most had only 3-4 hours sleep, as they had for the past few days. At 1am the call to move on was made.

On Saturday morning, Grant received Lee's reply to the first letter, and replied immediately with:

"...peace being my great desire....I would insist...that the surrendered shall be disqualified from taking up arms ...until properly exchanged."¹⁹

Seth Williams was again given the dangerous job of passing through the Confederate lines with this communication to Lee.

¹⁷ *ibid*, p 128.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p 139.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p 140.

By 6am the Union infantry with Griffin from Prince Edward Court House was again on the move. Two hours later, Sheridan's cavalry are on the chase again. Increasingly, there are signs of great turmoil in the Confederate ranks with deserted wagons, cooking utensils, camp equipment and personal baggage left strewn along the roads.

William Pendleton had, at last, seen Longstreet but was given short shrift to the proposal for surrender. Still Pendleton felt it his duty to notify Lee of the feelings of many of his generals, but was rebuffed again. Lee still would not yet admit of the precariousness of the Confederate position, something that was becoming more urgent by the minute.

Around 3pm Bushrod Johnson's division of Gordon's Corps arrived at Appomattox Courthouse, about 3 miles from the railway station. Fitz Hugh Lee had communicated to his uncle, Robert E. Lee, that Union cavalry could not get to the railway at Appomattox before Sunday and thus, no attempt was made to secure the station.

Not long after this, however, one of Custer's veteran cavalry brigades, led by the youthful Alexander Pennington, arrived at the station. Before the train engineers realised who they were, the trains were captured along with the rations on which Lee's army depended. The Yankees were jubilant! Soon afterwards, Confederate infantry began to arrive at the scene, probably men foraging for supplies. They were moving towards Appomattox Station where they knew the rations were headed! A fight broke out, and eventually Pennington's line was forced back but with the arrival of Custer's other brigade under Thomas Devin, Custer himself led a charge that secured the stage road. The Union forces now controlled Appomattox Station.

This news must have rocked Robert E. Lee to the core. He called a council of war, with Longstreet, Gordon, and a presumably highly embarrassed Fitz Lee. Lee advised that Grant had offered generous terms for the surrender of the Confederate army, but he still felt compelled to make one more attempt to break through to Danville. As it was only cavalry barring the way, in the morning, Fitz Lee's cavalry was to break through ahead of Gordon's men followed by Longstreet. Their path was to Campbell Courthouse and even with the devastating losses of the past few days Lee still had about 30,000 in total with him. All wagons were to carry only the bare essentials because if the breakthrough was successful, speed would be of the essence.

Even at this late stage there were some changes to the Confederate leadership, mainly due to the amalgamation of a number of corps. Gone were Richard Anderson, George Pickett, and Bushrod Johnson although Johnson was to remain with his Division, really having nowhere else to go.

Meade and Grant were still twenty miles away at Clifton, and both were unwell. Grant had a bad migraine, and Meade, who had been unwell for a couple of days, opted to travel in an ambulance. During the night Grant had received Lee's answer concerning his preparedness for a general discussion of peace, but this gave Grant no solace. He immediately wrote again stressing that the only outcome that he would accept was the surrender of Lee's army. Lee, for his part, was still "beating around the bush" and many on the Union side saw it as an attempt at calling a truce while his army would still move towards North Carolina.

SUNDAY APRIL 9

Gordon's corps was on the march at 4am, passed through the small township and just passed the Wilmer McLean house, soon to be famous and started entering the fields on both sides of the road. Fitz Hugh Lee's cavalry formed to Gordon's right. This manoeuvre took almost an hour, however, and it was an hour the Confederate's did not have. There were early gains as the advance began

with the thin ranks of the Union cavalry being immediately hard pushed, but only 4 miles away, the Union's infantry were on the move to the "sound of the guns" as soon as the fighting was heard.²⁰

Devin's cavalry advanced on the Le Grand Road bringing them onto Gordon's left flank and close behind was Osborn's brigade of Ord's Army of the James. The Confederates were fighting bravely in this last ditch attempt, but no sooner was a charge made or an attack repulsed when more Union troops arrived. The rest of Ord's army was coming up from the west, Devin from the southeast, Custer to the south, Griffin's V corps from the southwest. Finally, although it was still only 8.30am, Lee could no longer put off the inevitable. He ordered Longstreet to stop fighting and commenced riding toward the Union front to make arrangements to see Grant. The fighting continued near the Courthouse until the word arrived but not before William Cox of Gordon's corps ordered a charge on his front, believed to be the last time the famous "Rebel Yell" was used in battle by the Army of Northern Virginia. Gradually the guns fell silent as word of the truce was spread. Although in many ways not unsurprising, the news of the truce and the imminent surrender, which surely was the only outcome, came as a shock to many on both sides. Nearly all of the Confederate cavalry, and many of the mounted officers, were happy to break the conditions of the truce and started to make their way home.²¹

Custer tried vainly to get, first Gordon and then Longstreet, to surrender the Confederate Army to him, but was rebuffed and returned to the Union lines somewhat chagrined. Lee eventually found that Grant was riding around his army, so he returned to the village to await his conqueror. Grant finally heard the news, and sent one of his aides, Colonel Orville Babcock forward to arrange a suitable place for the surrender. Babcock eventually found Lee near the village, and they, together with Lee's Assistant Adjutant General, Colonel Walter Marshall,²² commenced to look for a suitable place. The Courthouse itself was far and away the most imposing place in the village, but being Sunday was not open and nobody could find the key. The McLean house, just a few hundred yards away was the most prominent residence in the small village, and this was soon chosen.

For over an hour, which must have seemed an eternity, Lee waited for Grant to arrive.

²⁰ *ibid*, p 163.

²¹ *ibid*, p 178.

²² Marshal had served on Lee's staff as an ADC to Lee since March 22, 1862. He was appointed Assistant Adjutant General on February 25, 1864 and Chief-of-Staff on April 9, 1865.