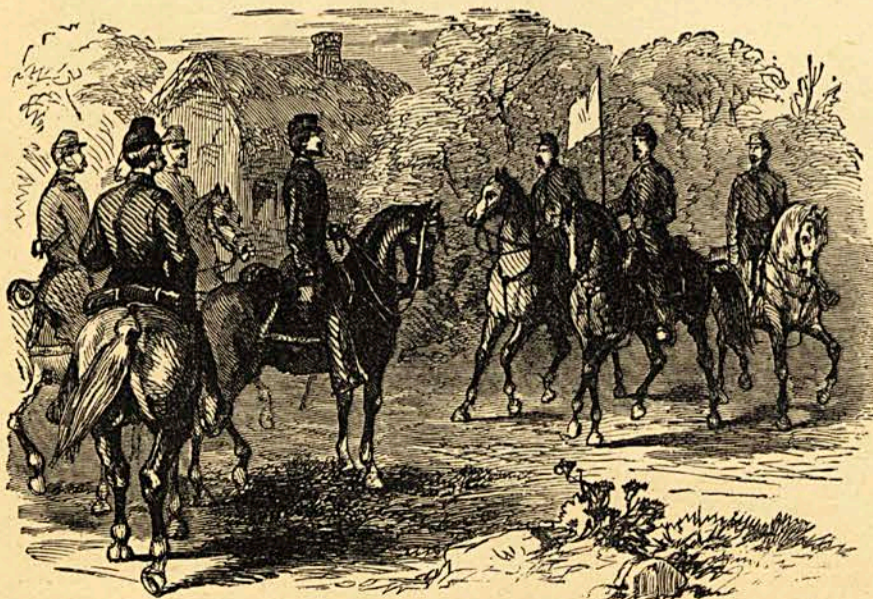




JOHN A. DAHLGREN.

taking a position in the mountainous country to the west. But Grant's left extended too far westward to permit of this without great hazard. To compel him to contract his lines, drawing in his left, Lee planned a bold attack on his right, which was executed in the night of the 24th. Large numbers of deserters had recently left the Confederate army and walked across to Grant's lines, bringing their arms with them, and this circumstance was now used for a ruse. At a point where the hostile lines were not more than 100 yards apart, some of General Gordon's men walked out to the National picket-line, as if they were deserters, seized the pickets, and sent them back as prisoners. Then a column charged through the gap, surprised the men in the main line, and captured a section of the works. But the Confederates were headed off in both directions, and a large number of guns were soon planted where they could sweep the ground that had been captured. A line of intrenchments was thrown up in the rear, and the survivors of the charging column found themselves where they could neither go forward nor retreat nor be reinforced. This affair cost the Confederates about 4000 men, and inflicted a loss of 2000 upon the National army.

Grant, instead of contracting his lines, was making dispositions to extend them. Three divisions



A FLAG OF TRUCE.

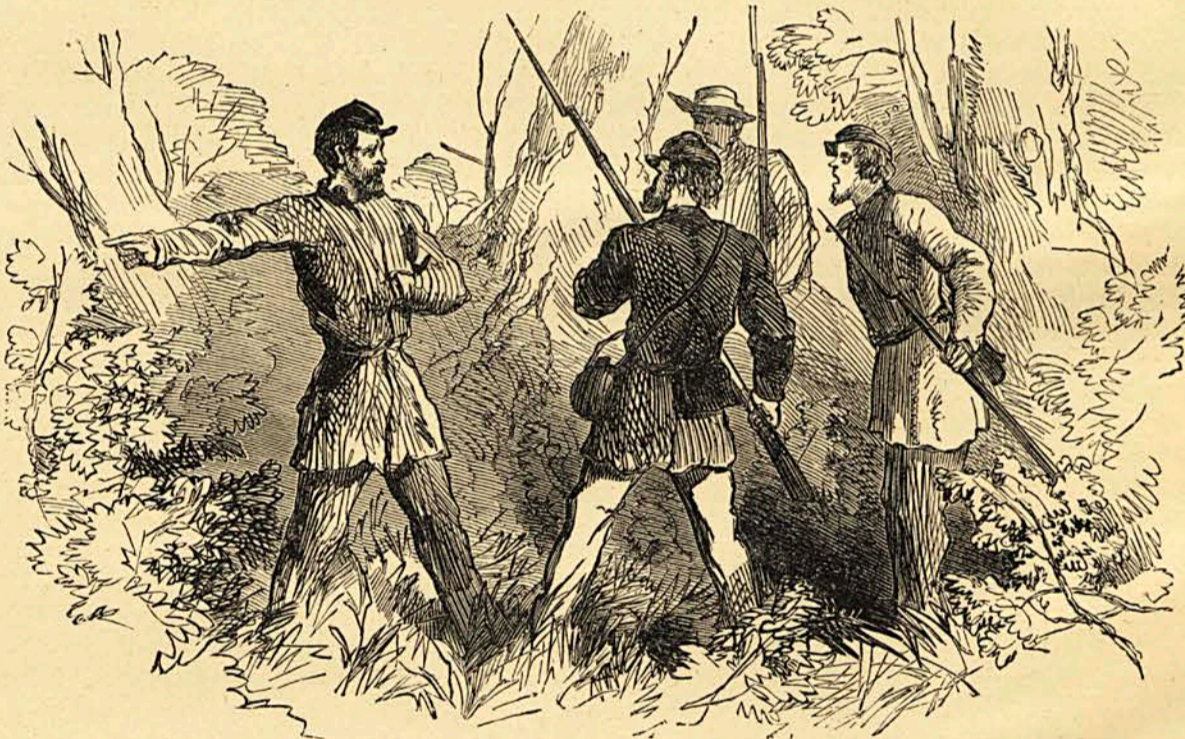
under General E. O. C. Ord were brought from his right in the night of the 27th and placed on his extreme left, while a movement was planned for the 29th by which that wing was to be pushed out to the Southside Railroad. When the day arrived, heavy rains had made the ground so soft that the roads had to be corduroyed before the artillery could be dragged over them. But the army was used to this sort of work, and performed it with marvelous quickness.

Grant's extreme left was now held by his most energetic lieutenant, Sheridan, with his magnificent cavalry. By Grant's orders, Sheridan made a march through Dinwiddie Court House, to come in upon the extreme Confederate right at Five Forks, which he struck on the 31st. He had no difficulty in driving away the Confederate cavalry; but when a strong infantry was encountered he was himself driven back, and called for help. Grant sent the Fifth Corps to his assistance; but it was unusually slow in moving, and was stopped by the loss of a bridge at Gravelly Run, so that it was midday of April 1st before Sheridan

taken. Sheridan's loss was about 1000. In the hour of victory came orders from Sheridan relieving Warren of his command, because of that officer's slowness in bringing his corps to the attack.

Judging that Lee must have drawn forces from other parts of his line to strengthen his right, Grant followed up the advantage by attacking Lee's centre at daybreak the next morning, Sunday, April 2, with the corps of Wright and Parke. Both of these broke through the Confederate lines in the face of a musketry fire, took large portions of them in reverse, and captured over 3000 prisoners and several guns. The Second Corps, under General Andrew A. Humphreys, and three divisions under General Ord, made a similar movement, with similar success, Sheridan moved up on the left, and the outer defences of Petersburg were now in the possession of the National forces, who encircled the city with a continuous line from a point on Appomattox River above to one below. In the fighting of this day the Confederate General A. P. Hill was killed.

General Lee now sent a telegram to Richmond, saying that both cities must be evacuated. It was received in church by Mr. Davis, who quietly withdrew without waiting for the service to be finished. As the signs of evacuation became evident to the people, there was a general rush for means of conveyance, and property of all sorts was brought into the streets in confused masses. Committees appointed by the city council attempted to destroy all the liquor, and hundreds of barrels were poured into the gutters. The great tobacco warehouses were set on fire, under military orders, and the iron-clad rams in the river blown up. The next morning a detachment of black troops from General Godfrey Weitzel's command marched into the city.



CAPTAIN FRAZER, OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT, TURNING UPON AND CAPTURING HIS GUARD WHILE BEING CONVEYED TO THE CONFEDERATE CAMP.

began to get it in hand. Lee had strengthened the force holding Five Forks; but Sheridan, when his troops were all up, late in the afternoon, opened the battle of a well-conceived plan. Engaging the enemy with his cavalry in front, he used the Fifth Corps as if it were his immense right arm, swinging it around so as to embrace and crush the Confederate force. With bloody but brief fighting the manœuvre was successful; Five Forks was secured, and more than 5000 prisoners were

Lee, with the remnant of his army, fled westward, still keeping up the organization, though his numbers were constantly diminishing by desertion, straggling and capture. Grant, in close pursuit, moved mainly on a parallel route south of Lee's, attacking vigorously whenever any portion of the hostile forces approached near enough. Some of these engagements were very sharply contested, and as the men on both sides had attained the highest perfection of destructive skill, and were not sheltered by intrenchments, the losses were severe, and the 70 miles of the race was a long track of blood. There were collisions at Jetersville, Detonville, Deep Creek, Sailor's Creek, Paine's Cross Roads and Farmville; the most important being that at Sailor's Creek, where Custer broke the Confederate line, capturing 400 wagons, 16 guns and many prisoners, and then the Sixth Corps came up and captured the whole of Ewell's corps, including Ewell himself and four other generals. Lees was