**The 47th Virginia Infantry Regiment**

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**Summarized by Ley Watson**

**Contents:**   
[**The 47th Virginia**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#1)   
[**Along the Potomac**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#2)   
[**The Peninsula Campaign**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#3)   
[**Seven Days**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#4)   
[**Cedar Mountain to Second Manassas**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#5)   
[**Sharpsburg**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#6)   
[**Fredericksburg**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#7)   
[**Winter Quarters**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#8)   
[**Chancellorsville**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#9)   
[**Gettysburg**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#10)   
[**Fall and Winter, 1863 – 1864**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#11)   
[**Overland Campaign**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#12)   
[**Petersburg**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#13)   
[**The End**](http://www.47thva.org/pages/history.html#14)   
    
 

**The 47th Virginia**

**The 47th Virginia Infantry Regiment was organized on June 11, 1861 and was accepted into service by the Confederate States of America on July 1, 1861.  Originally the 47th contained ten (10) companies, A to K.  However, at one time or another, the 47th had sixteen different companies in its official table of organization.**

**During its existence, at least 1,414 men served in the 47th with a mean age of 24 years, with the most common ages being 18, 19 and 22 years of age. The youngest recorded members were 15 years old (Samuel C. Anderson, George W. Carter, Alvardo D. Jett and Warner S. Sisson) and the oldest George W. Lewis at 57 years old.**

**Civilian occupation of the soldiers of the 47th was a cross section of the civilian activities in the Northern Neck of Virginia.  Of the 443 occupations recorded, 163 were farmers, 142 were laborers, 30 were farm managers, 19 were carpenters, 12 watermen, 7 merchants and 4 teachers, as well as an assortment of other tradesmen.**

**Along the Potomac**

**From March 1861 to May 1862, the 47th manned various batteries of cannon at Aquia Creek Landing.  At the convergence of the Aquia Creek and the Potomac River (10 miles north of Fredericksburg) was the terminus of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Rail Road (“RF&P”).  This route served as the main transportation line from Washington D.C. to the Capital of Virginia at Richmond.  Packet boats moved along the Potomac between Aquia and Washington, where the RF&P picked up the traffic.**

**The boat traffic on the Potomac also served to bring goods and supplies to the port of Washington, just below the fall line of the Potomac, making the river navigable to Washington from the Chesapeake Bay.**

**Once war commenced, the Confederate states established batteries along the Potomac to harass and hopefully blockade good from reaching Washington.  The 47th, (an Infantry unit) manned four batteries at Aquia Landing. The Stafford Guards (Company I) manned battery no. 1. They met with mixed success.**

**In May 1861, Colonel George W. Richardson assumed command of the 47th. While records of the 47th’s service along the Potomac are sketchy, other units in the vicinity lost approximately one man per day to fever and other sickness.  Engagement with various ships of the Union flotilla included:**

**•     Aquia - May 31, 1861 – USS Thomas Freeborn, Resolute and Anacostia – Two-hour engagement, one Union soldier wounded.**   
**•     Aquia - June 1, 1861 – USS Anacostia, Pawnee, Reliance and Freeborn – Five-hour engagement with damage to the earthworks, railroad**   
**and buildings.  The only casualties were Confederate, a horse and a chicken.**   
**•     Mathias Point – June 28, 1861 - USS Thomas Freeborn – Union forces attempted a landing to establish a batter position.  Reinforced**   
**Confederates arrived to force the landing party off shore with a Union Commander Ward killed by a Confederate sharpshooter.**

**In late March of 1862, Col. Richardson marched the 47th to Richmond, in defense of the city from McClellan’s advance up the peninsula.**

**The Peninsula Campaign**

**In March of 1862, General George McClellan amassed his 100,000 man Army of the Potomac in and around Hampton Roads.  His objective was to take Richmond.  On April 1, 1862, McClellan and his staff left Fortress Monroe, heading up the Peninsula of Virginia to Richmond. At this, the 47th abandoned its batteries on the Potomac and left for Richmond. As the 47th marched to Richmond, they numbered approximately 1,000 officers and men, the most they would ever have.**

**Shortly after their arrival in Richmond, the 47th was loaded on boats and were transported down the James River, to a point near Yorktown. At about the same time thirty skilled laborers from the 47th were assigned to the shipyard in Fredericksburg, then Richmond, to construct gunboats.  These men served at the shipyard until the end of the war, never returning to the 47th.**

**Upon arrival near Yorktown, the regiment became lost en-route and camped at Lee’s Farm.  The men held an election of officers from April 30 to May 2, 1862.  While most of the company grade officers were re-elected.  The field grade officers were not so lucky, Colonel Richardson was re-placed, with Major Robert M. Mayo.  Many other field grade officers were not re-elected.**

**In addition to the upheaval of officer changes, the conscription law of 1862 exempted men from service with 20 or more slaves.  Many referred to the war as that of a “rich man” or “a poor man’s fight”.  The conscript law also exempted men over 35 from service, creating additional dissension in the ranks.  On May 2nd, they broke camp at Lee’s Farm and marched to the woods behind the Lebanon Church, remaining there until May 4th.**

**Just as McClellan was prepared to strike Yorktown, Confederate commander General Joseph Johnston withdrew his force of 10,000 men, moving toward Richmond.  The 47th was on the road to West Point, Virginia by 1:30 a.m., serving as the rear guard for the army.  Throughout the 5th, 6th and 7th of May, the army, with the 47th at the rear guard, moved to Richmond, stopping at New Kent Court House on May 8th.  Lt. Ward, of the 47th, reported the men were starving with only five crackers and a mug of rice for breakfast.  By May 18th, the army was within two miles of Richmond and, thanks to the slowness of McClellan to act, the Confederate forces now numbered 60,000.**

**By May 30th, the Army of the Potomac was in an awkward position.  A torrential rainstorm soaked Virginia that day and the Chickahominy River was a torrent. Three corps of the army was on the north bank of the Chickahominy River and two corps were stranded on the south bank, near Seven Pines.**

**At 6:00 a.m. on May 31st, the 47th, along with the remainder of General Gustavus Smith’s division, marched cross country and headed down Nine Mile Road to Fair Oaks. General Pettigrew’s brigade, including the 47th, was place at the fork of Nine Mile Road and New Bridge Road.  Smith’s Division was to hold, in support of action to the Confederate right at Seven Pines, which was to start that morning.  By 4:00 p.m., nothing had occurred, General Johnston ordered Smith’s Division to attack. In the fight, Peddigrew’s Brigade found itself in an inverted “L”, fighting in two directions, taking the full effect of the Union fire.  While their braver was evidenced by how close the Brigade came to the Union line, the fire was merciless.  As the line broke, soldiers took cover and retreated in fragments.  Newly elected officer, most with no military training, did not attempt to rally the troops.  After an hour and one half, General Smith recalled the Division, returning them to their original position from that morning.  The 47th had seen “the elephant”.  Casualties were relatively light, numbering approximately 30 killed and wounded.**

**While Seven Pines was a tactical defeat for the Confederacy, it did not prompt McClellan to take advantage of the situation.  During the battle, General Johnston was wounded.  As a result, General Robert E. Lee was assigned command of the Army of Northern Virginia on June 1, 1862.**

**In mid June, the 47th Virginia was transferred to become part of an all Virginia brigade, composed of 40th and 55th Virginia Regiments.  This Brigade was assigned to General Field, becoming the First Brigade under General A.P. Hill and his “Light Division”.**

**Seven Days**

**General Lee’s first action, in defense of Richmond, was to construct entrenchments in front of the city.  These entrenchments allowed him to defend the city with relatively few men, leaving the remainder for offensive actions.**

**Lee’s plan was to attack McClellan’s supply line, from White House, Virginia on the York River, and make it impossible for him to remain in front of Richmond.  On June 24th, General A.P. Hill gave orders to cook two days rations and march to Meadow Bridge, On the 25th, Hill and his division were at the south end of Meadow Bridge, expecting to attack at 8:00 a.m. on the 36th.  At 3:00 p.m. on June 26th, Hill had not received the order to attack from General Jackson and ordered the attack, on his own.  The 40th, 55th and 47th Virginia Infantry Regiments dashed across Meadow Bridge, rolling up the Union pickets through the town of Mechanicsville.  The corduroy road from White House was now clear for D.H. Hill’s Division to join the rest of the corps.**

**After passing through Mechanicsville, the brigade pushed down the road to Ellyson’s Mill.  Once near Beaver Dam Creek, the 47th came under heavy fire from Union batteries, on the north side of the creek.  General Field deployed his brigade with the 40th and 47th to the left and the 55th and 60th to the right.  As the men advanced, they had to cover almost a mile of open ground, prior to reaching the creek.  The men withstood destructive artillery fire to reach the creek.  Once there, the men exchanged musket fire with the Union troops until 9:00 p.m., sleeping on their arms.**

**The next morning (June 27th), A.P. Hill determined that the creek was actually a nearly impassable swamp. In the heat of the battle, the Confederate second battle line would fire over Field’s first battle line.  The men were forced to load lying down.  Even so, several were killed by friendly fire. Along the whole front, the battle was going awry for the Confederates.  General Lee regrouped his command and, within twelve hours, was pursuing the Union forces towards Gaines Mill.**

**The Union soldiers fell back to form up on the bank of Boatswain Swamp.  Upon reaching the edge of the swamp, realizing the Union position could not be easily taken, General Andersen deployed his brigade to the left of the road, with Field’s brigade to the right of the road.  At 2:00 p.m., the brigades advance to within 100 yards of the Union position in a hail of fire.  They lost cohesion in the execution of the charge and the lines broke.  The brigades, including the 47th, returned to the edge of the supporting tree line.  The 47th lost 34 men killed, wounded and captured.**

**The 47th, along with the rest of Field’s brigade, and Anderson’s brigade, remained at Gaines Mill Battlefield for the remainder of the 27th and all of June 28th, to bury the dead and tend the wounded.  On the 29th, the 47th reformed and marched down the Darbytown Road to Frayser’s Farm, where the Union forces were attempting to make a stand.  The 47th marched 14 miles on the 29th and 6 more miles on the 30th.**

**In mid afternoon on June 30th, Hill’s Light Division attacked two batteries of Union artillery, reeking havoc on the Confederate line.  At 4:00 p.m., Field’s brigade, with the 22nd, 40th, 47th, 55th and 60th charged through Wilcox’s brigade and down the Long Bridge Road.  Field’s Brigade advanced so far and so quickly, that the enemy was between their supporting regiment.  With a final charge, the Brigade captured the Union batteries and broke their infantry support.  Upon capturing the batteries, the men of the 47th put their Potomac experience to good use, turning the cannons on their former owners.**

**The Light Division slept in the field the night of June 30th, expecting to continue the battle the next day.  During the night, the Union forces retreated to Malvern Hill.  The Light Division was kept in reserve, the following day, sparing them the slaughter of the Battle of Malvern Hill.**

**The Light Division pursued McClellan’s army on July 4th through 6th, to Harrison’s Landing.  On July 9th, the 47th and the Light Division returned to a camp near Laurel Hill, five miles south of Richmond.   There the men took a three week rest.  The strength of the 47th at Frayser’s Farm was 156, down from the 1,000 who left Stafford.**

**Cedar Mountain to Second Manassas**

**During dress parade on July 27th, the Light Division, including Field’s Brigade, was informed they had been assigned to the corps of General Thomas J. Jackson.  On July 29th, the 47th marched to Richmond and boarded rail cars for their trip north.  That evening, the train stopped in Gordonsville, where the men disembarked and rested for the night.  They were exhausted.  Numbering approximately 350, the 47th slept in the woods, near the track.**

**On August 7th, General Jackson gave orders for the march to Culpeper, Virginia.  Field’s Brigade once again served as rear guard, not leaving Gordonsville until the evening of the 7th.  The Corps reached Orange Court House on the morning of August 8th, continuing to march to the sound of guns on the 9th.  Late in the day, the 47th arrived on the battlefield at Cedar Mountain.  The men suffered from the heat and dust of serving as the rear guard yet General Field formed his brigade to chase the retreating enemy down the Culpeper Court House Road.  Their assault was slowed by the carnage left on the battlefield as well as the opportunity for the Confederates to acquire some desperately needed food and equipment from the retreating Union army.  Field’s Brigade made chase for approximately a mile, supported by Pegram’s artillery.  All were halted by the Union rear guard and the fire from four batteries of artillery.**

**After the battle of Cedar Mountain, General Jackson needed reinforcements.  These arrived on August 16th and the offensive continued.**

**The Corps marched to the south slope of Clark’s Mountain, near Orange Court House, on the 16th.  On the 19th to Sommerville Ford, on the Rapidan River, then, on the 20th and 21st chased the Union forces through Stevensburg, Brandy Station and on to the Rappahannock River.  Once north of the Rappahannock, the Federals used the river as a shield, keeping Jackson’s forces from crossing by guarding every ford they could.**

**On August 24th, Field’s Brigade reached Waterloo Bridge.  The Union soldiers were trying to burn the bridge, to destroy another point of crossing.  The battle lasted the entire day, with the brigade preventing the burning of the bridge.**

**At 2:30 a.m. on August 25th, the Brigade was awakened and ordered to march west, up the Rappahannock.  General Jackson planned to flank the Union army and destroy their supply stores at Manassas Junction.  Although the men rested for ten minutes every hour, they covered 26 miles on the 25th and 30 miles on the 26th, in the heat and dust of a Virginia August, arriving at Manassas Junction on the morning of the 27th.**

**Upon entering the yard at Manassas Junction, the 47th was treated to the sight of mountains of food, clothing and equipment, as well as an enemy who was not expecting and entire Corps of Confederates.  After repulsing an initial counter attack by a New Jersey Brigade, the men enjoyed the spoils and burned what they could not consume or carry.  The Confederate Quartermaster had made no provision to secure and distribute such spoils.**

**At 1:00 a.m. on August 28th, the Light Division moved to Centerville.  Later in the morning they proceeded down the Warrenton Turnpike, skirmishing with the Union army across the Stone Bridge.  Afterwards, they retired to the unfinished railroad cut, assuming a defensive position.  On August 29th, the Union forces mounted four attacks against the position held by the 47th Virginia and the Light Division.  The third assault caused the Light Division to retire slightly, regroup and take a Union battery.  Thinking that this indicated that the Confederates were worn down, the fourth attack came in the evening, and with everything the Union soldiers could muster.  General A.P. Hill called up support for the Light Division and the Union assault was broken.**

**General Field was seriously wounded in the action of the 29th, and was replaced by the commander of the 40th Virginia, Colonel John M. Brockenbrough.**

**On August 30th, Field’s (Brockenbrough’s) Brigade was held in reserve at the edge of the woods behind Archer’s Brigade.  About 2:30 p.m., Col. Brockenbrough received urgent orders to support General Starke’s Brigade near the center of the Confederate line, in a deep railroad cut.  The Louisianans had run out of ammunition and were fighting by throwing rocks at the advancing Union force.  Brockenbrough’s Brigade arrived as the Union soldiers were in mid charge, launching a volley of fire into the surprised attackers.  The 47th, along with the entire Brigade crashed into the attacking Union line, breaking them.  They continued on, breaking the second Union line, chasing them into some woods.  The Confederates returned to the rail cut, and relieved the Louisiana Brigade to replenish its ammunition.**

**Later on the 30th, the Union launched a massive attack on the rail cut.  Fire from flanking Confederate artillery batteries did horrible damage to the Union force.  As the Union line broke, then retreated 50,000 Confederates stood and charged, driving everything before them.**

**The morning of August 31st, Brockenbrough’s Brigade led the pursuit of the Union army, in the pouring rain, down the Little River Turnpike, though Chantilly toward Fairfax Courthouse.  The pursuit resumed on September 1st, to Ox Hill, where the Union forces took a defensive position.  In a pouring thunderstorm, the two march weary sides clashed for a brief period before the storm and darkness put an end to the fight.**

**On September 2nd, the Union army retreated back to the Washington defenses.**

**In two months of hard fighting, the Army of Northern Virginia had pushed the Army of the Potomac from the doorstep of Richmond to the defenses of Washington.**

**Sharpsburg**

**After Second Manassas, the Army of Northern Virginia was in dire need of rest and re-supply.  This was not to be.  General Lee had three choices:**

**1. Return to the defenses of Richmond,**   
**2. Attack Washington, or**   
**3. Invade Maryland.**

**The Confederate government supported invading the north, as it might swing sentiment to end the war. A move into Maryland could supply fresh animals and the untouched countryside would provide sufficient forage for the army. The army started north on September 3rd.**

**Brockenbrough’s marched through Dranesville and reached Leesburg on September 4th.  They continued forward, reaching the Potomac River on September 5th, crossing at White’s Crossing on the 6th and moved through Buckeystown.  They reached Frederick City on the 7th, resting there until September 10th.**

**On September 10th, Brockenbrough’s Brigade and the rest of Jackson’s Corps set off to capture Harper’s Ferry.  The Light Brigade re-crossed the Potomac River at Williamsport on the 11th, and through Martinsburg on the 12th, cutting of the Union’s avenue of retreat.  Meanwhile, the other divisions moved to occupy the Maryland Heights.  While the Union garrison at Harper’s Ferry was entrenched, Jackson intended to make this an artillery battle.   When the cannons opened fire from the Bolivar and Maryland Heights, the garrison quickly surrendered.**

**At 7:30 a.m. on the morning of September 17th, Jackson received and urgent message from General Lee to move towards Sharpsburg.  Jackson’s Corps, save Thomas’ Brigade, covered 17 miles in 7 and one half hours, arriving on the battlefield at 3:00 pm.  Hill deployed his Light Division to the right, assigning Pender’s and Brockenbrough’s Brigade to anchor the end of the line.  The remainder of the Division moved forward, crushing the Union line.  Afterwards, the 47th and rest Brockenbrough’s brigade moved to protect the Snavely Ford of the Antietam River.  The men were so exhausted they slept where they fell, too tired to cook rations. The armies remained in the same positions during the day of the 18th.  Late in the evening, the Army of Northern Virginia move backed towards Virginia soil, crossing the Potomac River at 3:00 a.m. on September 19th.  Later in the morning, the Union forces crossed in pursuit at Boteler’s Ford.  The captured five guns and forced the rear guard to retreat.  Jackson was furious.  He ordered A.P. Hill to push the Union vanguard back to Maryland.  Hill formed the Light Division into two battle lines, and accomplished his orders.**

**Jackson’s Corps moved back towards Winchester, camping at Bunker Hill on September 29th, remaining there until October 16th.  On the 18th, Brockenbrough’s Brigade was ordered to tear up railroad track between Martinsburg and Harper’s Ferry.  Once accomplished, the Brigade rested until October 31st.**

**During the Sharpsburg campaign, the Confederate Quartermaster Corps could not perform.  The men lived off of green corn and green apples.  Dysentery wreaked havoc with the men.  Shoes were in short supply and many of the men were barefoot and many had clothes that were filthy or worn out.**

**Between October 31st and November 10th, Brockenbrough’s brigade served on picket duty at Snicker’s Ford, on the Shenandoah River, then Moved to Stephenson’s Depot, near Winchester, from November 10th to the 22nd.**

**Fredericksburg**

**During November of 1862, Lincoln named General Ambrose Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac.  Burnside did not attempt to hide the fact that he intended to take Richmond, via Fredericksburg, moving his 118,000, man army to Fredericksburg on November 17th.  To General Lee’s Amazement, Burnside stopped in Stafford. The pontoon bridges he needed to for the Rappahannock River were not on the scene.**

**General Lee shifted Longstreet east from Culpeper to block any potential crossings upstream from Fredericksburg, and ordered Jackson to move to Fredericksburg from the Valley of Virginia.  Upon arrival, Jackson’s Corps took up a position on the Confederate far right, near Hamilton’s Crossing at Prospect Hill.  The 47th and 22nd Virginia were positioned in a shallow ditch, at the foot of the hill.  The artillery, 40th and 55th Virginia were on the hill, with a wide view of the RF&P Railroad, to the Rappahannock River.**

**On December 11th, Burnside’s great army stirred.  On the morning of the 12th, the Union soldiers crossed the rived and massed an attack.  The artillery pushed the first charge back on Prospect Hill.  About midday, the Union attacked again.  The 47th and 22nd waited fro the lines to close in and devastated the ranks with multiple volleys.  Although the right held, General George Meade’s men broke through the Confederate line between Archer’s and Lane’s Brigades.  The 47th and 22nd were recalled to behind Prospect to help seal off the break through, loosing the 55th and 40th in the dense woods.  The two companies struck the flank of the attacking Union soldiers, rolling them up.  The Union troops retreated to the RF&P cut, and then retreated back to the river.  The 47th were 7 killed and 38 wounded.**

**On December 17th, Brockenbrough’s Brigade was ordered to Port Royal, down river from Fredericksburg, to check rumors of a Federal crossing.  The rumors were not true.**

**Jackson’s Corps move into winter quarters near Moss Neck.**

**Winter Quarters**

**Camp Gregg, located approximately 10 miles south of Fredericksburg, was home for over four months. During this period, the men built log huts and rested from the long campaigns of 1862.  The men were paid eight months of back pay ($88 for privates).  With soap costing $1.25 per bar and six apples for a dollar, the money did not go far.**

**Since the 47th was so close to home, clothing and food delicacies could be ferried into camp.  Snowball fights and camp musical and entertainment productions were regular fare.  Food and clothing were, however, scarce.  General Lee sent Longstreet’s, Pickett’s and Hoods Divisions south of the James to collect forage.**

**Shirkers became another issue, related to being camped so close to home.  General Hill sent out parties to collect the missing men.  Some were tried for desertion. Most punishment consisted of riding a wooden horse.  Some were sentenced to hard labor or a term at Castle Thunder prison in Richmond.**

**As winter turned to spring, anticipation of the renewal of the campaigns was high.**

**Chancellorsville**

**In January of 1863, Burnside was replaced by “Fighting” Joseph Hooker, as commander of the Army of the Potomac.  Hooker studied the situation at Fredericksburg and determined that a flanking maneuver would be the best approach.**

**On April 27, 1863, Hooker sent 90,000 men west of Fredericksburg to cross the Rappahannock.  General Sedgewick was sent to Hamilton’s Crossing, south of Fredericksburg, with a small force.  Lee recognized this as a feint, realizing Chancellorsville was the object of the larger movement.**

**General Lee left Jubal Early’s Division in Fredericksburg to contain Sedgewick and marched the remainder of his army west, towards Chancellorsville.  With approximately 450 men present for duty, the 47th and the Light Division, left camp, morale high from rest and the successful campaigns of 1862.**

**On May 1, the Light Division was headed west on the Orange Plank Road.  Four miles from Chancellorsville, A.P. Hill deployed his men and soon met Union skirmishers.  Jackson ordered a halt and everything became quiet.  The men slept in the field, on their arms, that night.**

**The evening of May 1st, General Lee decided to split his army a second time.  Intelligence showed that Hooker’s right, anchored near a dense wooded area called the Wilderness, was “in the air”.  Without support from a geographical buffer (river or mountain) or a western facing front, Hooker was vulnerable.  Lee decided to send Jackson and his 24,000 effectives around the front of the enemy, to attack the flank.  Lee would remain with his 14,000 men, gambling that Hooker would not realize how few men were at his front.**

**Jackson’s men started out at 4:30 a.m. on May 2nd.  The Light Division stepping off at 11:00 a.m.  The column marched ten miles before being given a two hour break.  As they came up on the Orange Turnpike, Jackson had successfully moved his men to Hooker’s flank without being detected.  Putting the men in battle line took time.  As darkness approached, Jackson called for the attack at 5:15 p.m.  A wall of gray and butternut rolled up the Union line, catching the men preparing rations for the dinner meal.  It was a full route.  By 7:15 p.m., Jackson’s lines were completely disorganized.  The Light Division, which up to this point had been held in reserve, fell into line, marching up the Plank Road.  As they approached the Orange Plank Road, muskets, accouterments and all manner of items were strewn about, from the retreating Union soldiers.  With the 55th in front, as they passed the ruins of the Van Wert House, they encountered heavy artillery and musket fire.  The 55th took heavy losses and the 47th suffered from the artillery fire.  The Light Division found a small open space, near and old school, and bivouacked for the night.**

**Later that evening, General Jackson was wounded while performing recon.  As Jackson was removed to a field hospital, General JEB Stuart assumed command of Jackson’s Corps.  A short while later, A.P. Hill was also wounded.  General Henry Heth took command of the Light Division.**

**On the morning of May 3rd, the attack was resumed.  The Light Brigade advanced down the road, then through woods and bushes.  Pender and Lane advanced on the Union position and were repulsed.  At that point, Brockenbrough halted his men’s advance.  The 55th and 22nd, however, did not receive the message to halt and charged the Union position alone and unsupported.  The effects were devastating.  Brockenbrough then called the 40th and the 47th to take the position.  The Union had 29 guns, supported by infantry, on a hill called Fairview.  The two regiments attacked under merciless fire, pouring volley after volley into the enemy.  The previous assaults had softened the Union position and the Union soldiers ran as the Confederates approached the hill.  Without support, however, the victors had to retire.  Later on the 3rd, the 40th and 47th were again ordered to re-take the hill.  They held Fairview for the remainder of the day, as the Confederate forces cleared the remainder of the filed.**

**The Union arm dug in north of the Orange Plank Road, and held their position on May 4th and 5th.  During the evening of the 5th, Joe Hooker lost his stomach for fighting, crossing to the north side of the Rappahannock.**

**The Light Division bivouacked at the intersection of the Orange Plank and Bullock Road May 4th through 6th, marching back to Camp Gregg on May 7th.**

**Casualties for the 47th, during the Chancellorsville Campaign were four killed and forty-eight wounded.**

**After Chancellorsville, A.P. Hill was given command of the Third Corps and Henry Heth took command of the division to include Brockenbrough’s Brigade and the 47th Virginia.**

**Gettysburg**

**The first week of June 1863, General Lee sent Longstreet and Ewell to again invade the north.  A.P. Hill and his Corps were sent to the Rappahannock River.  Their job was to convince Hooker that the entire Confederate army was still in and around Fredericksburg.  The 47th, along with the rest of the Division, built entrenchments and other fortifications.  Hooker felt the force facing him was too strong, and never attacked.  During the night of June 13th, Hooker army left the Rappahannock to chase the Army of Northern Virginia.**

**On the morning of June 14th, Brockenbrough’s Brigade and Heth’s Division, left camp on the Rappahannock and started out to catch the main body of Lee’s army.  The weather was hot and oppressive.  Heth marched his men, starting before dawn and resting in early afternoon, covering 12 miles per day.**

**The 47th marched through Chancellorsville, Front Royal, White Post and Berryville, crossing the Potomac River on June 26th, in the rain.  The march continued through Chambersburg and Fayetteville with the Corps camping approximately 65 miles from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.  By June 29th, A.P. Hill’s men had reached Cashtown, eight miles north west of Gettysburg, stacking arms at sunset.**

**During the weeks of marching, the Union army had changed commanders again; General George Meade had replaced Joe Hooker.  Meade was now in pursuit of the Army of Northern Virginia.  While Lee had originally intended to send Ewell to Harrisburg, he now ordered his army to stop and consolidate east of the mountains.**

**On June 30th, Heth ordered Pettigrew’s Brigade to Gettysburg, to search for supplies.  On the outskirts of the town, Pettigrew encountered Union cavalry skirmishers and withdrew.  Although Lee had given orders not to engage the enemy until the army was consolidated, Heth was certain that the main body of the Army of the Potomac was at Middleburg.  Since he felt the force was minimal, Heth gave Pettigrew permission to continue into Gettysburg.  On July 1st, Heth started his division into Gettysburg with the order from A.P. Hill to not bring on a general engagement.**

**July 1 was a hot clear day.  As Heth’s Division moved forward, Archer in the lead, they met resistance along Cashtown Pike.  What Archer thought was cavalry, supported by militia was two brigades of Union General Buford’s cavalry with Spencer repeating rifles, supported by the infantry of General Reynolds.  The Union forces easily overran Archer.  Davis’ Brigade initially drove the Union forces back, but they re-grouped and routed the Confederates.  Brockenbrough and Pettigrew moved up to form a new battle line.  Pender’s Division moved up, in support of Heth, and the battle was on.**

**The Brockenbrough/Pettigrew line was along Herr’s Ridge, with the 47th on the far left.  At 2:00 p.m., they stormed McPherson’s Ridge, driving four companies of Union skirmishers from the woods along Willoughby Run. They then advanced across the open field between McPherson’s Ridge and the Cashtown Pike.  As they attacked, fresh Pennsylvanian troops came up and repulsed the Confederate attack.  With the battle raging all around, Brockenbrough had no choice but to attack again.  The second attack met the same fate as the first.**

**Around 3:00 p.m., Brockenbrough mounted a third attack, this time breaking the Union line, their men fleeing to the rear.  Exhausted and low on ammunition, Scales’ Brigade moved through the Virginians, in pursuit of the Union forces in retreat.  They continued through town and on toward Cemetery Ridge, where the advance stopped.  The 47th had suffered ten killed and thirty-eight wounded on the first day.**

**On July 2nd, Heth’s Division remained where they finished the day on July 1st, in reserve.  During the night of the 2nd, Heth’s/Pettigrew’s Division moved back to the front, along the reverse slope of Seminary Ridge, opposite the Union force on Cemetery Ridge.**

**The morning of July 3rd opened with General Lee determined to make a frontal assault on the Union position on Cemetery Ridge.  While the attack of that day is identified with the Division of General George Pickett, Pettigrew’s Division and the 47th were also engaged.  The Division held in Spangler’s woods, on the far Confederate left.  At 1:00 p.m., the Confederate artillery opened with a barrage on the Union positions.  The cannonade lasted two hours.  Once stopped, the infantry stepped out into a clear, hot and humid day.  The 47th, and Pettigrew’s Division on the left, were “in the air”.  There was no second battle line of support and was not protected from a flanking by the enemy.**

**Upon stepping off around 3:00 p.m., the 47th and 55th were on the extreme left.  Company commanders did not get the word on keeping in line and fell behind the companies on their right.  Upon noticing the lag in the line, the men were ordered to run to catch up the rest of the line.**

**At least 31 pieces of Union artillery were focused on Brockenbrough’s Brigade, the heaviest in the attack.  Shells ploughed great gaps in the Confederate line.  As the advance approached the burned out Bliss barn, the 47 stopped to redress in a small swale or ditch.  While some men remained in the swale, most continued the attack.  As the proceeded, the line was stretched to meet a Union flank attack.  Once within rifle range, the 47th and 55th came under enfilading fire, and took refuge in a sunken road.  The Virginian’s broke.  After giving chase for about 100 yards, the Union troops turned their attention to Davis’ Brigade, also flanking them.  The entire attack dissolved.**

**The night of July 3rd and the day of the 4th, the Army of Northern Virginia retreated back to Virginia.  Their route took them by way of Fairfield and Waynesboro, to Hagerstown.  Despite the rain, muddy roads and hardships, the 47th reached Hagerstown on July 7th, making camp.  The rains since July 3rd had flooded the Potomac Rived, making the crossing impossible.  On July 10th the army took defensive positions covering Williamsport and Falling Waters.  Brockenbrough’s Brigade, again as rear guard, skirmished with the Union vanguard almost constantly.**

**On July 13th, pontoon bridges were placed at Falling Waters and the army started its crossing of the Potomac, back into Virginia.  Progress was slow, taking the Brigade 12 hours to make 7 miles.  The morning of July 14th found Brockenbrough’s Brigade at the rear guard of the army.  They were ordered to form in a battle line, to the left of the road, to discourage the incessant sniping of the Union skirmishers.  Since tow squadrons of Fitz Lee’s cavalry screened the infantry, no skirmish line was out.  The cavalry, however, had already crossed the river.  The men were allowed to stack arms and sleep.  Their muskets were muddy, unloaded and, in some instances, unfit for service.  At about 11:00 a.m., a force of 50 Union cavalry attacked the sleeping men.  Without their muskets, the Confederates roughed up the Union troopers, capturing a set of colors.  General Pettigrew was mortally wounded in the assault.**

**At Noon, the Union cavalry attacked dismounted, using breech-loading carbines with artillery in support.  Once again Brockenbrough’s Brigade chased them up the road.  At this point, General Hill ordered a recall of the pursuit of the enemy.  Brockenbrough missed the order, allowing his men to continue the assault.  While some of the Brigade did not follow the Union troops, a large number did.  When it was realized that the remainder of the Brigade was not with the forward men, the other had made a dash for the Potomac Crossing.  The 40th 47th and 50th lost their battle flags and over forty-eight of the men were captured.  During the Gettysburg campaign, the Brockenbrough’s Brigade had at least four men killed, eight wounded and one hundred and ninety-eight captured.**

**Fall and Winter, 1863 – 1864**

**Upon crossing the Potomac on July 14th, the 47 headed back to Bunker Hill, where they had camped and rested after the Sharpsburg campaign.  The arrived on July 18th, with the reported strength of the 47th at about 100 men and Brockenbrough’s Brigade at about 300 men.**

**On July 19th, Brigadier General Henry Harrison Walker was named commander of the brigade.  Brockenbrough resigned, noting the young Walker had no campaign or battle experience.**

**Under a new commander, the 47th marched to Winchester on the 21st and to Front Royal on the 22nd.  They continued their march to Flint Hill on the 23rd and, on the 24th, moved out for Culpeper.  While on the march, the Confederates had a brief clash with Custer’s Union cavalry near Gain’s Cross Roads.  The Union troopers were “whipped soundly”.  The men marched the remainder of the day, reaching the Rappahannock River, in Culpeper County. On the 25th, the 47th marched another 10 miles to camp at Pendleton’s farm, near Culpeper Court House.**

**Two problems faced the Confederate command, resting and strengthening the men and filling out the numbers, lost to the attrition of over a year of hard warfare.  General A.P. Hill, working with his commissary, saw to it that the men received rations of both quality and quantity.  To strengthen the spirit of the men, numerous revivals moved through the camps.**

**Through the end of July, drill and inspection occupied the men.  The 47th was called out in support of Anderson’s Division on August 1st, near Brandy Station, as it was reported that Union cavalry were in the area.  By the time the 47th arrived, the fighting was over.  The men returned to camp by about 10:00 p.m.   On August 3rd, the entire 3rd Corps, moved out to Orange Courthouse, where they would remain for the next two months. On September 11th, General Lee, with his daughters inspected the 3rd Corps.**

**During this period, Union General Meade surmised that Lee’s position was too strong to attack.  That all changed in late September.  Two of the Union Corps, under Meade were transferred to another theatre and General Longstreet’s Corps was transferred to Tennessee.  The change nearly equalized the two opposing forces.**

**On October 8th, the 47th and the rest of the Brigade, moved up to the Rapidan River.  On Friday, October 9th Ewell and Hill crossed the Rapidan and moved along the circuitous route toward the Union left.  Lee’s plan was to turn the Union flank, at Culpeper and strike him in retreat.  The 47th spent the night of October 11th at Mitchell’s Station and on the 12th marched through deserted Union camps near Culpeper, spending the night at Hazel Run.  The 47th moved 23 miles on the 13th, picking up Union stragglers and camping near Warrenton on the 13th.  At 5:30 a.m. on the 14th, Heth’s Division hit the road to Bristoe Station.**

**Upon reaching Bristoe Station, it was apparent to Hill the Union army was in full retreat. HE deployed his battle line, Cooke and Heth to the right of the road, Kirkland Walker to the left of the road, hoping to catch the Union forces before they could escape.  As the line deployed, Walker’s Brigade left late and tried to catch up to the remainder of the line.  During the process, Walker was moving through thick underbrush while the troops to his right moved through open fields.  The line had on anchor.  Cooke and Kirkland marched directly into a Union ambush, hiding in a deep railroad embankment.  Desperately behind and out of the line of sight, Walker arrived on the battlefield as Kirkland and Heth had changed direction and falling back.  While the 47th was spared the slaughter inflicted on the other brigades, they covered the retreat of their men, preventing the Union ambush party from inflicting additional damage.**

**The 3rd Corps spent October 15th and 16th, destroying as much of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad as they could.  On the 17th they moved across the Rappahannock, camping near Culpeper for the remainder of the month.**

**On November 7th, Meade and the Union army crossed the Rappahannock.  The 47th was ordered to cook two days rations and at 3:00 a.m. on the 8th, moved out, forming a battle line near Bott’s farm.  While part of Walker’s Brigade brushed with Union cavalry, the men moved on, through the snow to cross the Rapidan, to a former camp, and commenced building winter quarters. Before much progress was made on the huts, Lee ordered the men closer Orange Courthouse on the 11th.**

**Meade again crossed the Rapidan on November 26th at Germanna Ford.  The 47th and the rest of the army broke camp about 4:00 a.m. on the 27th and headed down the Orange Plank Road towards Fredericksburg.  Walker’s Brigade was leading Heth’s Division and, after 15 miles of marching, met with Confederate skirmishers engaged with their Union counterparts.  Hill ordered Walker deployed as skirmishers, 300 yards in front of the main battle line.  The Union skirmishers retreated.  Walker advanced his Brigade to 700 yards in front of the main line and was met with heavy Union fire.  Thirty men were captured almost immediately.  The battle ended with two countermanded advances, since most of the Confederate army could not be brought into battle line.  In the early morning of the 28th, the Confederates moved back across Mine Run and commenced the construction of strong earthworks.  Meade moved forward and determined that the Confederate line was too strong, and entrenched his army.  Until December 1st, both sides exchanged artillery and heavy skirmishing.  Meade retired back across the Rapidan and the 47th moved back to their camp near Orange Court House.**

**The 47th spent the next two weeks building winter shanties, made of mud and logs.  On December 14th, the 47th was informed they would head to the Valley of Virginia.  Walker’s Brigade was told they would not be gone long and left everything not essential in their shanties.  The rode in train cars all day on the 15th, arriving in Staunton that evening.  Upon arrival, they were informed that their services were needed to defend Staunton from Union Cavalry.  On the 16th the Brigade marched to Buffalo Gap, twelve miles west of Staunton.  The Union cavalry never showed.  On the 17th, they backtracked to Staunton.  The men begged shelters from the freezing weather in town or in make shift shanties, just outside of town.**

**Rumors of more Union cavalry, this time from the north, were reported on the 19th.  The Brigade moved up the Valley Pike three miles and on the 20th to Mount Crawford.  On the 21st they moved through Harrisonburg, halting at New Market that evening.  On the 22nd, they marched to Mount Jackson.  It was snowing hard and the men took shelter, staying at Mount Jackson until January 10th.**

**On January 10th, Walker’s Brigade headed back to Staunton.  While they were sure the Union cavalry had skedaddled, they never saw a single trooper.  They reached Staunton on January 12th, 1864.  January 18th saw the Brigade again heading down the Valley Pike.  This time they moved to Cross Keys, arriving on the 19th.  General Early was making a raid and used Walker’s men as a feint.  On January 29th, the 47th finally made winter quarters at Harrisonburg.**

**On March 1, 1864, the joyous 47th and Walker’s Brigade left the Valley to re-join the Army of Northern Virginia.  With the exception of one detour to Charlottesville, to check a Union cavalry advance, arriving at their old camp at Orange Court House after several days.**

**Overland Campaign**

**In May 1864, the Army of Northern Virginia prepared for the spring campaign.  A.P. Hill had improved the condition of his corps, raising the numbers from 11,000, just after Gettysburg, to 22, 000.  The 47th reported 350 present for duty and spirits were high.**

**Over the winter, General Ulysses S. Grant was named overall commander of the Union Army.  Grant elected to personally command the eastern theater, replacing General George Meade.**

**At 9:00 a.m. on May 4th, a signal corpsman on Clarke Mountain, just northwest of Orange Courthouse, signaled that Grant’s blue columns were headed east, moving on Lee’s right.  Two hours later, the 47th and the rest of the 3rd Corps had cooked two days of rations and by 2:00 p.m. were headed down the Orange Plank Road.**

**After 12 miles of marching, the men made camp at Mine Run.  At dawn on May 5th, the men were back on the Orange Plank Road.  About 2:00 p.m., they met the Union advance approximately one-half mile east of Widow Tapp’s farm.  Heth deployed Davis to the left of the road, Cooke straddling the road and Walker to the right of the road, I a scrub forest.  Kirkland remained on the road, in reserve.  Opposing skirmishers exchanged fire at about 4:00 a.m. and continued forward.  Reaching a slight swell, the Confederates placed logs on top of the swell, shielding them from the Union fire.  While they rested, a Vermont brigade charged their position, meeting heavy fire.  After reinforcement, the Vermonters charged again, penetrating Walker’s line, occupying the position of the 40th and 55th Virginia.  The 47th drove the attackers back with the remainder of the brigade infliction flanking fire on Union men.  This exchange occurred in the dense brush, from which the battle received its name “Wilderness”.  Visibility was low and the men moved in the direction of the musket clatter and the smoke.  At 5:00 p.m., a third charge was made on the Confederate line.  It was also repulsed.  Over 10,000 Union troops moved against the 2,500 Confederates.**

**Wilcox’s Division relieved Heth’s Division and commenced digging trenches and log fortifications.  Walker and the 47th were move to the north side of the Orange Plank Road, to the Confederate far left.  Hill informed Walker that Longstreet’s Corps would relieve them the next morning.**

**At dawn on May 6th, fresh Union troops were thrown against the Confederate lines. Overwhelming numbers of blue clad men were sent against their lines.  The Confederate lines broke, Walker’s men moving to the rear one-half mile.  The First Corps, led by Hood’s old Division, arrived on the field just in time to stabilize the Confederate line.  Heth rallied his Division and deployed them north of the Orange Plank Road.  The 47th spent May 7th recovering from the onslaught the day before, lying in their entrenchments.**

**The strong earthworks put up by the Confederates discouraged Grant from another assault.  Grant disengaged at Wilderness and again moved southeast, to the Confederate left, attempting to flank Lee’s army.  After this shift of about eight miles, Lee intercepted the blue army at Spotsylvania Courthouse.  The Third Corps camped at Shady Grove on the 8th and moved to the cross roads, at the Courthouse on the 9th.**

**On May 10th, a Union column was spotted west of the Courthouse.  Lee sent Early to cut them off and sent Heth to Waites Shop to meet a Union advance there.  After marching approximately four miles, Heth encountered the Union advance guard a half-mile south of Talley’s Mill.  Heth deployed his division across Glady’s Run, driving the advance guard before him, all the way to Shady Grove.  Early and Heth continued pressing the Union troops to the north bank of the Po River.  As they retired, Barlow’s Union Division was trying to cross the Po when Heth hit them at 2:30 p.m.  The Union Brigade repulsed two attacks, before Heth’s men enveloped the Union soldiers, pushing them across the river.**

**General Walker was wounded in the foot during the fighting.  The foot was amputated and Walker was out of action.  Colonel Robert M. Mayo would be assigned command of Walker’s Brigade.**

**On May 11th, Mayo’s Brigade was back at Spotsylvania Court House.  That night, a torrential rain soaked the men and their ammunition.  Before dawn on the 12th Hancock’s Second Corps struck the salient in the Confederate line, referred to as the “Bloody Angle”.  Heth’s Division, less Mayo’s Brigade was rushed in as support, where Hancock had struck.  The 47th, and Mayo’s Brigade, were held in support of Poague’s Artillery three-quarters of a mile away from the Bloody Angle in a small salient, fronted by woods.  With Lane’s Brigade to the right, Archer’s Brigade to the left, and Poague’s artillery raking canister fire, the small Confederate force repulsed two attacks by the three blue waves of Burnside’s Ninth Corps.   Casualties of the 47th were one killed, one mortally wounded, six wounded and one captured.  Heavy rain and the need for reinforcements caused Grant to suspend operations.**

**Grant moved east to attempt another flanking maneuver on May 20th.  The 47th left the salient they had occupied since May 12th, and moved to Mitchell’s Shop on May 21st, having marched 11 miles.  They marched 15 miles on the 22nd, camping two miles south of the North Anna River.  They marched to Jerico Mills on the 23rd, in support of Wilcox’s Division, who was engaged by the enemy.  The fight was over by the time they arrived.  Rather than attack the entrenched Confederates, Grant again moved to Lee’s right.**

**On May 24th Colonel Birkett Fry was promoted and given command of Mayo’s Brigade and the 47th Virginia.**

**The 47th moved out at 9:00 a.m. on the 27th,and marched eight miles to Ashland.  The next morning they marched another eight miles, stopping at Shady Grove Church, about two miles north of Mechanicsville.  At 5:30 a.m. on the 29th, the 47th marched two and one-half miles to the Hanovertown Road and Totopottomoy Creek.  The men established a line of battle and commenced digging entrenchments and fortifications.  On May 31st, Fry’s and Cook’s Brigades were sent in support of Breckenridge’s Brigade, heavily engaged by the enemy.  By the time they arrived, the crisis was over.  The two brigades returned to their original positions near daybreak on June 1st.  After resting for several hours, Fry’s brigade broke camp at 10:00 a.m. and was again on the march, this time towards Hundley’s Corner.  Here they relieved Early’s Division, becoming the left flank of the Confederate line.  That evening they skirmished with Union cavalry, which was easily repulsed.**

**The 3rd Corps, with the exception of Heth’s Division, moved behind the Confederate line to the right.  Heth’s Division was placed under the command of General Jubal Early.  Heth’s and Rode’s Divisions advanced against Burnside’s forces around 5:00 p.m. They swept over Burnside’s forces, to their front and captured hundreds of prisoners.  The men arose early o the 3rd, and commenced building entrenchments and fortifications, expecting an attack.  Frye’s Brigade was the left flank of Lee’s army, anchored at Totopottomy Creek.  Heth’s and Rodes’ Divisions fought off two attacks by the Union troops.  As the attacks tapered off, late in the day, The Confederate right was struck by a Union cavalry charge.  Walker’s Brigade fought of the cavalry and the infantry attack, for which the cavalry were attempting to cover.**

**In the action around Cold Harbor, had four killed, two mortally wounded and one captured.**

**Petersburg**

**During the night of June 12th, Grant moved from Cold Harbor and commenced a crossing of the James River, with Petersburg as his target.  Three railroads, and many roads for regular traffic converged at Petersburg.  On June 13th, Heth’s Division crossed the Chickahominy River, catching what they thought was Grant’ flanking movement at White Oak Swamp.  Only minor skirmishing took place.**

**It was not until June 16th that Lee discovered over half of the Union army had crossed the James.  On the 18th, Heth’s Brigade made the 20 mile march to Drewery’s Bluff, crossing the James and moving within one mile of Petersburg.  They immediately began digging trenches and preparing for the arrival of Grant.  The 3rd Corps had beaten Grant, saving Petersburg from capture.  The men were tired and hungry.  Yet for more that two day, the 47th and the remainder of the Corps, improved their fortifications and dug in for a long and drawn out wait.**

**On June 25th, Frye’s Brigade was shifted two miles down river to Fort Clifton, situated at the confluence of the Appomattox River and the Swift Creek, two miles north of Petersburg.  The units rotated picket duty until July 4th.  Frye became sick and Colonel Mayo succeeded him as Brigade commander and Lt. Col. Lyell assumed command of the 47th Virginia.**

**On July 4th, Mayo’s Brigade moved to the far right of the Confederate defenses, where they stayed until July 10th.   On the 10th, they marched 10 miles to Ream’s Station on the Weldon Railroad.  The Brigade returned to Petersburg on July 12th.**

**August began with Mayo’s Brigade moving to the center of the Petersburg defensive line, just to the right of the “Crater”. The defenses were a labyrinth of trenches, pieces of canvas fly’s and “bomb-proofs”.  Stagnant water covered the bottom of the trenches for days after a rain.  The enemy “with Negro troops” was 200 yards away.  The 47th was subjected to mortar fire for the first time and were in constant fear of another mine.  Mayo placed his men under arms at 2:00 a.m. every morning, in case of attack.  Life in the trenches was simply miserable.**

**On August 13th, Kirkland’s Brigade relieved the 47th, and the 47th moved to the rear to recover from their ordeal in the trenches.**

**Heth’s Division received orders on August 18th, to move south and re-take the Weldon Railroad from Union General Warren’s Fifth Corps.  They proceeded to a point near Vaughan Road, about a mile beyond the Confederate line.  Heth deployed Mayo’s Brigade to the left of the tracks and ordered the advance.  The 47th passed through a belt of woods and into an open field.  The Union soldiers were in a tree line, across an open field.  At 200 yards, and under fire, the Brigade had to cross a fence.  Upon crossing, Mayo’s and Davis’ men charged the woods and Warren’s Union line collapsed.**

**Warren was reinforced and turned Mayo’s flank, regaining some lost ground.  The Confederates reformed their line at the edge of the woods and fought off an attack at approximately 6:00 p.m.  The line still held at 9:00 p.m., as darkness fell on the battlefield.  Heth withdrew his Division to Petersburg.**

**At 4:00 p.m. on August 19th, in a driving rain and reinforced by three brigades from Mahone’s Division, Heth made another attempt to take the Weldon Railroad from Warren.  Heth deployed his line with Mayo’s Brigade second from the left.  They rolled up the first Union line and attacked the second.  Although the second line broke, Heth’s assault stalled.  Within short order, the sheer numbers of blue-clad infantry arriving on the field overwhelmed Heth’s men.  After a brief hand-to-hand encounter, the Confederates moved back to the line from which they started the day.  Heth sent Mahone’s brigades back to Petersburg while his men and Davis’ stayed on the field.  The next day Warren entrenched in more open ground, to allow the artillery full access to any advancing Confederates.  Heth and Davis remained, checking any further Union advance.**

**Mahone used Mayo’s Brigade as a feint in support of a flank attack on August 21st.  The Confederates conceded the loss of this part of the Weldon Railroad and withdrew to the Petersburg defenses.  Mayo’s men were assigned to the trenches near Battery 37, just south of town.  Casualties along the Weldon Railroad for the 47th numbered one killed, seven wounded and seven captured.**

**In August, the 47th Virginia came under the command of General James Archer. By September 3rd, Archer’s Brigade began construction of trenches and forts parallel to and ½ mile in front of the Boydton Plank Road.  A few days later, they started a second line ½ mile closer to the Union lines and along the Squirrel Level Road.  These were rough entrenchments, not a dug-in or sophisticated as the others around Petersburg.  On September 29th, the Union forces broke through the outer Confederate defenses of Richmond.  Archer handed over his earthworks to General Joel Griffin’s cavalry and headed for Battery 45 for transport to Richmond.  The line near the Boydton and Squirrel Level roads were virtually deserted.  On September 30th, as Archer and the 47th waited transport t Richmond, the Union attacked and captured to entire Squirrel Level Road sector.**

**Archer’s Brigade was ordered to repulse the Union army along the Squirrel Level Road.  The brigade marched west, down the Boydtown Road to Pegram’s Farm, just west of Church Road.  The men were deployed through a swampy and wooded area, near Town’e Creek.  Their orders were to flank the enemy.  The marched through almost impenetrable briars and woods, arriving on the field lagging the other brigades, and moved to the left of the line.  They were met with devastating fire from Griffin’s men, defending the Pegram Farm.  There was no opportunity to flank the Union troops and the 47 grimly returned the fire.  The battle lasted less than thirty minutes yet included some of the most savage hand-to-hand combat the 47th would see.  Casualties were high on both sides.  The men remained in the battle line until 9:00 p.m., when torrential rains forced all to seek shelter.**

**At 3:00 a.m. on October 1st, the men were awakened and marched back to Battery 45.   As they marched along Squirrel Level Road, they looked for an opening in the advanced Union line.  As they moved into woods, Archer’s Brigade met a North Carolina Brigade, stalled in the wood from the earlier battle.  The whole progress of the advance broke down.  When the 22nd Virginia was given the order to move forward, they refused.  Not even the officers budged.  Although the fight also jarred Archer’s Brigade on September 30th, they rallied for an assault on the entrenched Union Forces.  The attack quickly broke down and that evening the entire mass of troops commenced retreating to the safety of the Petersburg defenses.**

**On October 2nd, Archer’s brigade was sent to the Boydton Plank Road at the north end of Church Road.  There they commenced building trenches and other defenses.  After a week, they were shifted to the right to the left of Mrs. Hart’s residence.  Again they commenced the construction of defensive trenches.  When Archer became sick on and died on October 24th, Mayo assumed command of the Brigade and Captain Wharton was given command of the 47th.  On October 27th, Mayo’s Brigade was sent to hold the trenches near Hatcher’s Run.**

**After the first week of December 1864, Grant gave up on flanking Petersburg and commenced the destruction of the Weldon Railroad in his possession.  The 3rd Corps were ordered to stop the destruction.  Mayo’s Brigade left the Petersburg lines at 4:00 p.m. on December 8th, marching three miles past Dinwiddie Courthouse.  The Brigade marched another 20 miles on the 9th, crossing the icy Nottoway River at Wyatt’s Mill.  The march to Jarrett’s Station was made in freezing rain.  When Heth’s Division arrived, they found only burned buildings and a few cavalry of the read guard.  The cavalry were easily dispatched but the men were forced to sleep in the elements.  The next morning (December 10th) Heth pushed the Union raiders 7 miles south of Jarrett Station, and then gave up the chase, as the men were exhausted and the roads were quagmires.**

**Mayo’s Brigade returned to the trenches near Hatcher’s Run on December 13th.  After marching 100 miles in 6 days, they discovered other troops had destroyed their tents and other shelters for firewood.  The men returned to picket duty and spent Christmas in the trenches at Hatcher’s run.  The day after Christmas, Heth’s Division was moved to north of the James River, in support of the Heavy artillery at Chaffin’s Bluff.**

**The End**

**On January 1, 1865, the 47th Virginia had 227 men present for duty.  The relative safety and improved conditions at Chaffin’s Farm, on the bluff overlooking the James, helped the men’s spirits.  The position was well fortified and, at the foot of the bluff, were the Confederate ironclads of the James River Fleet.  In a reorganization of the troops, General Seth Barton was given control to this portion of the Richmond defenses that included the 47th Virginia.**

**Barton’s Brigade spent the winter at Chaffin’s Farm, with minimal rations and shortages of clothing.**

**On April 1st, Grant broke through the Confederate lines between Hatcher’s Run and Petersburg.  On April 2nd, General Ewell was ordered to evacuate the Richmond line, left to right, and march west.  As a result, Barton’s Brigade and the 47th became the rear guard.  April 3rd was exhausting and confusing.  The men crossed the James at Wilton, three miles south of Richmond, heading west through Chesterfield County.  Refugees from Richmond clogged the road and were joined by sailors and other, new to their division.  They marched 17 miles camping at Tomahawk Church.**

**The men hit the road at dawn, on April 4th in a light rain. Upon reaching the Appomattox River at 4:00 p.m., they found no pontoon bridge, by which to cross.  The men marched downstream to Mattoax, crossing the rail bridge by placing boards across the tracks.  Back on the road by dawn, April 5th, they found the roads snarled with refugees and retreating troops.  They marched along the Southside Railroad for a short while, until they were forced to face the threat.  Most of the firing was friendly fire for the Confederates, in all the confusion.  When they reached Amelia Court House, they found that their supply wagons, with food and ammunition, had become lost and had been destroyed by Union forces.  The men marched all night, having had no rations since Chaffin’s Farm.  The men were exhausted and hungry.  Stragglers were falling out by the dozen.**

**The men took a brief rest near dawn on April 6th, and continued marching.  The column reached Sayler’s Creek about 3:00 p.m.  The men could hear firing ahead and firing to their rear.  Barton’s Brigade deployed to meet the Union attack with the 47th at the center of the line.  Union artillery started and the blue lines moved forward.  They were met with multiple volleys from the Confederates, briefly hurling them back.  The Union artillery resumed, as the infantry regrouped.  The second Union attack was in overwhelming numbers. The Confederates fired, there was brief hand-to-hand combat, and it was over.  On April 6, 1865, the 47th Virginia ceased to exist as an organized unit.**

**One hundred and eighty-nine men from the 47th were recorded as paroled. These do not count those paroled, after returning home to Stafford.  Those paroles were never recorded.**