



On June 7, 1864, 9300 Federal horsemen under Major General Phil Sheridan traveled northwestward from their camps at Cold Harbor. Their orders were to join forces with Major General David Hunter advancing from the Shenandoah Valley, then destroy the Virginia Central Railroad and the James River Canal. For four days Sheridan led his troopers toward Trevilian Station, a freight and water stop on the vital Confederate railroad. While the Federals rode leisurely, Major General Wade Hampton pushed his 6400 Rebels to intercept this Federal menace. The two forces clashed about 5:00 A.M. on June 11, two miles northeast of the depot. Troops on both sides were ordered to dismount as the fighting took place among a tract of dense underbrush and trees. Fighting blindly in the thick growth caused confusion as many from both sides fired into their own men.

Late in the morning Sheridan committed another division which smashed Hampton's front. As many of Hampton's men fled toward the depot, they were met by the "Wolverines" of George Armstrong Custer. Hampton's incensed troopers charged, and a furious struggle ensued. From three sides Confederate reinforcements closed in on Custer's beleaguered men for a number of hours in the stifling heat. Finally the Federals cracked a seam in the Confederate lines and escaped.

The next morning Sheridan's horsemen renewed the attack, and during the afternoon South Carolinians under Matthew Calbraith Butler repulsed seven separate attacks by General Wesley Merritt and Colonel Thomas C. Devin's dismounted troopers. Eventually a stunning Confederate counterattack nearly broke the entire Union line. Darkness ended the battle, and the Federals would begin retreating the following morning.

The Confederates could claim victory as Sheridan had neither seriously damaged the railroad and canal, nor linked up with David Hunter. Sheridan informed U.S. Grant, "I regret my inability to carry out your instructions" and blamed losses and shortness of supply for his failure to reach Hunter. Both sides suffered heavy losses. Sheridan sustained 95 killed, 445 wounded, and 410 missing, for a total of 955, or more than 10% of his total force. Hampton lost 813 men for a casualty rate of more than 12%. Heroic deeds were commonplace at Trevilian Station as three Federals won the Medal of Honor.

This month on **MONDAY, AUGUST 30**, our own **Larry Jackson** will present "*The Battle of Trevilian Station.*" A member of the MRRT since November 1979, Larry has given many talks to our group over the years. His programs are always noted for their research, detail, and passion. Larry, who owns a home in Virginia near Trevilian, has explored the battlefield minutely and will enhance his presentation with slides, weapons, and artifacts. Trevilian Station is sometimes called "the largest all-cavalry battle of the Civil War," yet few know any of the facts of this battle. Larry will straighten it all out for us and hopes to have plenty of time after the talk for a good question/answer session. You'll want to be there!

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If you missed the meeting in July, you missed a dandy. **Ron Cleveland** presented, "*If It Could Only Talk...#194: Discovering the History of a 3" Ordnance Rifle Identified to the Stuart Horse Artillery.*" Not only did Ron give an extraordinary talk on this rare weapon with slides, anecdotes, and humor, he brought the cannon to the Round Table meeting and displayed it in the parking lot! After the regular meeting we convened in the lot for another meeting around the cannon. A great night!

**FALL FIELD TRIP:** All the arrangements have been made for what promises to be an incredible trip to Spotsylvania/Wilderness on Saturday/Sunday October 16-17. Payments for the bus/speaker (\$80) and the Saturday night dinner (\$38) are still being accepted (Please make out the checks to Jerry Maxwell). The money is due NOW. [A list of the folks who have signed up but still owe money is included in their newsletter.]



### QUIZ: All questions pertain to Cavalries [Part II]

1. Only two Confederate generals were buried in Arlington National Cemetery. One was a cavalryman; the other was not. Name them both.
2. Which Federal general led his “Mule Brigade” on a 17-day raid through the hills of northern Alabama in April and May of 1863? And, which Confederate general fooled him into a premature surrender by making his own cavalry numbers look far larger?
3. Which Federal cavalry unit carried a 9-foot lance with an 11-inch long, 3-edged blade attached? And, who was their colorful leader?
4. Which mild-mannered Ohio schoolteacher became a “heinous murderer” known for “savage barbarity” during the war? And, where did he and his horsemen slaughter over 90 of 100 Federals on October 6, 1863?
5. Who were his two notorious henchmen that served as second in command? And, at the time he was killed in Kentucky, what were his plans?
6. Who commanded the Union cavalry at the Battle of Brandy Station? And, which battle, fought merely six miles outside Richmond on May 11, 1864, cost Jeb Stuart his life?
7. Which three Federal “boy generals” were promoted to the rank of brigadier general on the eve of the Battle of Gettysburg?
8. Which Confederate cavalry general was killed in a rearguard action near Harrisonburg, Virginia, on June 6, 1862? And, which Irish-born colonel who fought in the British army and in at least four countries, later settled in Detroit, Michigan and commanded the “Sabre Brigade”?
9. On which of Jeb Stuart’s raids did he send a telegraph message to the Union quartermaster complaining about the “bad quality” of mules and horses, promising not to steal anymore unless the quality improved? And, who was the quartermaster that Jeb sent the note?
10. Which London-born cavalryman claimed he fired the fatal bullet that killed John Wilkes Booth? And, what was his final outcome?

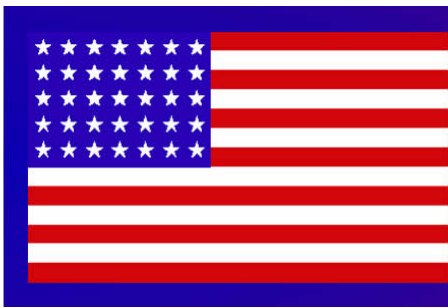
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#### Tales of two noted horsemen.....

Born on July 8, 1826, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, future Federal cavalry general **Benjamin Henry Grierson**, was eight years old when his horse bolted and threw him to the ground. While he was getting up, he was kicked in the face and received a deep gash. For two weeks young Grierson was unconscious, and his eyes were bandaged for eight weeks. He could see from one eye, but it took months before he could use the other. The long scar on the right side of his face was later covered by his beard.

A music teacher and merchant, Grierson joined the Federal service as an aide-de-camp to Benjamin M. Prentiss. Grierson was commissioned major of the 6th Illinois Cavalry in October 1861 and colonel the following April. On September 6, 1862, during a Confederate attack on their camp in Mississippi, his clothes were pierced by bullets and two fingers of his left hand were severely bruised. He was soon given the brevet rank of brigadier general. In April 1863 he led his famous cavalry raid through Mississippi. At Vicksburg on July 20, 1863, he received a serious injury to his right knee when he was kicked by a horse. Luckily, his high cavalry boots prevented any more damage. Although unable to ride on horseback for the rest of the year, he remained on duty using crutches. Even riding in a carriage caused pain. He was given a leave from September 21 to October 31, 1863, on a surgeon’s certificate.

During May 1864 Grierson was under treatment for piles and hemorrhoids, a problem that plagued him the rest of his life. After the war he was appointed colonel of the Tenth Cavalry and served mainly on the frontier. During the fall of 1866 he underwent an examination by a board of officers, and it was reported that he had a stomach disorder, which resulted from



excessive stress. On July 5, 1867, he was admitted to the post hospital at Fort Leavenworth. Grierson had recurrent episodes of digestive complaints, and for ten years after the injury to his knee he required the use of crutches and a cane. Promoted to permanent brigadier general in April 1890, he retired a few months later. In the summer of 1907 he developed the flu and had a stroke from which he never recovered. His memory became impaired, and for the next four years his condition deteriorated so that he was confined to his bed. In the summer of 1911 his speech was incoherent. He died at age eighty-five on August 31, 1911, in Omena, Michigan, and was buried in Jacksonville Cemetery at Jacksonville, Illinois.

It was often stated that Benjamin Henry Grierson, one of the North's best cavalrymen, hated horses.

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A "born-soldier," **Wade Hampton**, with the possible exception of Nathan Bedford Forrest, was probably the most frequent and successful hand-to-hand combatant among all the general officers in American history. A born aristocrat, his breeding showed itself in every feature. "*He rode like a centaur,*" wrote one of Robert E. Lee's staff, "*and possessed a face and form so noble that men vied with women in admiration of General Hampton.*" The oft-wounded general suffered his most painful day at Hatcher's Run on October 27, 1864. On that day Federals drove in Hampton's pickets a distance of two miles. All that morning and afternoon Hampton strove to hold back the advancing Yankees.

Riding with the venerable general that day were his two sons: 24-year-old Wade (the IV) and 22-year-old Preston. At about 4:00 P.M. Preston took a bullet in the groin, dropping him from the saddle. Young Wade spurred ahead and dismounted at his brother's side. As young Wade bent over Preston, he was hit in the back and fell beside him. When the father himself arrived, Preston was dying and Wade was gasping from his own wound. Their father leaped from his horse and caught Preston in his arms. "*My son, my son!*" he muttered brokenly. He kissed Preston tenderly and bent to whisper in his ear. Preston could not move. He tried to speak, but no words came. Preston died shortly afterward, but his older brother, Wade, survived. Afterward General Hampton insisted that his son must join some other command. "*The agony of such a day,*" he stated, "*It is all more than mere man can bear.*"

#### QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Joseph Wheeler and Marcus Joseph Wright
2. Abel D. Streight and Nathan Bedford Forrest
3. 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry ("Rush's Lancers") and Benjamin H. Rush
4. William Clarke Quantrill and Baxter Springs, Kansas
5. "Bloody Bill" Anderson/George Todd and he was on his way to Washington, D.C., to assassinate Pres. Lincoln
6. Alfred Pleasonton and Yellow Tavern
7. George Armstrong Custer, Elon John Farnsworth, and Wesley Merritt
8. Turner Ashby and Robert Horatio George Minty
9. Dumfries, Virginia Raid ("Christmas Raid") and Montgomery Meigs
10. Boston Corbett and he escaped from a mental institution on May 26, 1888, and was never seen again

Mark your calendars now—**MONDAY, AUGUST 30**—for the "*Battle of Trevilian Station*" presented in his own inimitable style by MRRT member **Larry Jackson**. Same time, same place: the Farmington Public Library (Grand River and Farmington Road) at 6:30 P.M. Bring a friend.

Also try our website: <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/>.