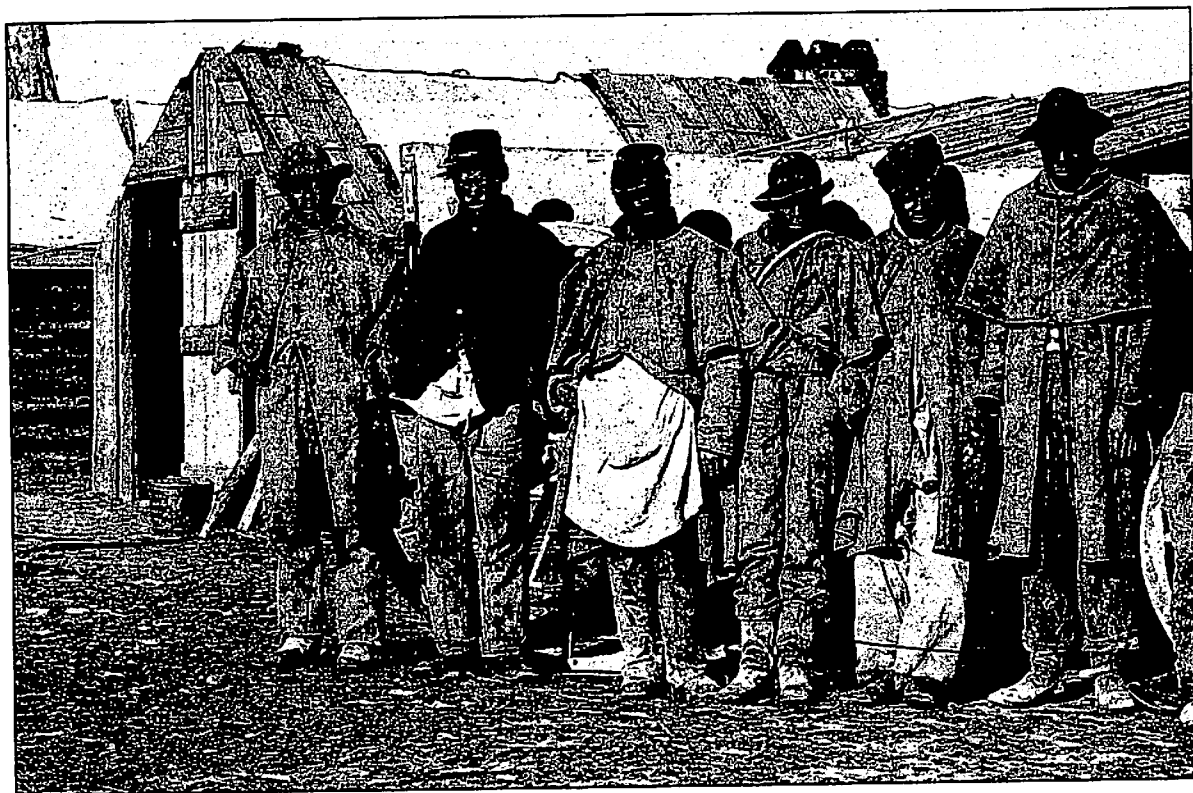


Behind the Horsepower of Civil War Armies

by Eric Ethier



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

BESIDES THE AVAILABLE technology of railroads and steamships, Civil War armies were supplied

much like the Roman armies had been. North and South still relied on the simple strength of wagons, the brawn of mules, horses and oxen, and the skill of unheralded wagon masters and teamsters to drive them.

Wagon masters and teamsters generally worked under the thumb of a quartermaster, whose duties included making sure food and supplies reached the men on the front lines when they needed it. Quartermasters had little patience with incompetence or mistakes, and these hard-pressed supply czars often vented their frustration on their underlings driving the teams, who in turn cracked their whips, alternately eased and yanked the leather reins, and made "the air blue with profanity addressed

This 1864 photograph shows six "contrabands"—Southern slaves who attached themselves to the invading Union armies in an effort to gain their freedom—at Bermuda Hundred, Va., who were employed as teamsters for the Army of the James.

to their mules, individually or collectively, so that the anxiety to get through was felt by all the moving forces in the train," as one observer put it.

Among the teamster and wagon man's many enemies were shoddy, stump-filled roads, sucking mud that threatened to swallow up teams and wagons whole, and lame or otherwise injured animals. Drivers often found themselves down in the dirt, digging out their wagons or helping mechanics with repairs. They were also responsible for the care of their hard-working teams and constantly fed their animals from the sacks of forage they lugged in each 2,500- to 2,800-pound wagonload.

By 1862, driving teams was one of many

jobs that had opened for free blacks in Union outfits; Union officers, in fact, often preferred

African-American drivers to whites. By 1864, troop-starved Confederate armies were also replacing white teamsters with impressed slaves—supervised by white wagon masters.

The importance of all these workers was reflected in their salaries: skilled wagon masters earned upward of \$75 a month; assistant wagon masters might also earn \$45-\$50; white teamsters earned \$25-\$30 a month, while blacks were paid \$10-\$20. Wagon masters occasionally earned extra money (as much as \$10-\$25 per load) transporting the considerable wares of sutlers—a risky proposition that could result in forfeiture of pay or immediate discharge for everyone involved in their conveyance.

CONTRIBUTORS

Feature Writers:

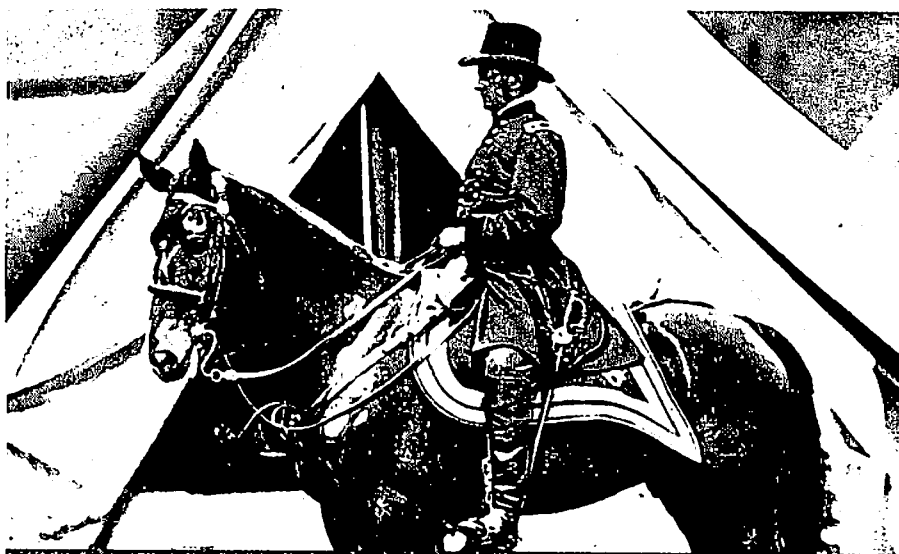
Jeffrey D. Wert, who penned this month's cover feature, has been writing articles for *Civil War Times* for three decades, and also contributes the "Turning Points" column. He is the author of several acclaimed Civil War books and the only two-time winner of the prestigious Laney Prize for *The Sword of Lincoln: The Army of the Potomac* in 2006 and *Brotherhood of Valor* in 1999. He is currently working on a new book about J.E.B. Stuart.

John Lockwood is a special contributor on Civil War topics to the *Washington Times* and has also written articles for numerous other publications, including the *Washington Post*. John has served as a National Park Service Ranger in Washington, D.C., for over 20 years.

Joseph Pierro is a historian and freelance writer based in Richmond, Va. He is the editor of the upcoming *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862: Ezra A. Carman's Definitive Study of the Union and Confederate Armies at Antietam*, due for release this July from Routledge.

Chuck Leddy is a freelance writer based in Quincy, Mass. He has written articles on the Civil War and other topics in American history for several major newspapers, including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Boston Globe* and *Philadelphia Enquirer*.

Thomas P. Lowry is an author based in Woodbridge, Va. As a retired psychiatrist, he brings a unique perspective to the mind-set of Civil War soldiers and civilians. He has written several Civil War books, including *Confederate Heroines: 120 Southern Women Convicted by Union Military Justice*, *Don't Shoot That Boy: Lincoln and Military Justice*, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell: Sex in the Civil War*, and his latest effort, *Sexual Behavior in the Civil War, A Compendium*.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Civil War Times Readers Poll: Do you agree with Joseph Hooker that fault for the Federal defeat at Chancellorsville lies elsewhere, or do you feel the commanding general was justly blamed?

Please log on to the *Civil War Times* forum at www.historynet.com/forums to discuss this and other Civil War topics. Email your answer to civilwartimes@historynet.com or send a response to our mailing address. *Civil War Times* welcomes letters and comments addressed to "Letters, *Civil War Times*," Weider History Group, 741 Miller Dr. SE, Suite D-2, Leesburg, VA 20175 or sent by e-mail to the address above. Please note that we are unable to answer letters or questions personally due to the high volume of submissions.

WEIDER HISTORY GROUP

STEPHEN L. PETRANEK
EDITOR IN CHIEF

J.C. SUARES
DESIGN DIRECTOR

CIVIL WAR TIMES

ILLUSTRATED

Vol. XLVI www.HistoryNet.com Number 2

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR ROGER L. VANCE	EDITOR CHRIS W. LEWIS
MANAGING EDITOR CARL VON WOODKE	ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR
CREATIVE DIRECTOR BARBARA SUTLIFF	NAN SIEGEL
SENIOR EDITORS TODD BECK DANA B. SHOFAR NICK WOOD	ART DIRECTOR MIKE CAPLANIS
COPY EDITORS KATHRYN LYNCH STEPHEN MAURO	EDITORIAL PRODUCTION COORDINATOR BEVERLY D. ARNOLD
PICTURE RESEARCH DIRECTOR GINA MCNEELY	EDITORIAL PRODUCTION ASSISTANT KELVIN HOLLAND
PICTURE EDITOR SARAH HOCK	EDITORIAL RESOURCES COORDINATOR SHIRLEY M. BAILEY
	EDITORIAL ASSISTANT RYAN M. BURKE

— ADVISORY BOARD —
Edwin Cole Bearss • Gabor Boritt • Albert Castel
William C. Davis • Gary W. Gallagher • William Hanchett
Herman Hattaway • John Hennessy • James M. McPherson
Mark E. Neely Jr. • William N. Still Jr.

Senior Graphic Designer Barbara Justice	Director, Production and Distribution Karen G. Johnson
Production Planner Dawn Wertz	Associate Production Manager Karen M. Bailey

— ADVERTISING OFFICES —

MKTG Services
Lauren Barniak • (215) 867-4105 Fax: (215) 579-8041
lbarniak@mktservices.com
140 Terry Drive • Newtown, PA 18940

WEIDER History Group, Inc.

ERIC WEIDER
President & CEO

BRUCE FORMAN
Chief Operating Officer

Product Marketing Manager Bill Brinkman
Director, Single Copy Sales George Clark

Civil War Times Illustrated (ISSN 1546-9980) is published 10 times a year in Jan., Feb., Mar./Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., and Nov./Dec. by Weider History Group. The known office of publication is: Weider History Group, 741 Miller Drive SE, Suite D-2, Leesburg, VA 20175. Periodical postage paid at Leesburg, VA, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: *Civil War Times Illustrated*, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Yearly subscriptions (ten issues) in U.S.: \$39.95; Canada: \$51.95; Foreign: \$51.95, payment in U.S. funds only. Subscription information: U.S. and Canada (800) 829-3340, Foreign (386) 447-6318. E-mail: civil-war@palmcoastid.com Web: www.civilwartimes.com. Back Issues (800) 356-6327.

© 2007 by WEIDER HISTORY GROUP

— EDITORIAL OFFICE —

741 Miller Dr. SE, Suite D-2, Leesburg, VA 20175
civilwartimes@historynet.com
Phone (703) 771-9400

CIVIL WAR TIMES ILLUSTRATED® is a registered trademark of WEIDER HISTORY GROUP

Canada Publications Mail Agreement #41342519
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to DHL Global Mail, 7496 Bath Road, Unit 2, Mississauga, ON L4T 1L2
Canadian GST No. R1 23452781

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WEIDER HISTORY GROUP

TWO GREAT MUSEUMS TO DISCOVER!



The National Museum of Civil War Medicine

Explore life-like exhibits that tell the story of care and healing, courage and devotion amidst the death and destruction of war. Discover genuine medical Civil War artifacts that paved the way for major advances in medicine.

48 East Patrick Street, in Downtown Frederick, Maryland
Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm • Closed Major Holidays

Pry House Field Hospital Museum

A complimentary site to the NMCWM, this museum focuses on field medicine as it was practiced at the Battle of Antietam. Exhibits include an operating theater and objects relating to the care of the wounded.



18096 Shepherdstown Pike, between Sharpsburg & Keedysville, Maryland
Open daily 11 am-5:30 pm June-October • Weekends only in May & November



For information 301-695-1864 or civilwarmed.org

For other great things to see & do in Frederick County visit fredericktourism.org



Some soldiers considered driving an escape from the front lines, but a mule team or a mule train under fire was a diverting spectacle to everyone but the mule drivers

Visit Spotsylvania, VA "Crossroads of the Civil War"

A Day in the Life



April 28th & 29th, 2007
Saturday 10-10
Sunday 10-5
Belvedere Plantation

"Living History Re-Enactment"

Walk through time and follow the stories of Spotsylvania County's historical citizens.

Experience the feelings, customs and activities in many different walks of life over the county's past 400 years.

Spotsylvania County
Department of Economic Development
and Tourism
10304 Spotsylvania Avenue Suite 440
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
www.spotsylvania.org
540-407-7210



For more information log on to: www.spotsylvania.org/tourism.asp

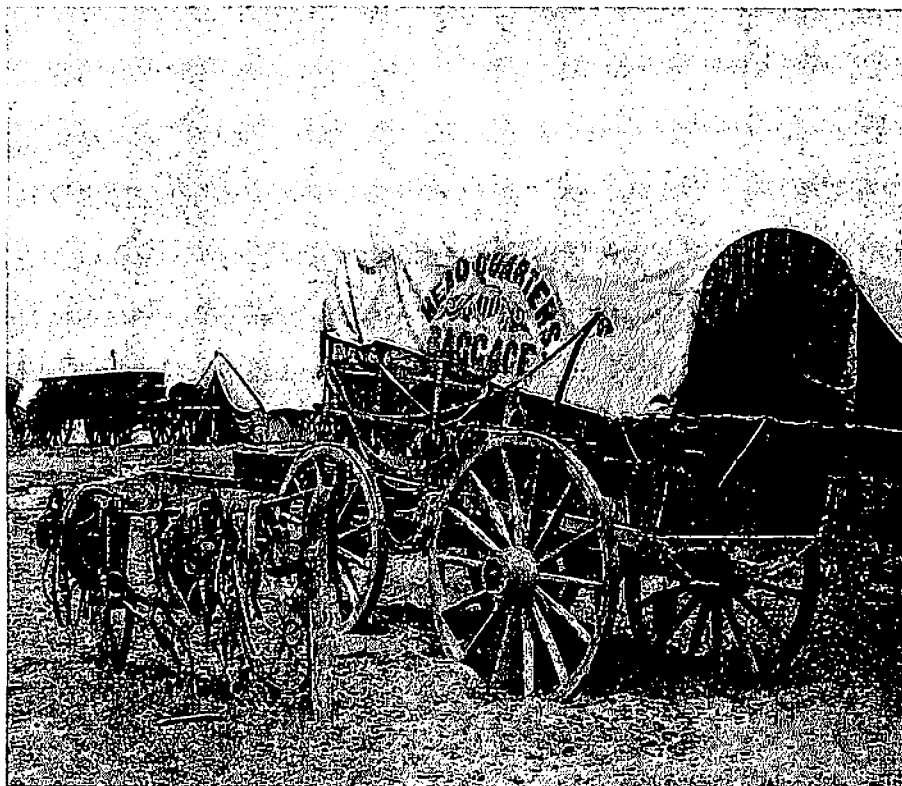
Some soldiers considered driving . escape from the front lines, but a mule team or a mule train under fire was a diverting spectacle to everyone but the mule drivers. Teamsters transported all sorts of valuable goods and were under constant danger of capture or worse—even when they had large escorts of armed troops. And the ponderous size of wagon trains (especially Union trains) often made them inviting tar-

gets and easy to find.

During the fall of 1862, for example, Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's huge Army of the Potomac moved toward Fredericksburg with at least 4,000 wagons stuffed with everything necessary to sustain 100,000 men in enemy territory. Even Robert E. Lee's leaner Army of Northern Virginia presented attractive targets as it snaked north some 100 miles through back-country roads in 1863.

Smaller, lightly guarded trains rushing from supply depots to field units were especially vulnerable, and the unofficial non-combatant status of drivers meant nothing to supply-hungry enemy cavalry. In early August 1864, Confederate Lt. Col. John Singleton Mosby and 300 of his partisan Rangers pounced on a Union train rumbling into the Shenandoah Valley.

"The whole wagon train was thrown into a panic," Ranger John W. Munson later testified. "Teamsters wheeled their horses and mules into the road and, plying their black-snake whips, sent the animals galloping madly down the pike, crashing



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Wagons, the teams that hauled them and the teamsters who drove them were the most important link in the supply chain. Civil War armies, particularly those operating in enemy territory, had to carry most of what they needed with them, and were impotent without efficient supply transportation.

into other teams which, in turn, ran away. Infantry stampeded in every direction. Cavalry, uncertain from which point the attack came, bolted backward and forward without any definite plan. Wounded animals all along the train were neighing and braying, adding to the confusion." The stunned Federal guard scattered as Mosby's men gathered up 150 supply-filled wagons and a herd of cattle.

On another occasion, William Clarke Quantrill's Confederate raiders killed six Yankee soldiers and a half-dozen teamsters (allegedly "from pure maliciousness and after they had surrendered") after attacking a small Federal train in Kansas and finding its wagons empty. And in October 1863, Yankee Lieutenant Richard N. Batchelder was forced to quickly issue guns to his teamsters in order to fight off a Confederate raid on his train while it was en route near Fairfax Station, Va.

The work required of wagon masters and teamsters was stressful, backbreaking and often dangerous. At least one infantryman admitted that all the drivers labored in "one of the most wearing departments of the service." **CWT**

CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHS

cape fear
museum

On exhibit
through 28 May 2007

814 Market Street
Wilmington, NC
910.798.4350

CapeFearMuseum.com



Embalming tent at Camp Letterman, Gettysburg, PA, 1863, courtesy Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA

Exhibit
Sponsors



Merrill Lynch



Oleander Company • The Verandas • Port City Capital Bank • C.W. Worth House