



28th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry

Mid-July – Early-December, 1862

By Paul Hanna

Introduction:

From the early summer to the early winter of 1862, the 28th Massachusetts formed part of the Army of the Potomac and their opposition to Confederate General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. There were multiple major engagements during this time, The Second Battle of Bull Run, The Battle of Chantilly, the Battle of South Mountain, and the Battle of Antietam. This article

will go into detail about how the 28th Massachusetts took part within these campaigns and these engagements.

Chain of Command:

IX Corps Commanders:

- Major General Jesse Reno (Killed at South Mountain)
- Major General Ambrose Burnside

1st Division Commanders

- Brigadier General Isaac I. Stevens (Killed at Chantilly)
 - o Briefly replaced by Colonel Benjamin C. Christ
- Brigadier General O.B. Willcox
- Colonel Daniel Leasure
- General William W. Burns

3rd Brigade Commanders (July-Sept.)

- Colonel Addison Farnsworth (Wounded at 2nd Bull Run)
- Lt. Colonel David Morrison

1st Brigade Commander (Sept.-Dec.)

- Colonel Benjamin C. Christ

28th Massachusetts Regiment Commanders

- Lt. Colonel George W. Cartwright (Wounded at 2nd Bull Run)
- Captain Andrew P. Caraher (August 30-October 18)
- Colonel Richard Byrnes

Here are some unit symbols that would have identified the unit on the battlefield during the campaign (Click on the flag pictures to learn more about them):



Figure 1: ¹ Above: 28th Massachusetts First Irish Regimental 'Pilot Flag'
Photo Credit: ***Massachusetts State House Battle Flag Collection***

¹ Figure 2: 28th Massachusetts First Irish Regimental 'Pilot Flag', Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division



Figure 2: ² Above: 28th Massachusetts 'First National' Flag
Photo Credit: ***Massachusetts State House Battle Flag Collection***

The period from July to the first part of December in 1862 would prove to harden the 28th Massachusetts into a veteran fighting unit far more than any of the soldiers could have expected. They would sail, march, guard, cross rivers, camp, and fight their way across Virginia and Maryland during these months in 1862.

These set of events begin in early July of 1862, where on the 3rd of July, where Secretary of War Edwin Stanton wrote a letter to Hilton Head, South

² Figure 1: 28th Massachusetts 'First National' Flag, Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division

Carolina that stated, “The condition of the Army under General McClellan requires that the whole available infantry forces of the Government should be sent to his command on the James River.”³ As the three new divisions for the IX corps converged upon Fort Monroe, it took General Stevens and the First Division (including the 28th Massachusetts) more than a week than the others to arrive in Virginia.⁴

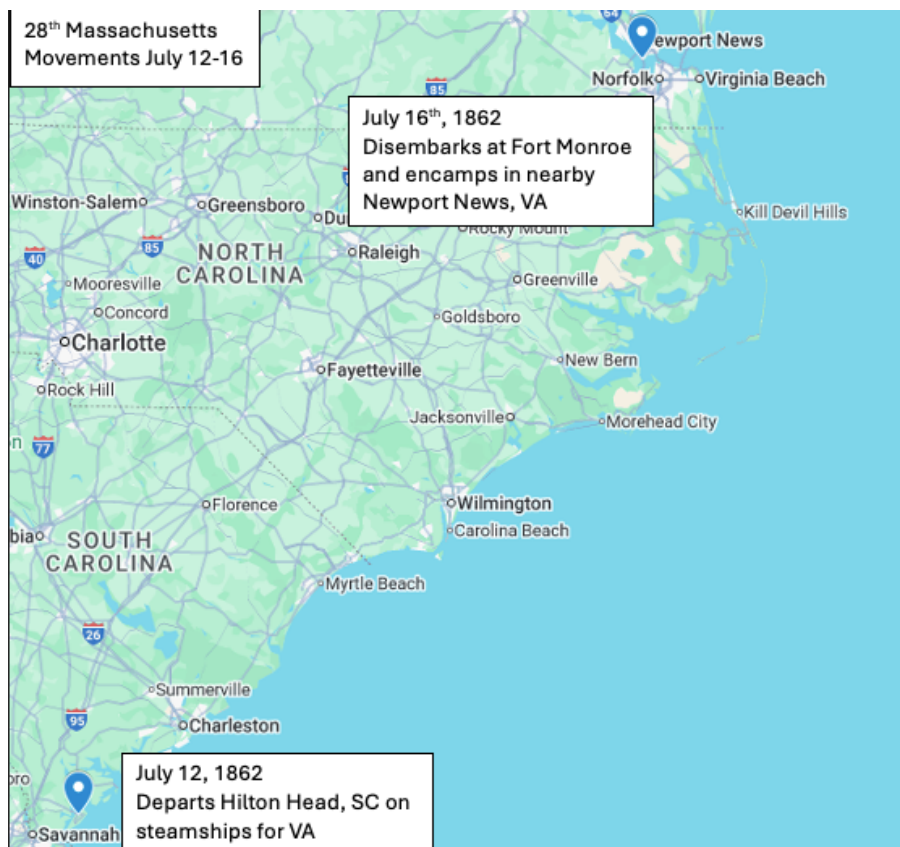


Figure 3: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements July 12-16, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

³ Darin Wiperman, *Burnside's Boys: The Union IX Corps and the Civil War in the East*, (Lanham, MD: Stackpole Books, 2023), pg. 17.

⁴ Ibid, 20

It is important to stress the feelings of such a switch in command and theater amongst the Division. In a biography of his father, Gen. Stevens, Hazard Stevens assured,

The troops were transferred to ocean steamers at Hilton Head on July 10 and 11, and on the 12th were borne away northward, rejoiced to leave a command marked by incompetence and disaster, and to rest after the useless toil to which they had been subjected.⁵

Gen. Stevens, in his own writing aboard the steamer *Vanderbilt*, noted, “We left Hilton Head at eight o’clock, yesterday morning. I was utterly worn out, and was very glad to go to bed. I slept twenty hours the first twenty-four I was on board, and to-day I have been very well rested.”⁶

It should be noted that Gen. Stevens did not hold the greatest outlook over what lay ahead of his division in Virginia either. In the same letter he noted, “The plan of campaign of the Potomac (army) has been a monstrous folly, and disaster is its legitimate fruit. The army should never have been divided, and the route should not have been by Fortress Monroe.”⁷ It is safe to say that Gen. Stevens was not looking forward to serving under the command of Gen. McClellan whatsoever.

⁵ Stevens, Hazard, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, Vol. II (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1900). 422

⁶ Ibid, 423

⁷ Ibid,, 423

The 28th Massachusetts encampment in Newport News lasted until early August, until General Pope in Northern Virginia needed infantry reinforcements from the rest of the army in the waterways of Hampton Roads, where Newport News is located.⁸ On August 4th, the First Division left the protection of the Hampton Roads and sailed for Aquia creek (Aquia Landing), on the Rappahannock River. Arriving two days later on August 6th, the First Division (incl. 28th Massachusetts) disembarked and marched to Fredericksburg that same day.⁹ There the 28th Massachusetts and the rest of Stevens's Division will stay for a few days.

⁸ Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys*, 26-27

⁹ Stevens, *The life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 425

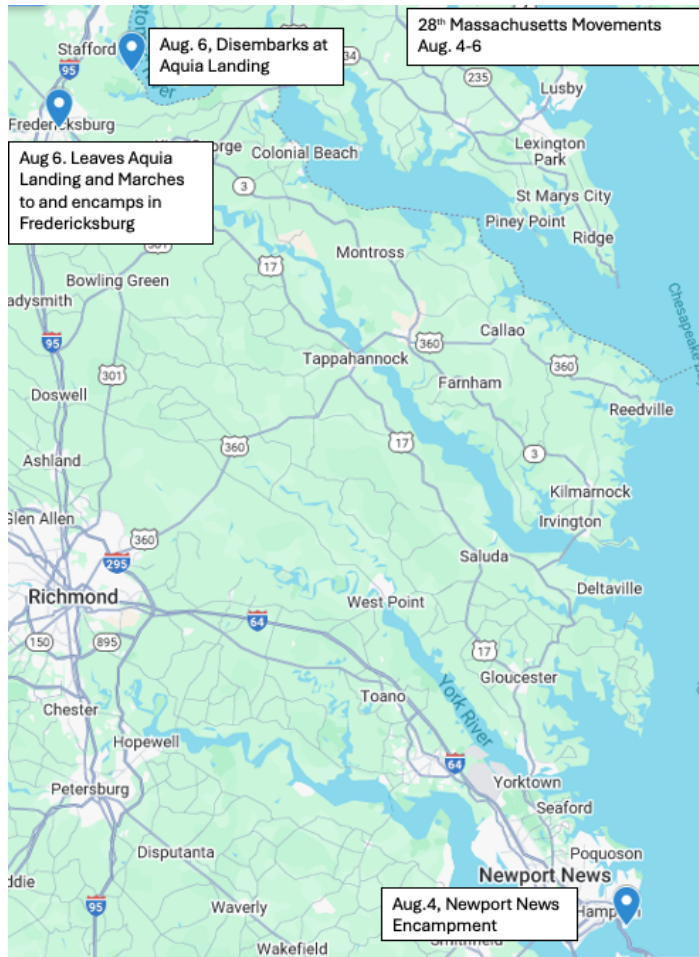


Figure 4: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 4-6, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

The next movement occurred on August 13, where the 28th Massachusetts and the rest of the division left Fredericksburg leaving behind all excess equipment except for shelter tents and marched along North Bank of the Rappahannock River.¹⁰ Setting off on Culpeper Road, the division

¹⁰ Ibid, 426

encamped for the night near Deep Run after a 13-mile march.¹¹ The next day, their travels took them to Bealton, VA and stopping at Rappahannock Station; a further 18 miles.¹² Gen. Stevens's division eventually arrived at the intended destination of Culpeper Court House on August 15th where General Pope's forces were located.¹³

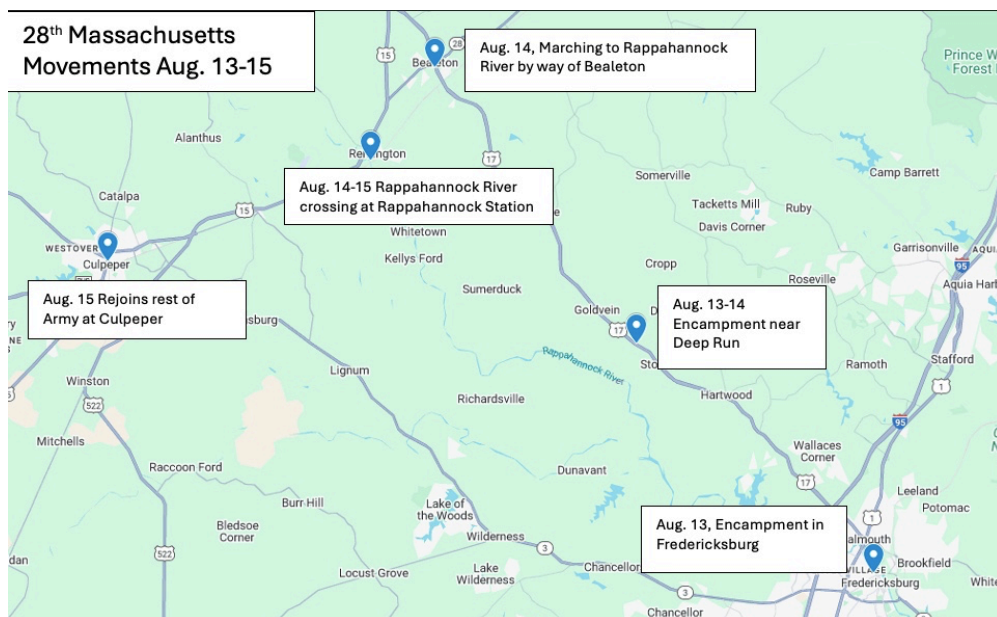


Figure 5: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 13-15, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

¹¹ Isaac I. Stevens, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XII No. II, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1885, 544

¹² Stevens, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 426

¹³ *Ibid*, 426

The next day, the 28th Massachusetts and the rest of Gen. Stevens's Division was forwarded to the banks of the Rapidan to guard Raccoon Ford.¹⁴ In greater context, the aftermath of the Battle of Cedar Mountain left General Pope to send all incoming reinforcements, including the 28th Massachusetts, to the banks of the Rapidan River to block any confederate advances. Gen. Stevens held the extreme left flank of the Union Army at Raccoon Ford.¹⁵

Through the afternoon on August 19th, the next maneuvers were conducted for the 28th Massachusetts. Gen. Stevens was ordered to move his supply trains out first, with the infantry moving out at 2:00 a.m.. Adhering to the orders, Gen. Stevens started stretching his division along the banks of the Rapidan for a few miles to prolong the guarding of the ford and pulled the rest of his troops out at 2:00 a.m. Their destination was Stevensburg, Virginia which they reached at daybreak.¹⁶

August 20th was a long day's marching for the 28th Massachusetts. After reaching Stevensburg in the morning, they were held for an hour before advancing to Barnett's Ford on the Rappahannock (Rapidan) River.¹⁷ It is important to note that Barnett's Ford is referenced by most of the Union

¹⁴ Ibid, 426

¹⁵ Ibid, 427

¹⁶ Ibid, 428

¹⁷ Ibid, 427-428

officers as part of the Rappahannock, rather than the Rapidan. General Orders No. 23 in the official war records is a good example: “...Banks' train, now at Culpeper...will cross the Rappahannock certainly before daylight... Reno's train will march by way of Stevensburg; thence to Barnett's Ford, where it will cross as soon as possible.”¹⁸ From dusk on August 20th until around midnight, the division would then move from Barnett’s Ford eight miles up to Kelly’s Ford on the Rappahannock.¹⁹

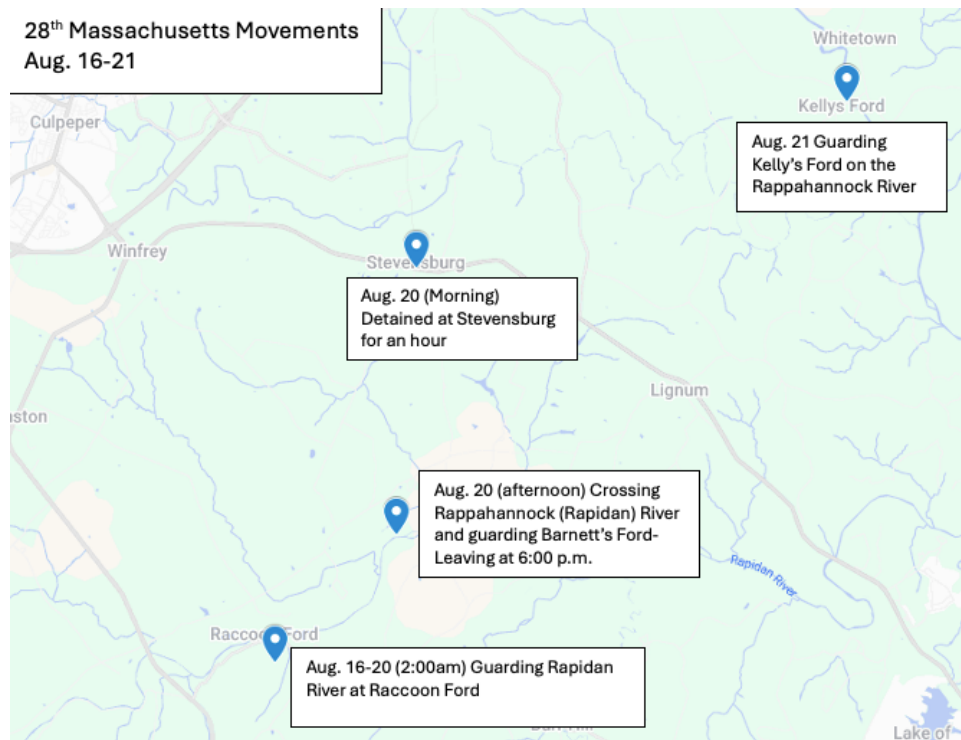


Figure 6: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 16-21, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

¹⁸ R.O. Selfridge, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XII, No III. Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1885, 598

¹⁹ Stevens, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 428

August 22nd, however, would turn to be a day of action for the 28th

Massachusetts. Hazard Stevens wrote of his father:

The next day he recrossed the river with two brigades in support of a cavalry reconnoissance by General Buford. Deploying the third brigade,—the Highlanders and 28th Massachusetts,—he drove back a considerable force of the enemy for more than a mile in a sharp action, and, after accomplishing all that was expected or desired, withdrew to the left bank.²⁰

This action would secure Kelly's Ford for the Union Army and free up further movements up the Rappahannock. Leaving behind 2 regiments from each division, the rest of the IX Corps marched up to Rappahannock Station and mirrored the confederate army on the other bank doing the same.²¹

²⁰ Ibid, 428

²¹ Ibid, 429

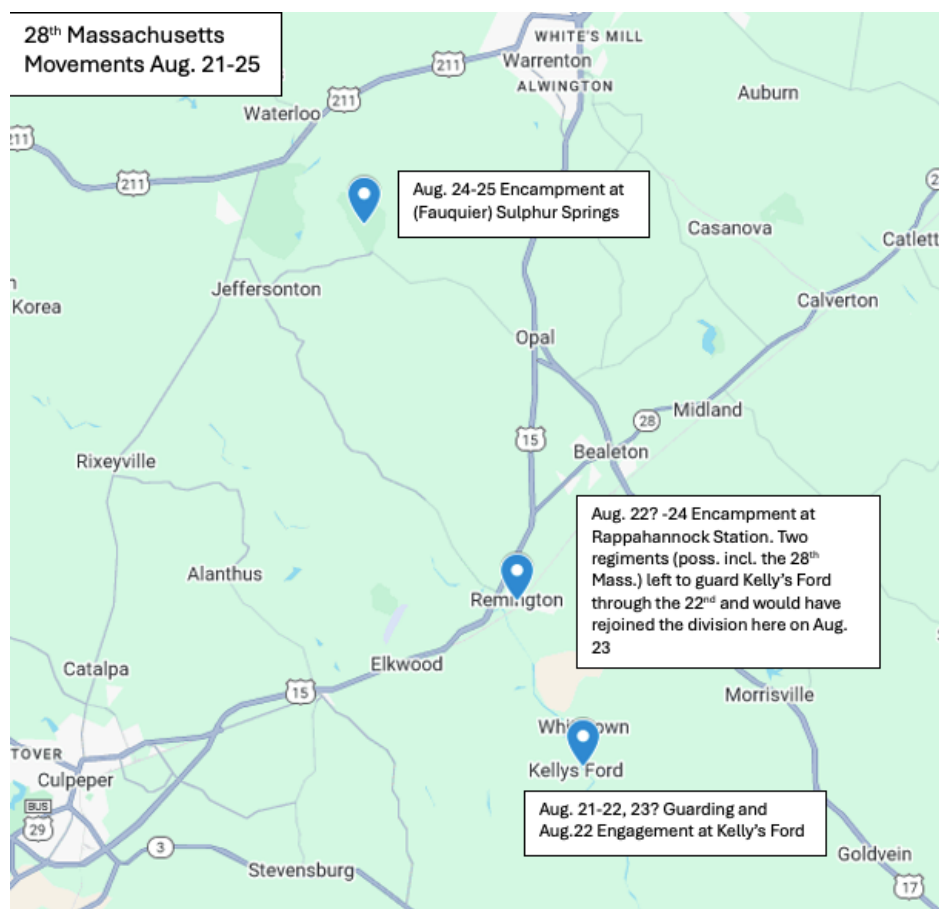


Figure 7: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 21-25, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

On August 23, all the units from the lower fords were reunited with the rest of Gen. Stevens's division and continued marching to Sulphur Springs, VA on August 24th.²² The next day Gen. Stevens moved his division up towards Warrenton, stopping at Waterloo Bridge. At midnight on the 25th, the division

²² Ibid 429

reached Eastern View, several miles from their destination of Warrenton Junction, which they would reach the next day on August 26th.²³

On August 27, the 28th Massachusetts, along with the rest of the division mobilized to the Manassas area. Encamping the night of the 27th at Greenwich Church, a small area just southwest of Manassas Junction. The following day, the unit was sent to be in reserve at Manassas Junction. There they would wait for further orders which would come on August 29th.²⁴ These series of movements up the Rappahannock and into Manassas Junction would eventually set up the Battle of Second Bull Run.

²³ Ibid, 430

²⁴ Stevens, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XII No. II, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1885, 544

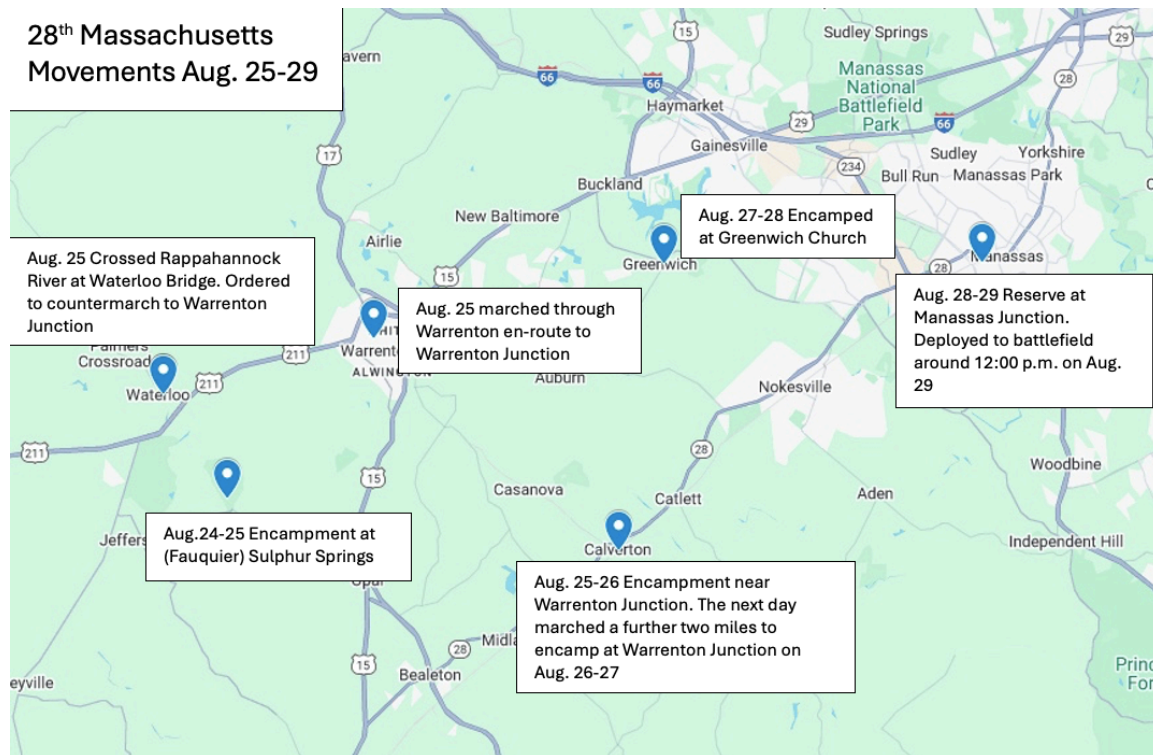


Figure 8: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 25-29, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

BATTLE OF SECOND BULL RUN

AUGUST 28-30, 1862

On August 29th, the 28th Massachusetts and the rest of Gen. Stevens's division found themselves at Blackburn's Ford on the Bull Run Creek forming up part of General Pope's right wing. They were stationed there along with the troops under Generals Kearny, Reno, and Hooker.²⁵

²⁵ Stevens, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 439

During the afternoon, earlier action in the day had caused Gen. Stevens's division to be scattered helping to reinforce different units that had been engaged. The 28th Massachusetts, along with the 79th New York 'Highlanders', had been deployed along the railroad protecting the maneuvering artillery that were being pulled from Groveton.²⁶ The retreat of the artillery allowed the confederates to press their attack against the 28th Massachusetts's position. Hazard Stevens wrote of the 28th:

It was General Stevens's third brigade, under Colonel Addison Farnsworth, that was sent to support Schurz, and was posted on the front line along the railroad, next to Schimmelfennig's brigade. Part of this (Schimmelfennig's) brigade, on Farnsworth's left, broke at the advance of the enemy, and fell back through the woods, but the Highlanders and Faugh-a-ballaghs (28th Massachusetts) stood firm and repulsed the attack. Soon afterwards the fugitives, having reformed, moved up in line from the rear, and began firing into the backs of the troops who had stood their ground, mistaking them for the enemy; but this was speedily stopped, and they were again placed on the line.²⁷

The Union line of battle at this point would have stretched across the wood line and the unfinished railroad bed from which the Confederates were advancing. To get a better idea here are two points of view in a map of this time of the battle:

²⁶ Ibid, 452

²⁷ Ibid, 452

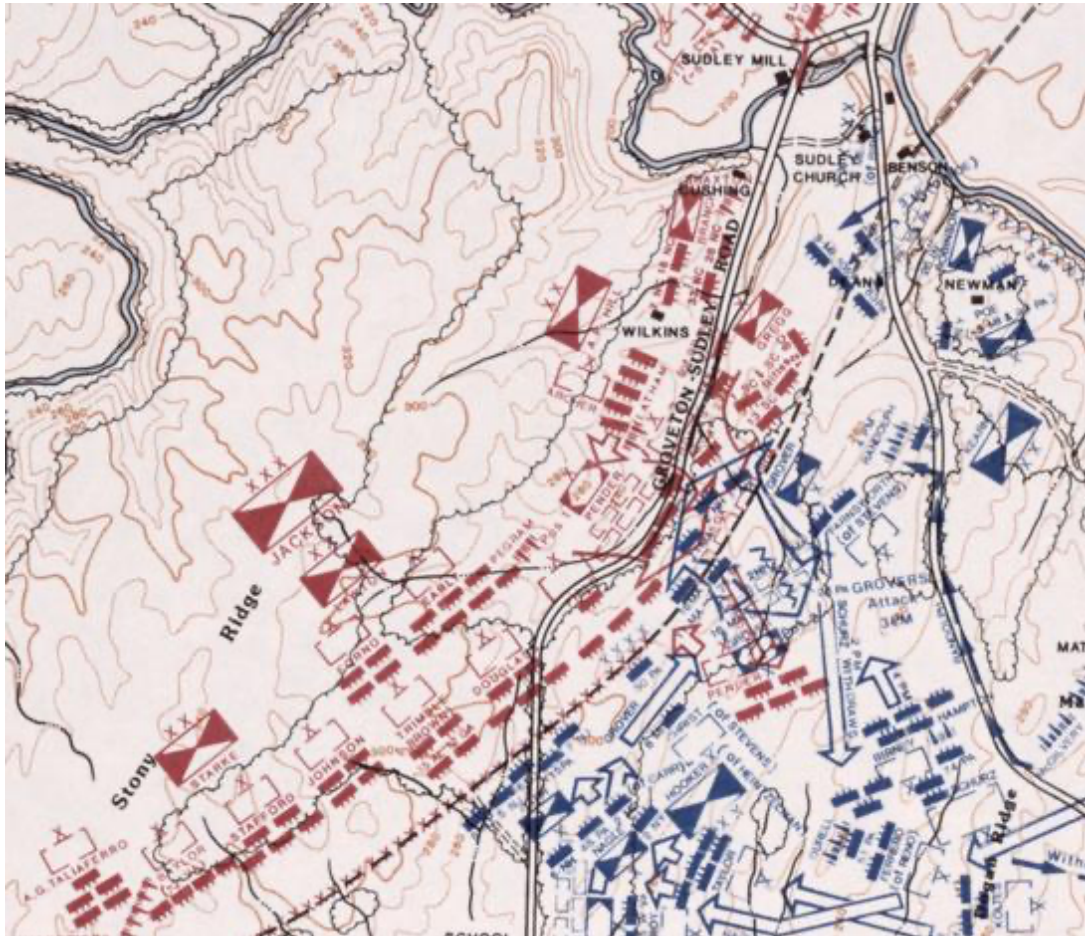


Figure 9: ²⁸ Above: August 29th Attack 2:00p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

²⁸ United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park And Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 6. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96684567/>.

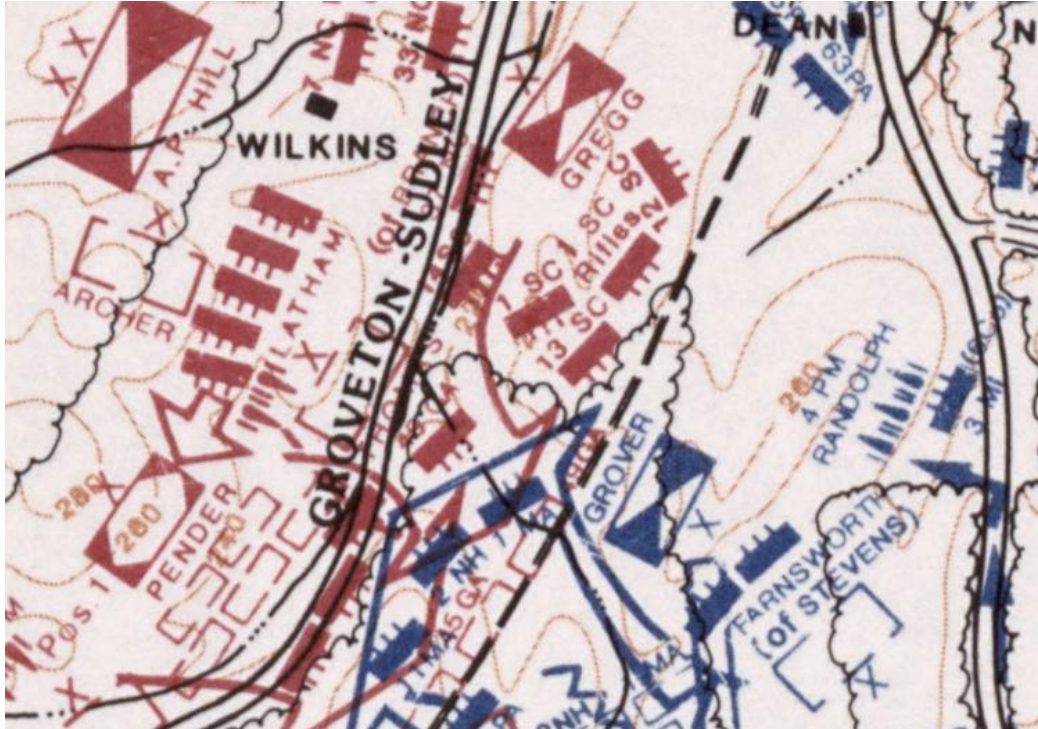


Figure 10: Above ²⁹ 28th Massachusetts (In Col. Farnsworth's Brigade) during August 29th Attack

Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

The 28th Massachusetts, along with the New York 'Highlanders', would have experienced a great deal of fire during this moment of the battle, having engaged and repulsed an enemy force, while also briefly taking fire from Union Army forces from their rear as well. At the end of the day, Gen. Stevens had his division reunited and formed his division in the wood-line a quarter of a mile

²⁹ United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park And Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 6.

back and to the right of the railroad where the 28th Massachusetts had helped defend earlier.³⁰

Looking for the 28th Massachusetts, Gen. Stevens was angered by the scattering of his troops. Hazard Stevens noted:

General Stevens was indignant, and used some pretty strong language, when I carried back this report, and ordered me to find the missing regiments, and not to return until I brought them with me. I started, therefore, for the old railroad embankment. Luckily, I found Farnsworth just on the edge of the woods. He said he was waiting for orders, but had none since I left him in the morning.³¹

The scattered troops had left the command in disarray by the end of the day. Although they found a strong position in the wood-line by the end of the night, they had been forced to give up the railroad position they had attacked earlier in the day.

The next day did not bring any relief for the 28th Massachusetts either. Around noon of August 30th, General Pope, on the assumption that the Confederates had retreated during the night, ordered “...forces will be immediately thrown forward and in pursuit of the enemy, and press him vigorously during the whole day.”³² Around 4:00 p.m., Gen. Stevens formed up

³⁰ Stevens, *the Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 459

³¹ Ibid, 459

³² Ibid, 463

his division, including the 28th Massachusetts, and began to deploy their attack.

On the right flank of General Porter's units, Gen. Stevens formed his division in three columns with each a brigade in strength. When Gen. Porter made his attack, Gen. Stevens attacked with him. As soon as the attack started, the division became instantly under fire.³³ Hazard Stevens wrote of the attack setting off:

... at once becomes furiously engaged, and suffers heavy loss, including Colonel Farnsworth, who is severely wounded. General Stevens maintains this contest until Porter's column is repulsed, when he withdraws his command to the first ridge in rear of the woods, posting his lines just behind the crest, with skirmishers holding the edge of the woods.³⁴

This attack would have had immediate effects on the 28th Massachusetts as they had lost their Brigade commander during the attack.

For the August 30th line of battle, these points of view on this map give an understanding of how the line of battle developed and how the 3rd Brigade with the 28th Massachusetts fit into the formations:

³³ Ibid, 467

³⁴ Ibid, 467

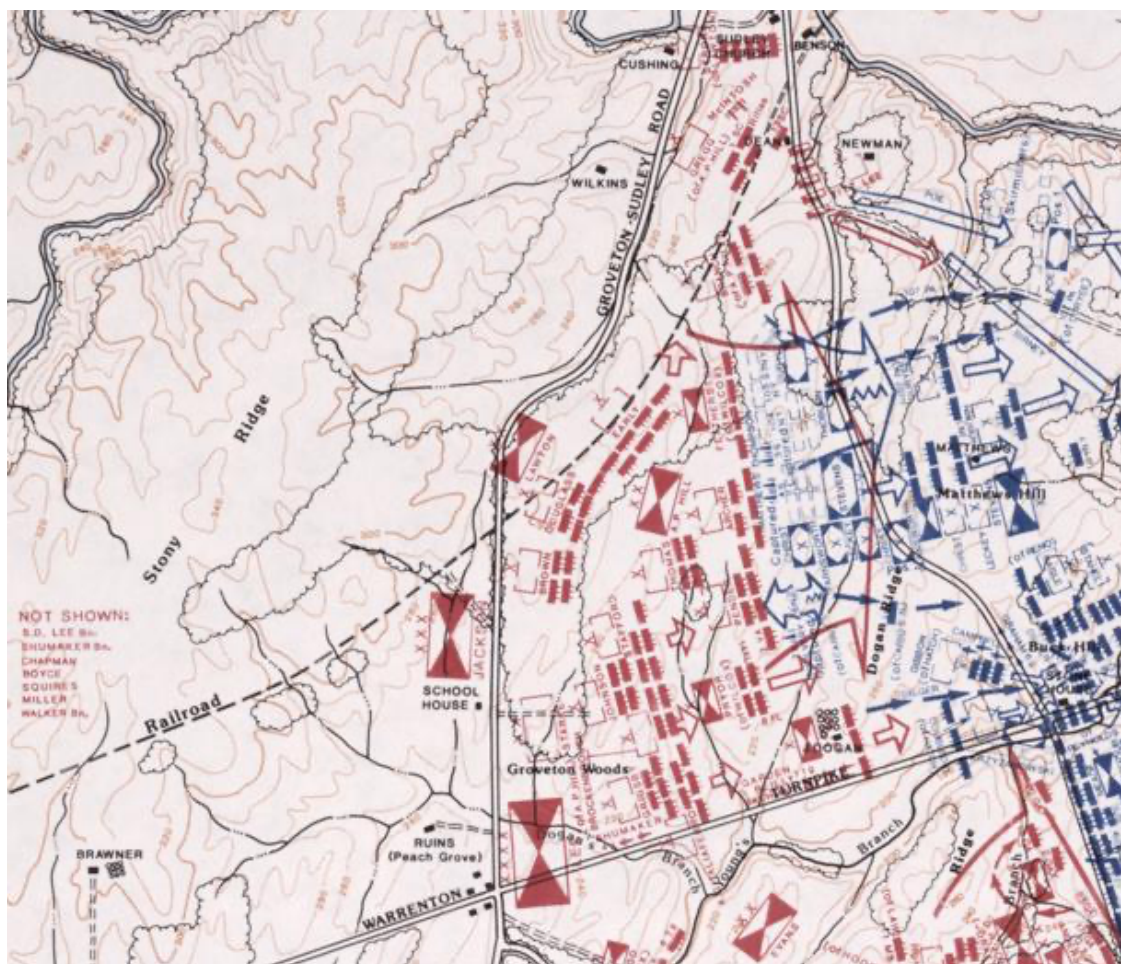


Figure 11: ³⁵ Above: August 30th Attack from 6:00-6:45 p.m.
Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

³⁵ United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park And Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 15. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96684567/>.

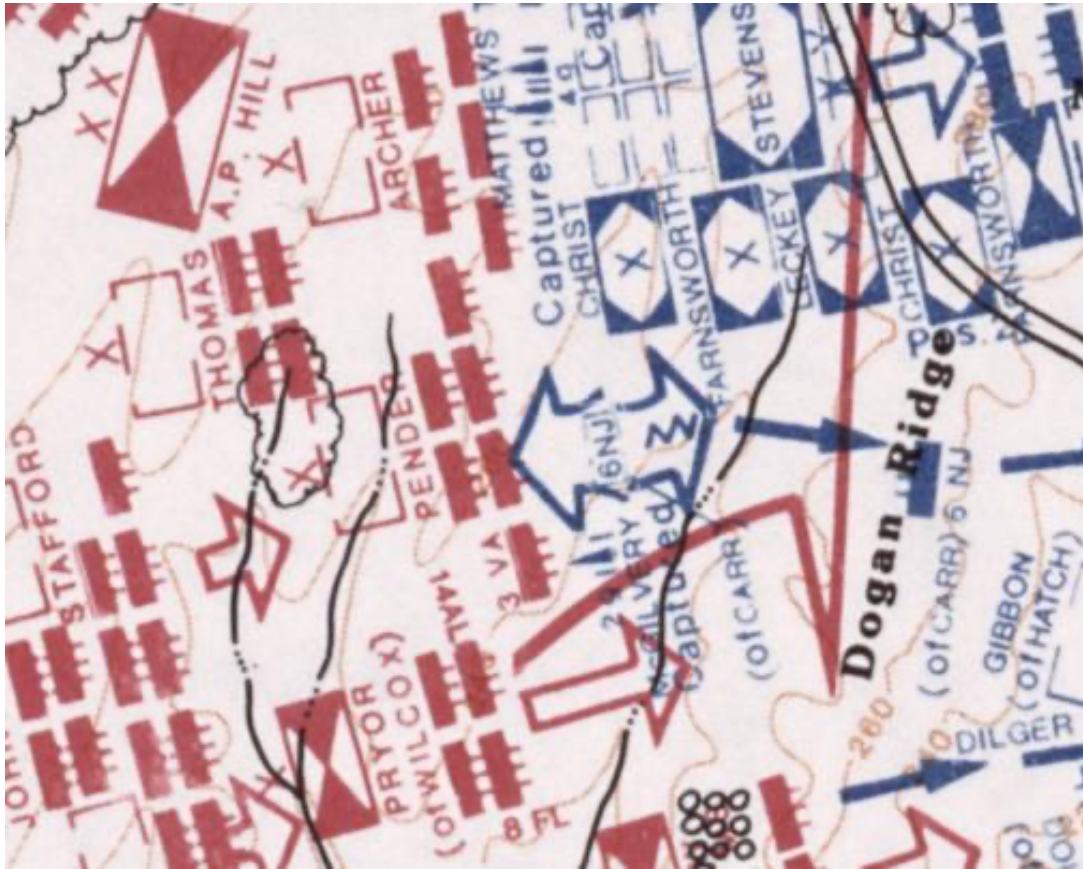


Figure 12: Above ³⁶ 28th Massachusetts (In Col. Farnsworth's Brigade) during August 30th Attack

Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

The evening of August 30th would prove to be an anxious time for the members of the 28th Massachusetts. As the left wing of the federal Army had collapsed, Gen. Stevens was in a race against time to retreat his division from the battlefield. Hazard Stevens noted that as the artillery and the infantry were pulling back, the Confederates started racing up the slopes of the hill. Two

³⁶ United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park And Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 15.

regiments of General Stevens's Division, possibly including the 28th Massachusetts, fired a volley into the advancing confederates which stopped their advance.³⁷

In a testament to Gen. Stevens and his emphasis using terrain advantage, Gen. Stevens crossed Bull Run Creek at Locke's or Red-House Ford.³⁸ This terrain advantage helped Gen. Stevens bypass the roads clogged with Union supply trains and other Union forces. From here. Gen. Stevens bivouacked off the established roads until they reached Centreville.³⁹

The 28th Massachusetts suffered many casualties as a result of the attacks during the battle of Second Bull Run. In total, *The Civil War in the East* lists the unit having suffered 135 casualties, including their regimental commander, Lt. Col. George W. Cartwright (wounded), and Lt. William Flynn (Killed). In contrast, Historian Donald Williams lists the unit having suffered 125 casualties. Lt. Col. Cartwright's wounding forced Captain Andrew P. Caraher to take command of the regiment.⁴⁰

³⁷ Stevens, *the Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, 474

³⁸ Ibid, 474

³⁹ Ibid, 474

⁴⁰ "The Civil War in the East: 28th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment," *Civil War in the East*, 1862.
<https://civilwarintheeast.com/us-regiments-batteries/massachusetts/28th-massachusetts/>

On August 30th alone, the 28th Massachusetts suffered “...about a dozen were killed in action.”⁴¹ This included Corporal Michael Donnelly; referred to as a “...patriotic teamster in his mid-twenties, was one of those who died...without his body being recovered. A member of the color guard, Donnelly was remembered fondly as a very kind person by his comrade John Ryan.”⁴² Officers and Regimental Surgeons were also casualties. Officers & Staff: Lt. Col. Cartwright and Capt. Andrew P. Caraher (slightly) Surgeon P. A. O’Connell (Captured) Asst. Surgeon George W. Snow (Captured).⁴³

A few weeks later, on September 8th, the printed media in Boston had already started printing the many of the casualty information for the 28th Massachusetts at the Battle of Second Bull Run:

⁴¹ Wipperman, *Burnside’s Boys*, 55

⁴² Ibid, 55

⁴³ “Losses in Massachusetts Regiments,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 8, 1862, Vol. 100, Issue 15000, Boston, MA, 2, <https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752464852>

List of killed, wounded, and missing of the 28th Mass. Volunteers, commanded by Major George W. Cartwright, in the engagement of Aug. 30, near the old Bull-Run battle-ground.

Killed.—Co. A—Corporal William Casey.

Co. C—Lieut. Wm. H. Flynn, corporal M. J. Coffee, (color-bearer.)

Co. F—Bartholomew Durant; Oliver H. Hodges.

Wounded.—Co. A—Sergt. John J. Cooley, in arm; Corporal John Cross, in foot; Thos. Donohoe, in breast; John Murphy, in leg; Garrett Barry, in arm; Hugh McIntire, in arm; Charles Doherty, in breast; Thomas Kenedy, Jr., in arm.

Co. B—Jesse Pollard, in hand; Corporal Patrick N. Bird, in shoulder; John Fitzgerald, in breast, severely; Philip Donohoe, in leg; Thomas Maloney, in leg; Robert Swain, in leg; Keyron McCoy, in breast; Corporal Wm. Ryan, in breast; John Meagher, in breast; M. Vey, in breast; Thomas Condon, in breast; Patrick Carr, in breast; John How in breast; Asa Snider, in breast.

Co. C—Sergeant James Hotten, wounded and missing; Sergeant J. P. Quigley, slightly; Corporal N. J. Dohally, wounded and missing; Corporal Wm. O'Neil, wounded and missing; James Cahill, wounded and missing; Gerrett Collins, wounded and missing; Henry Barton, wounded and missing; Wm. Corwin, wounded and missing; Edward Dwyer, slightly in neck; Martin Kirk, in leg; Edward McGrony, wounded and missing; Dennis Murphy, wounded and missing; Thomas Wheeler, wounded and missing; Patrick McSweeney, wounded and missing.

Co. D—Lieut. Buckley, in leg, severely; Acting Lieut. John Still, arm, slightly; Sergeant Patrick Dwyer, (color bearer), legs, severely; Corporal Andrew Colligan, in leg; Hugh Mitchell, in leg; Wm. Clory, in leg; John Shanley, in leg; Robert Lesley, in leg; Cornelius Slattery, in leg; George Brant, in leg; Bernard Mullen, mortally.

Co. E—Corporal Miles E. Ferguson, wounded and missing; James McNall, wounded and missing; James Goonen, wounded and missing; Laurens F. Langley, bullet in neck, not serious; James Burns, Thomas Huger, Charles McVey, Steven Regan.

Co. F—Sergeant Thomas Hurley, in groin; Corporal Joseph F. Phillips, in thigh; Corporal Wm. H. Frey, in thigh; Michael Fosbery, in thigh; Thomas Lubray, in hand; James Daley, in bowels, serious; Hugh Campbell, in leg; John Murphy, in head; Patrick Powen, in bowels; Patrick Erwin, in mouth.

Co. G—Orderly Sergeant E. O'Brien, in hip, slightly; Corporal A. G. Weller, in hand; P. Hewa, in arm; P. Hanlon, in neck; Henry McDavitt, in leg; John Healey, in head; John Seymour, in hand; Simon Walsh, in thigh.

Co. H—Patrick Stinson, in thigh; John Concannon, in leg; John Hickey, in neck; Michael Dolon, in leg; James Flynn, arm broken; Patrick Golden, in leg; Cornelius Murphy, in leg, missing; Michael Spencer, arm, missing; William H. Chatfield, arm, missing.

Co. I—Sergeant Wm. Bert, wounded and missing; Albert M. Blair, slightly in leg; Michael Galvin, slightly in leg; Philip Galligan, slightly in leg; Patrick Hurley, slightly in knee; Daniel Kilohet, severely in head; Thomas Bellon, severely in leg; Timothy McCarty, in knee; Phillip Rand, in leg; William Walsh, in finger, (taken prisoner and paroled.)

Co. K—G. F. Kenney, M. Mullon (both missing); Lieut. Killion, slightly in thigh; Sergt. Maguire, in leg; Patrick Kenney, in side; Michael Levin, in hands, severely; R. Mullon, in thigh; Thomas Shine, in leg and body; David Rosch, in jaw, severely, and missing; Wm. O'Donnell, thumb; Timothy McCormack, arm, severely.

Surgeon P. A. O'Connell, and Assistant Surgeon George W. Snow were taken prisoners, they volunteering to remain in hospital and attend to the wounded.

Major Cartwright, wounded in head by piece of shell; Capt. Carahu, (acting Major,) slightly, in head.

Figure 13: ⁴⁴ Losses in Massachusetts Regiments
Photo Credit: **Boston Daily Advertiser**

⁴⁴ "Losses in Massachusetts Regiments," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 8, 1862, Vol. 100, Issue 15000, Boston, MA, 2,

Donald Williams's breakdown of the 28th Massachusetts Casualties (by company) from the Battle of Second Bull Run include: ⁴⁵

Killed/ Mortally Wounded: 29

Co. A- 2

Co. B-1

Co. C-9

Co. D-1

Co. E-3

Co. F-5

Co. G-2

Co. H-2

Co. I-1

Co. K-3

Wounded/Missing/Captured: 96

Staff- 3

Co. A- 8

Co. B- 14

Co. C- 8

Co. D- 10

Co. E- 7

Co. F- 8

Co. G- 7

Co. H- 9

Co. I- 12

Co. K- 10

After leaving the battlefield on the night of August 30th, the 28th Massachusetts fell back to the Centreville, VA area, where they spent the

⁴⁵ Donald C. Williams, "Battle Casualties, 1862-1865: 28th Massachusetts Regiment" in, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade: Pvt. John Ryan, 28th Massachusetts*, ed. by Sandy Barnard, (Terre Haute, IN: AST Press, 2001), 177

remainder of the night. The next day, their division advanced down the Bull Run Road for about a mile and held their position while the Confederate Army made an advance. Union artillery, having halted the advance of the Confederates, allowed Gen. Stevens's division to pull back to Centreville once their division was relieved that evening.⁴⁶

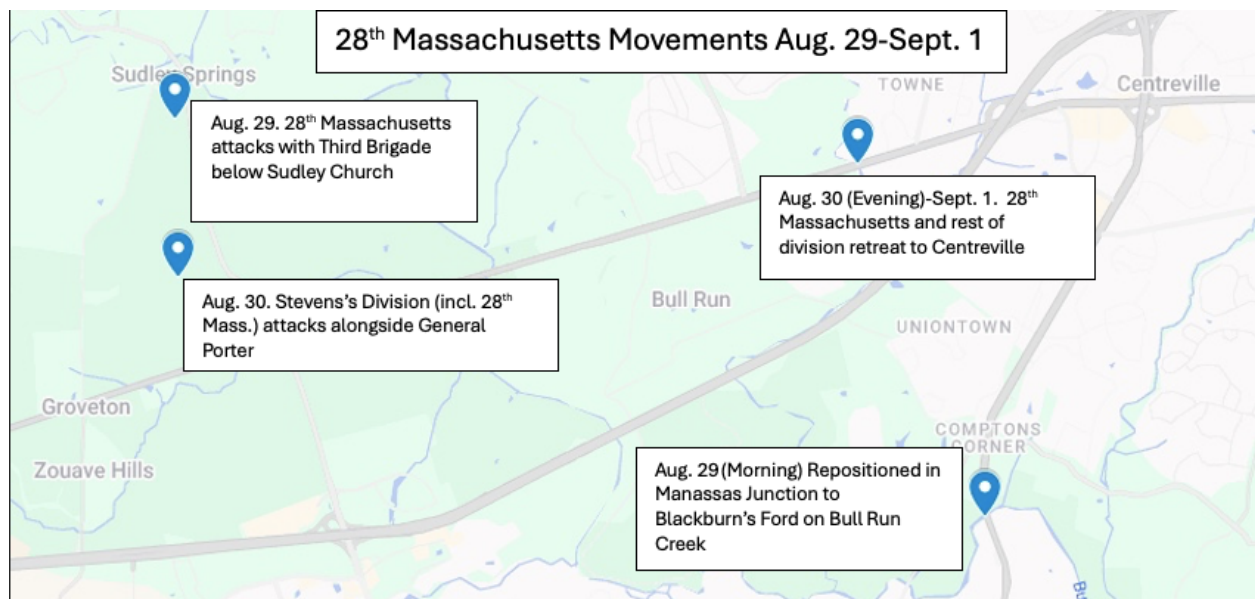


Figure 14: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements August 29-September 1, 1862

Made with: **Google: My Maps**

⁴⁶ Stevens, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 544

BATTLE OF CHANTILLY

SEPTEMBER 1, 1862

The itinerary of the Maryland Campaign for the 28th Massachusetts's campaign began with their encampment just West of Centreville, Virginia on September 1st, 1862.⁴⁷ On this day, the entire IX Corps 1st Division left the encampment and proceeded towards Fairfax, Virginia where they encountered the Confederate Army in the late afternoon.⁴⁸ General Willcox noted that, "...met the enemy at Chantilly...about 5 p.m. A severe engagement ensued, lasting until after dark, in which the enemy were driven from the field."⁴⁹

The 28th Massachusetts would soon find themselves in the thick of the fighting. Gen. Stevens, with a strong vantage point, could see most of the field of battle, however, could not determine the strength of the opposing forces in the forests.⁵⁰ Pressing forward, Gen. Stevens established his line of battle with

⁴⁷ O.B. Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XXVII, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1902, P. 431

⁴⁸ Ibid, 431

⁴⁹ Ibid, 431-432

⁵⁰ Darin Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys: The Union IX Corps and the Civil War in the East*, (Lanham, MD: Stackpole Books, 2023), p.63

the 28th Massachusetts and the 79th New York ‘Highlanders’ in the lead of the attack formation.⁵¹ The 28th Massachusetts would have been one of the first engaged units during the attack, as historian Darin Wipperman noted, “ a company from the 28th Massachusetts also went forward in the brigade’s initial line, as the troops began to draw enemy fire.”⁵²

The line of battle, including Gen. Stevens’s Division, can be shown in these points of view on this map:

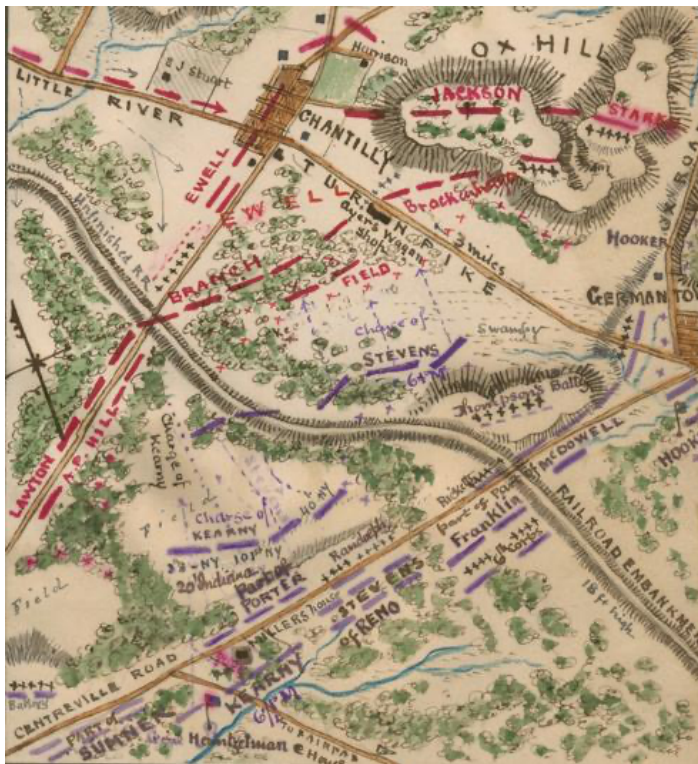


Figure 15: ⁵³ Above: Battle of Chantilly Sept. 1st 5:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.
Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

⁵¹ Ibid, 63

⁵² Ibid, 63

⁵³ Robert Knox Sneden. *Plan of the Battle of Chantilly, Virginia: September 1st 5 to 9 p.m.* (1862-1865) Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00108/>.



Figure 16: ⁵⁴ Above: Plan of the Battle of Chantilly
 Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

The battle soon began to turn chaotic in both a clash of man and nature. Wipperman noted, “Few fights in the Civil War were more confused as a result of a powerful thunderstorm that would rage during the battle of Chantilly.”⁵⁵ With the Union forces gaining momentum through the storm, the opposing forces soon engaged upon each other in close combat. These soldiers would have battled nature in that besides the danger of lightening and enemy fire,

⁵⁴ Robert Knox Sneden. *Plan of the Battle of Chantilly, Virginia: September 1st to 9 p.m. (1862-1865)* Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00108/>.

⁵⁵ Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys*, 64

but also wind and rain would have created a multitude of problems for the soldiers and their ability to be effective.

A soldier from the 28th Massachusetts recollected, “Our regiment stood the fiercest fire that was witnessed...We ran through what we did not shoot. We bayoneted them. One man begged and got no mercy, a yankee ran him through. Thank God it was not an Irishman (that) did it.”⁵⁶ It is interesting to note how a soldier in the 28th Massachusetts, a primarily Irish-raised regiment, emphasized national heritage and identity during active combat.

During this initial attack, would leave an effect on the entire leadership through the rest of the campaign. Leading the attack, Gen. Stevens was killed during the assault. Col. Christ, the Brigade commander that included the 28th Massachusetts, immediately became Division commander until a later date when Gen. Willcox relieved him of duty.⁵⁷ This would have changed most of the command structure through at least the end of the day.

The Battle of Chantilly was not fought without its cost of the men of the 28th Massachusetts. In terms of total casualties, *The Civil War in the East* lists the 28th Massachusetts suffered 99 casualties, including Lt. Alexander Barrett

⁵⁶ Ibid, 64-65

⁵⁷ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 432

(Mortally wounded).⁵⁸ In contrast, Historian Donald Williams lists the total 28th Massachusetts casualties at 92.⁵⁹ One week later, the *Boston Daily Advertiser* posted the casualties of the latest actions, including the action at Chantilly:

⁵⁸ “The Civil War in the East: 28th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment,” *Civil War in the East*, 1862.

⁵⁹ Williams, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 178

Killed, wounded and missing in same regiment, Sept. 1, Capt. A. P. Carahu commanding, in consequence of Major Cartwright being wounded:—

Killed. Co. A—Patrick Callahan, shot through head; Timothy Kent, Patrick McCole, James Phillips, through heart.

Co. B—Serg't Timothy Cooke, private Timothy Leary.

Co. C—George W. Hall.

Co. F—Patrick Mitchell; Lieut. Alexander Barrett was wounded in breast, supposed mortally.

Co. K—Barney Gibbons, Patrick C. Sullivan.

Wounded. Co. A—Sergeant James A. McIntire, in shoulder and hand; Corporal Jeremiah Murphy, severely; Corporal Michael Carnes, in leg; Thomas Clark, in leg; John Crocker, in arm, slightly; Morris Cahill, in leg, slightly; John Duffy, in head; Dennis Day, in hip; Chas. Fennon, in arm; Bernard McIntire, in hand, slightly; Corporal Patrick Riley, in breast, severely.

Co. B—Charles Mahon, in leg; Sergeant Gibbons, in leg; Bernard Manning, in breast; Michael Hanley, in wrist; Sergeant Gray, wounded and missing; Bernard Wren, wounded and missing.

Co. C—Michael O'Donnel, wounded and missing; Hugh Maginnis, wounded and missing; Daniel Hanley, same; Corporal Daniel McGrath, in hand; Thomas O'Brien, in arm; Jeremiah O'Brien, in head; Michael Cavanaugh, severely; Michael Carey, severely.

Co. D—Sergeant John Fitzpatrick, severely; Sergeant John Hannagan, severely; Patrick Powderly, slightly; James Heberts, severely; Stephen Cronan, severely; Wm. Dolan, severely; Robert Lowder, slightly; Andrew Gulaly, slightly.

Co. E—Corporal Wm. Boynton, severely; Joseph A. Shirley, severely; Corporal Charles Goulding, Patrick Looby, James Daley, Michael Cotey, Patrick Higgins, James Taylor, David Corklond, Michael Casmon, Lieut. James McArdle, in arm.

Co. F—Lieut. Alex. Barrett, in breast; Sergt. Phillip Cavanaugh, in leg; Sergt. Geo. H. Farnham, in leg; Pat. Gainer, in leg; David Tyler, in thigh; James McAbey, in head and arm; Henry Shofer, in knee; James Coyle, in foot; Michael Coyle, in hand; Edward Sergeant, in mouth, severely; John Luth, in ankle; Peter Ready, in knee.

Co. G—W. H. Frizzle, in hand; Andrew Caswell, in hand; David S. Webber, in hand; Jas. Winn, missing.

Co. H—Jas. Short, breast, severely; John Meagher, severely; John Turner, arm broken; Thomas Blanchard, in groin; James McSweeney, in leg; Wm. Hallegen, in arm; Peter Ring, in side.

Co. I—Charles Flannegen, seriously in leg; Lewis I. Crosby, slightly in side; Corporal John Tift, severely in shoulder; John Killien, slightly in hand; John Kelly, in side; John Chadbourn, in chin; Noah Linacott, in leg; Richard Powers, severely in leg; Laurens Clark, in arm; James Goodwin, missing.

Co. K—John Griffin, finger off; Thos. Carly, same; John Moore, in thigh slightly; John Mahon, in side slightly; Barney Baxter, in leg slightly; Maurice Condon, in leg slightly; Patrick Lowrey, in thigh; Edward Farrell, in thigh.

Figure 17: ⁶⁰ Above: 28th Massachusetts Casualties at Chantilly
Photo Credit: **Boston Daily Advertiser**

⁶⁰ "Losses in Massachusetts Regiments" in *Boston Daily Advertiser*, (Sept. 8, 1862). Vol.100 Issue 15000. <https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752464852>

Donald Williams's breakdown of the 28th Massachusetts casualties (by company) from the Battle of Chantilly include:⁶¹

Killed: 25

- Co. A- 5
- Co. B- 4
- Co. C- 2
- Co. D- 2
- Co. E- 1
- Co. F- 4
- Co. G- 1
- Co. H- 4
- Co. K- 2

Wounded/ Missing/Captured: 67

- Staff- 1
- Co. A- 10
- Co. B- 2
- Co. C- 7
- Co. D- 8
- Co. E- 2
- Co. F- 9
- Co. G- 5
- Co. H- 4
- Co. I- 11
- Co. K- 8

After the battle had lasted until after nightfall, Gen. Willcox added that the division had remained on the battlefield until the next day.⁶² Beginning on September 2nd, the 28th Massachusetts along with the other units in division

⁶¹ Williams, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 178

⁶² Ibid, 432

began the pursuit of Confederate forces into Maryland. The first day involved marching towards Alexandria, Virginia. after staying for a few days, the division crossed Long Bridge and encamped on Meridian Hill, Washington at 4:00am on September 5th.⁶³

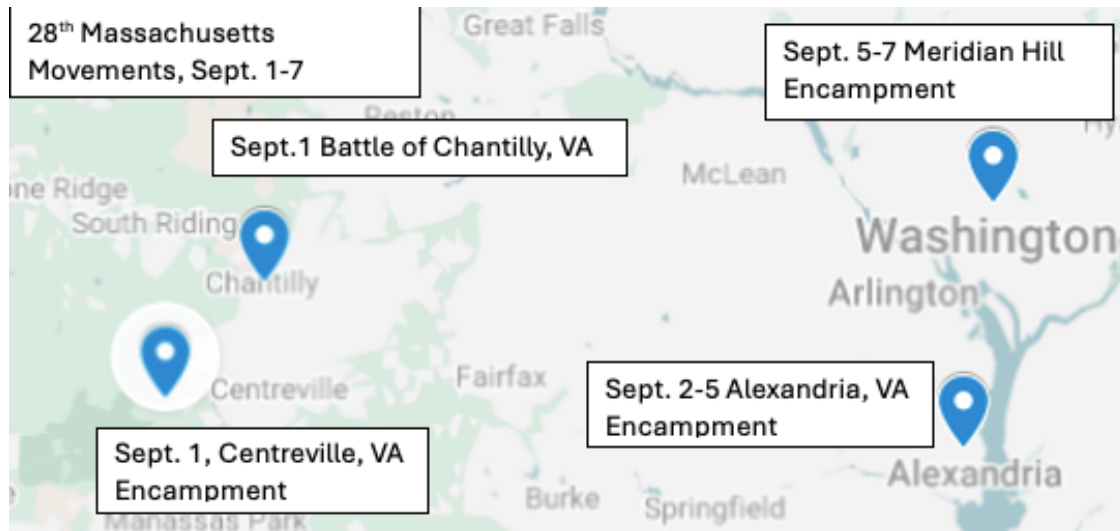


Figure 18: 28th Massachusetts Movements Sept 1-7, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

The 28th Massachusetts would have crossed into Maryland at some point on September 7th. Where at 8:00 a.m., the division left their encampment in Washington, D.C. and marched to “Leesborough” (Leesboro), Maryland about 10 miles away around 7:00 p.m.⁶⁴

⁶³ Ibid, 432

⁶⁴ Ibid, 432

September 8th began a new chapter for the division. Gen. Willcox arrived and assumed command of the division from Col. Christ. At 6:30 a.m. the next morning, Gen. Willcox and his division moved to Brookville, Maryland at 2:00 p.m.⁶⁵ By September 11th, the division had moved to New Market encamping at Forer's Creek for a night.

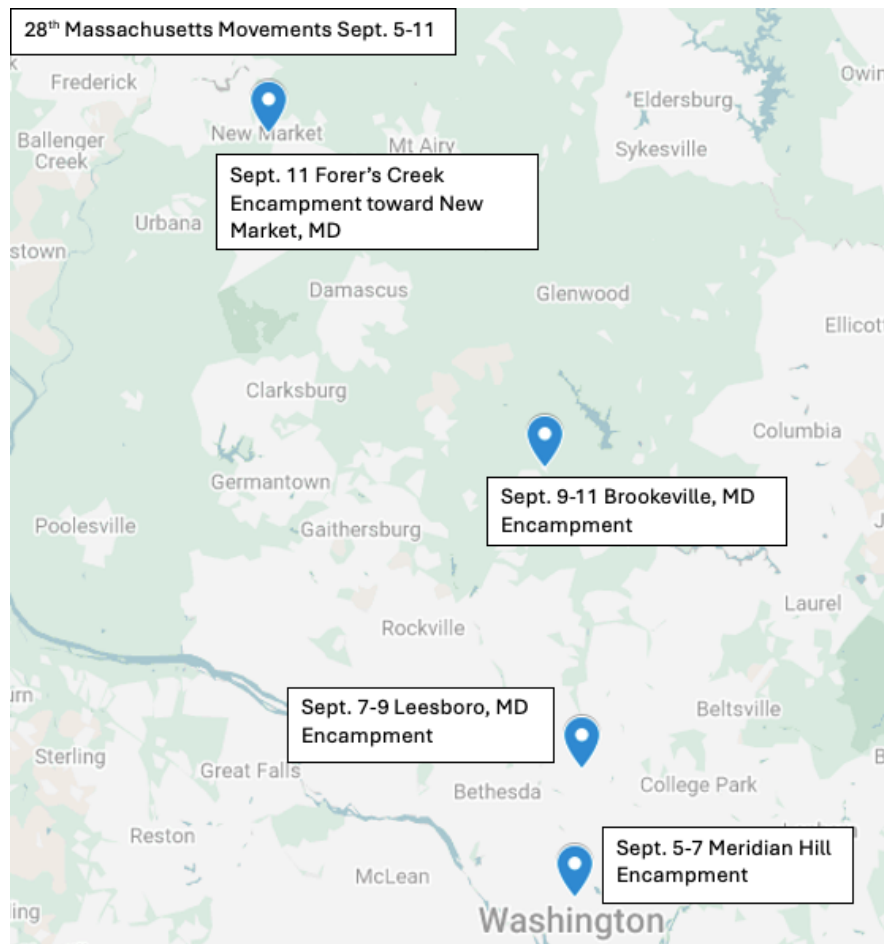


Figure 19: 28th Massachusetts Movements Sept. 5-11, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

⁶⁵ Ibid, 432

Moving ever closer to the mountain passes that separates the Union and Confederate Armies, the division moved towards Monocacy, within two miles of Frederick City.⁶⁶ September 13th was the last day of marching for the 28th Massachusetts before their next major engagement. At 2:00 p.m., the division moved to within 1.5 miles of Middletown, Maryland.⁶⁷



Figure 20: 28th Massachusetts Movements Sept. 11-14, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

⁶⁶ Ibid, 432

⁶⁷ ibid, 432

BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN

SEPTEMBER 14, 1862

Introduction:

In September of 1862, the Army of the Potomac had pursued the Confederates to Frederick, Maryland and deployed to advance onto South Mountain. Because of the mountainous landscape, the Confederates blocked gaps within the mountain range to prevent the Union Army's passage. These Gaps were Crampton's, Turner's, and Fox's Gaps.⁶⁸ The 28th Massachusetts and the other regiments of Gen. Willcox's 1st Division engaged at Fox's Gap.⁶⁹

During the early stages of the attack, Gen. Willcox had engaged most of his units to the left of the Old Sharpsburg Road, the key roadway leading through Fox's Gap. The 28th Massachusetts was held in a supporting role behind the 17th Michigan Regiment, alone in attacking along the immediate right side of the road.⁷⁰ Gen. Willcox noted this attack in his itinerary of the campaign:

⁶⁸ "The Civil War, Battle Detail: South Mountain," National Park Service CWSAC Reference: MD002, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battles-detail.htm?battleCode=md002>

⁶⁹ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*. 432

⁷⁰ David Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys: The Union IX Corps and the Civil War in the East*, p. 109

September 14, division ordered to South Mountain by Boonesborough Road, left of the main pike, and engaged the enemy at Shriver's (Fox's) Gap, on the right of Cox's Division. Enemy dislodged with heavy loss, and collected 1,100 stand of arms and some hundred prisoners.⁷¹

General Cox, watching Gen. Willcox's attack on his right, exclaimed, "The advance was made with the utmost enthusiasm...", adding that Gen. Willcox's regiments, "gallantly overcame all obstacles."⁷²

Although the 28th Massachusetts was held in a supporting role during the initial assault on Fox's Gap, the regiment was eventually deployed to the front to face a Confederate counterattack. Col. Christ, noted in his after-action report, "Later in the day the... Twenty-eighth Massachusetts Volunteers were ordered to the front, and assisted in repulsing the enemy in his second attempt to force our lines."⁷³

In examination of the day and his brigade, Col. Christ added the note, "With few exceptions, both officers and men discharged their whole duty."⁷⁴

As a result of their attack, the 28th Massachusetts did sustain a few battlefield casualties listed in the reported returns for South Mountain. Col.

⁷¹ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion*, 432

⁷² Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys*, 109

⁷³ C.B. Christ, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XXVII, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1902,), 438.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 438.

Christ officially reported that the 28th Massachusetts suffered 1 officer wounded as well as 6 enlisted wounded for a total of 7 Casualties.⁷⁵ Historian Donald Williams listed 8 wounded casualties in his compilation.⁷⁶

Donald Williams's breakdown of the 28th Massachusetts casualties (by company) from the Battle of South Mountain:⁷⁷

Wounded:

Co. B- 1

Co. F- 1

Co. H- 1

Co. I- 2

Co. K- 3

The line of battle at Fox's Gap can be seen in this map from these points of view. The 28th Massachusetts would have been on the right of the IX Corps:

⁷⁵ Christ, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 186

⁷⁶ Williams, *Campaigning With the Irish Brigade*, 178

⁷⁷ Ibid, 178

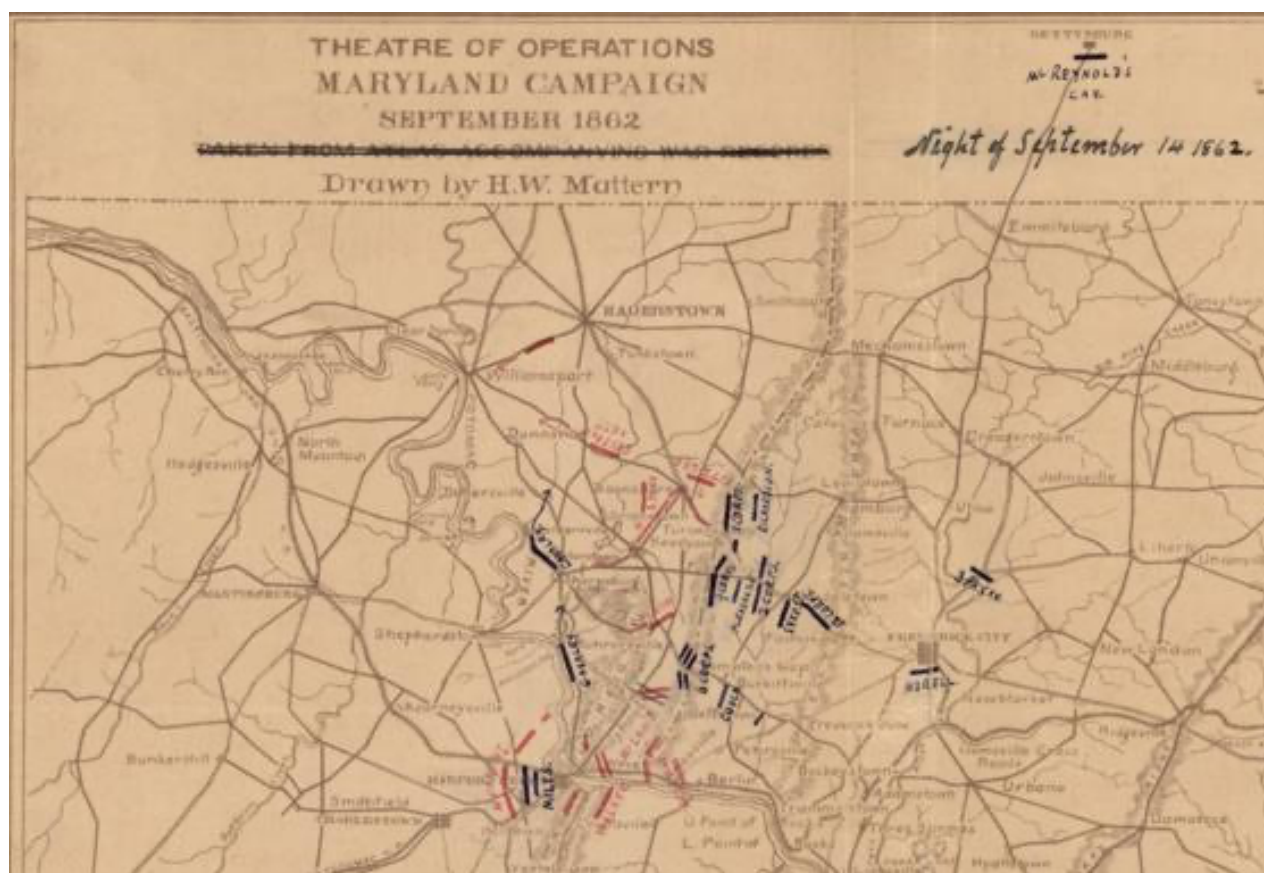


Figure 21: ⁷⁸ Above: Battle Lines depicting South Mountain on Sept. 14
 Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

⁷⁸ Free Image Domain, *Library of Congress*, H.W. Mattern, "Theatre of operations, Maryland Campaign, September 1862," Maps, Washington D.C., 1862. <https://lccn.loc.gov/2009584566>



Figure 22: ⁷⁹ Above: Battle lines depicting Fox's Gap on South Mountain; Sept. 14

Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

After the Battle of South Mountain, Union Divisions started maneuvering through the newly opened mountain passes and kept the pursuit of the Confederate Army going. Gen. Willcox added for the subsequent days of the campaign, "September 15, marched a short distance after crossing South Mountain, and halted around 11 p.m., at which time resumed march and continued to near Porterstown."⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ibid, 1

⁸⁰ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 431.

The 28th Massachusetts would still soon be near action, however, on Sept. 16, the division encountered more enemy resistance. Gen. Willcox added that, “September 16, an artillery engagement occurred, in which Benjamin’s battery took part. Christ’s brigade on picket duty.”⁸¹ This would have meant the 28th Massachusetts and the other regiments in Christ’s brigade would have been the first line of defense against attacks threatening the Union artillery during their engagement. This engagement would turn to be just a small taste of what would befall the regiment on the 17th.

THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM

SEPTEMBER 17, 1862

The 28th Massachusetts and the rest of Christ’s brigade found themselves in the thick of the afternoon fighting at the Battle of Antietam. Gen. Burnside’s IX Corps attacked repeatedly across a bridge (now referred to as Burnside Bridge) in lower Antietam Creek to put pressure on the Confederate Army. Around 1:00 p.m., Burnside had successfully forced the

⁸¹ Ibid, 431

defending Confederate units to retreat which secured the bridge for the Union Army.⁸²

With the bridge navigable, the 28th Massachusetts was then deployed into action. Broadly, Gen. Willcox noted that the division,

...marched to Antietam Creek, crossed to the west bank by the stone bridge, and took position on Rodman's right and on both sides of the road, toward Sharpsburg, and engaged the enemy driving them in confusion from their position opposite our front, and held the position till ordered by General Burnside to fall back a short distance, holding the west bank of the Antietam, near a ford, and the road to the bridge.⁸³

The section of the battlefield that the 28th Massachusetts would have been deployed on can be seen on this map:

⁸² "Burnside Bridge: Antietam National Battlefield" National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/places/antietam-battlefield-burnside-bridge.htm>

⁸³ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 431



Figure 23: ⁸⁴ Above: Depicting Antietam Creek section of the battlefield.
Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

Col. Benjamin Christ, leading his brigade which included the 28th Massachusetts, crossed the bridge and followed the road for a few hundred yards. With the enemy on his left guarding the town of Sharpsburg, Col. Christ and his 1st Brigade formed his line of battle on the right side of the road headed into town.⁸⁵ Note in Figure 23, where the road crosses Burnside Bridge in the bottom right-hand corner. The road follows the creek then bends toward Sharpsburg. The 28th Massachusetts would have formed into the line of battle

⁸⁴ Free Image Domain, Library of Congress, Nathaniel Michler, "Antietam," 1867, <https://lccn.loc.gov/99447379>

⁸⁵ Christ, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 438

on the right side of the road where it bends into town and engaged the enemy through the fields between the creek and the town. Better shown in this map:

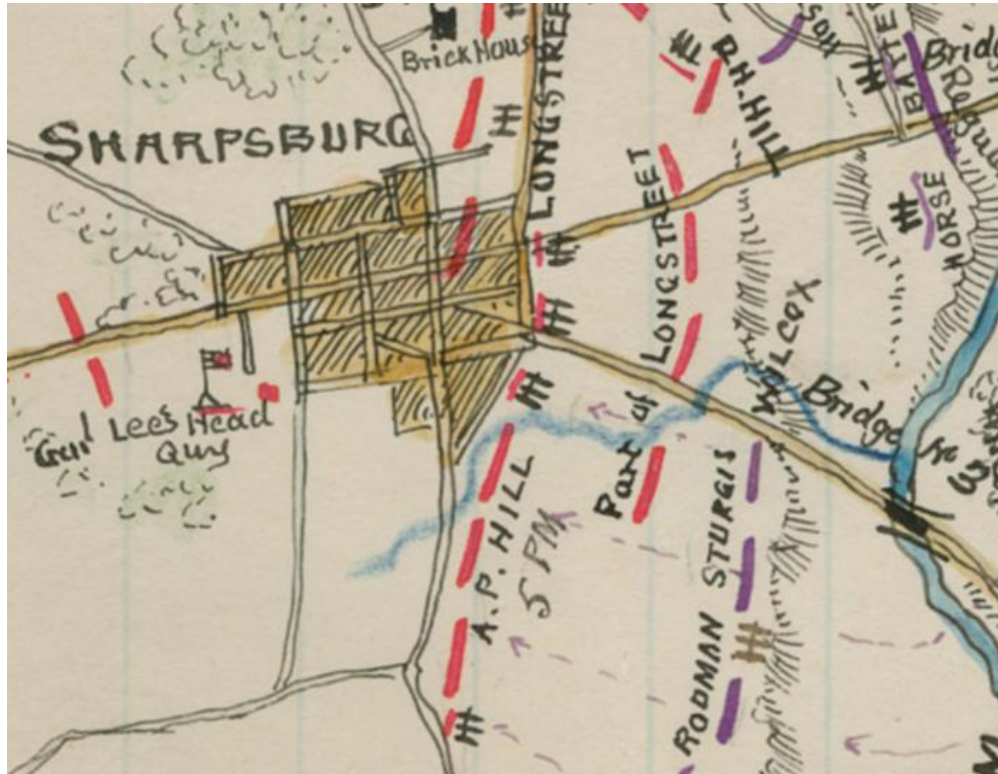


Figure 24: ⁸⁶ Above: 28th Massachusetts (In Willcox's Division) attacking into Sharpsburg

Photo Credit: **Library of Congress, Washington D.C.**

There was a problem however, as Col. Christ was not supported by other infantry regiments on the left of the road as they were deploying,

⁸⁶ Robert Knox Sneden . *Battle of the Antietam*. [1862-1865] Map.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00044/>.

causing him to pause his attack until further support could disperse the Confederate fire.⁸⁷ Col. Christ noted,

While halting under cover from the enemy directly in front, he opened a battery on my left which commanded my whole line from left to right, and for thirty minutes we were under a most severe fire of round shot, shell, grape, and canister, and suffered severely.⁸⁸

Fortunately, Col. Christ's support came through, which allowed him to be able to push his line into engaging the enemy. Col. Christ noted in his deployment,

A demonstration on the left compelled the enemy to change the direction of his fire, and my supports coming, we moved to the front, where we engaged the enemy on his left, and in about one hour succeeded in driving both his artillery and infantry from the position.⁸⁹

This attack into the outskirts of Sharpsburg was successful for the 28th Massachusetts and their part of the line. Specifically, Col. Christ charged on the Confederate battery with the 17th Michigan which led the line of battle formation and deployed the 50th Pennsylvania and 28th Massachusetts to support the charge.⁹⁰

Once the brigade reached 100 yds from the battery, however, the Confederate battery retreated behind the cover of sharpshooters in the forest. This is where Col. Christ retired the 17th Michigan back into the line-formation

⁸⁷ Ibid, 438

⁸⁸ Ibid, 438

⁸⁹ Ibid, 438

⁹⁰ Ibid, 438-439

with the 50th Pennsylvania and the 28th Massachusetts where they held until the general retreat to the bank of the Antietam protecting the bridge. This defensive position is where the 28th Massachusetts stayed for the remainder of the night on September 17th.⁹¹

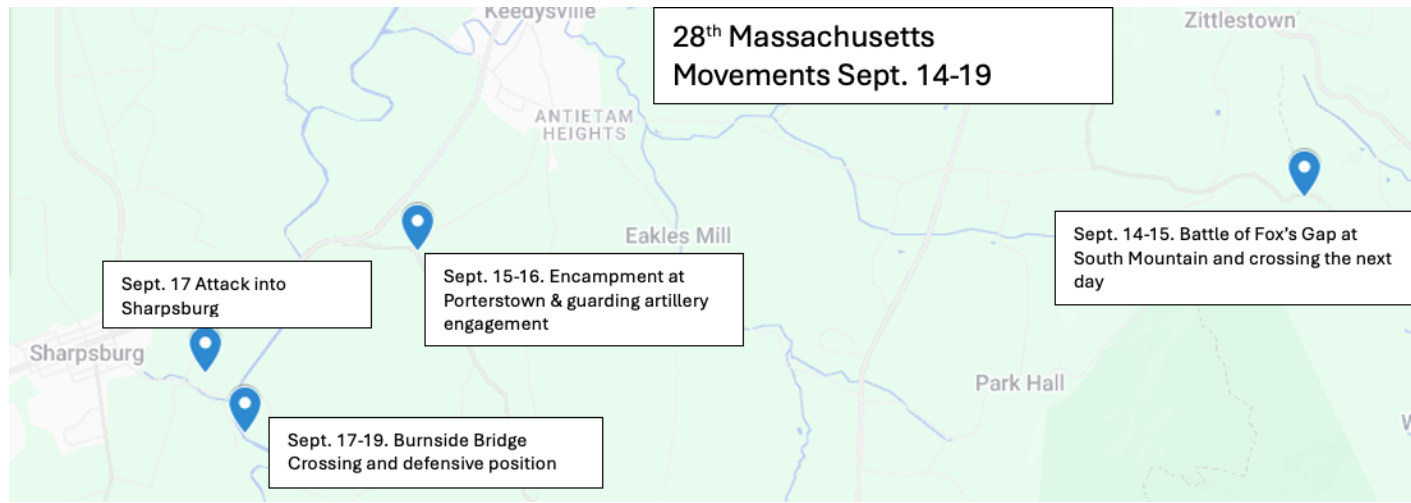


Figure 25: 28th Massachusetts Movements Sept. 14-19, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

The 28th Massachusetts sustained several casualties as a result of the action at Antietam. The *Civil War in the East* lists the total 28th Massachusetts casualties include 18 Killed, 40 wounded, and 1 missing.⁹² In contrast, Historian Donald Williams listed the total casualties at 51.⁹³ Col. Christ noted a strong sentiment for how the 28th and the rest of his brigade fought:

⁹¹ Ibid, 439

⁹² "The Civil War in the East: 28th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment," *Civil War in the East*, 1862.

⁹³ Williams, *Campaigning With the Irish Brigade*, 178

In this engagement it is impossible to particularize regiments, officers, or men, for, from the moment we were brought under fire until ordered to retire near the bridge, all displayed the utmost coolness and courage, ready and prompt to move forward at the word of command, and both officers and men vying with each other in the discharge of their duty.⁹⁴

After the Battle of Antietam, Partial lists of soldiers that became casualties during the Maryland Campaign started to reach the media in Boston. These are from partial listings from the *Boston Daily Advertiser* and the *Boston Pilot*: They include names, company, and injuries.

William Burns, Co. H (Foot), Michael Corbitt, Co. I (Thigh), P. Dangborn, Co. K (Hand), M. Driscoll, Co. F (Hand), W.J. Le Moyne, Co. B (in Head Slightly)⁹⁵, Patrick Bigman Co. H, Daniel Murphy, Co. A⁹⁶

The *Boston Pilot* also recorded the casualties from Massachusetts regiments coming in from the campaign as well. Here is a listing from early October concerning the casualties from the 28th Massachusetts:

⁹⁴ Christ, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 439

⁹⁵ "The Killed and Wounded," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Vol. 100, Issue 15009 No. 69. Thursday, Sept. 18, 1862, Boston, MA, Pg. 2. <https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752122305>

⁹⁶ "The Casualties in the Late Battles," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Vol. 100, Issue 15010 No. 70. Friday Sept. 19, 1862, Boston, MA, Pg. 2. <https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752122347>

MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENTS.

TWENTY-EIGHTH.

Co A. Killed, Private Joel C Ellis. Wounded, corporal Wm Lynch, leg shot off; privates Wm Lenken. in both legs, severely; John Lyons, in arm, slightly.

Co B. Killed, privates Timothy Cannoly, John Hogan. Wounded slightly, sergt Patk McIntyre shoulder, privates Daniel Crowley leg, John Knight do. Daniel Power, ankle, Patk Foley, hand.

Co C. Wounded slightly, Capt John H Brennan, stomach, Edw Fox back, Patk Laven leg; severely, Sergt Robt McNally neck, corp John Nalty do.

Co D. Killed, 1st sergt Martin Quinn, private Michael Quinn. Wounded, Robert Quail.

Co E. Wounded severely, privates John H Hodde, Cornelius Linehan, John Stritch leg, James Taylor arm.

Co F. Killed, private Wm Burke. Wounded, privates Pa k Stokes, Michael Joyce.

Co G. Killed, corp Francis Nicholson. Wounded, Edward Houghton, Thos Riley, severely; Simeon Walsh, slightly.

Co H. Killed, Lieut N J Barrett, 1st Sergt Thos Cline, Peter Donnelly. Wounded severely, corporals Patk Sweeney, Michael Quilty; Peter Sheehy, Thos Moriarty; slightly, Patk Kelly, Maurice Roach.

Co I. Killed, Michael Dolan, Thomas Fleming. Wounded, sergt Chas V Smith, Robert Wiseman, Michael Tenney, James McCafferty, Lawrence McLaughlin.

Co K. Wounded, sergt Harrington in leg, Edw McGowan arm shot off.

Total—Killed, 12; Wounded, 36

Figure 26: ⁹⁷ Above: Listing 28th Massachusetts Regiment Casualties
Photo Credit: **Boston Pilot**

⁹⁷ "Massachusetts Regiments," *The Boston Pilot*, Volume 25, No. 41, 4 Oct. 1862, Boston, MA, Pg 5.
<https://newspapers.bc.edu/?a=d&d=pilot18621004-01.2.17>

Donald Williams's breakdown of 28th Massachusetts casualties (by company) from the Battle of Antietam:⁹⁸

Killed: 18

Co. A- 3

Co. B- 2

Co. C- 1

Co. D- 2

Co. F- 3

Co. G- 1

Co. H- 3

Co. I- 3

Wounded/Missing: 33

Co. A- 1

Co. B- 5

Co. C- 4

Co. D- 1

Co. E- 5

Co. F- 2

Co. G- 3

Co. H- 6

Co. I- 4

Co. K- 2

After the Battle, the Regiment stayed in their position until around 5:00 p.m. the day after the attack, Sept. 18, and recrossed the creek once relieved by additional units.⁹⁹ Starting on Sept. 19th, the 28th Massachusetts along with the entire IX Corps 1st Division was already mobile and moving elsewhere.

⁹⁸ Williams, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 178

⁹⁹ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 432

Their movement on the 19th consisted of recrossing the Antietam Creek and marched southward towards the Potomac River, encamping near the Shepherdstown Ford.¹⁰⁰ A week later, on Sept. 26th, the division moved to the east side of the Antietam Creek and encamped at Antietam Iron Works where Gen. Willcox added they continue, “...drilling and doing picket duty.”¹⁰¹



Figure 27: 28th Massachusetts Movements Sept. 17- Oct. 11, 1862

Made with: **Google: My Maps**

On October 7th, Gen. Willcox and his division moved to Pleasant Valley, MD. During this time, specific units within the division were sent away from the general encampment to move to different objectives. The 1st Brigade was

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 432

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 432

sent to Frederick, MD on Oct. 11th, where under the command of Colonel Adolphus Williams, the 28th Massachusetts and with nine companies of the 20th Michigan Infantry were sent to guard Noland's Ferry.¹⁰²

During this time at Noland's Ferry, the 28th Massachusetts would see a shakeup in terms of command structure. Massachusetts Governor John Andrew had appointed a new commander for the regiment; Colonel Richard Byrnes. Col. Byrnes arrived to the 28th Massachusetts on October 18 and was met with displeasure from the existing officers in the unit. Seven of these officers even wrote a petition to Gov. Andrew to show their displeasure at the appointment.¹⁰³

On Oct. 26th, the division, along with the other members of the first brigade, left Pleasant Valley and crossed back into Virginia on a pontoon bridge at Berlin (Now Brunswick), MD headed to where they would stay at Lovettsville, VA for a few days. On Oct 29th, the 28th Massachusetts from Noland's Ferry probably crossed at Heedle's Ford near Point of Rocks, Maryland where they proceeded to rejoin the division at Waterford, VA.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Ibid, 433

¹⁰³ "Regimental History: 1862" 28th Massachusetts: Volunteer Infantry 4th Regiment Irish Brigade, <https://www.28thmass.org/history3.htm>

¹⁰⁴ Willcox, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 433

It is doubtful that the 28th Massachusetts joined the rest of the first brigade in going back up to Pleasant Valley on Oct. 15th because of an addition Gen. Willcox made in his report: “On October 29 brigade moved from Point of Rocks, forded the Potomac at Heedle's Ford, and joined remainder of the division at Waterford at 5 p. m. the same day.”¹⁰⁵ Gen. Willcox likely referred to the 28th Massachusetts as an undefined brigade because they were only attached to Noland’s Ferry with most of the 20th Michigan Regiment and while there, they would not have been with one of the official brigades within the division structure.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 433

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 433



Figure 28: 28th Massachusetts Movements Oct. 7- Nov. 1, 1862

Made with: **Google: My Maps**

In the days that followed their encampment at Waterford, the brigade and division commanders for the 28th Massachusetts did not submit detailed itineraries and daily marches with much detail, however most of the units in the IX Corps followed roughly the same itinerary during this time. By

November 2nd, the IX Corps' First Division of which the 28th Massachusetts was still a part, made their way to the town of Wheatland VA. From there, the first division of the IX Corps were ordered to the vicinity of Philomont, VA near the town of Union (now Unison), VA on Nov. 2nd.¹⁰⁷

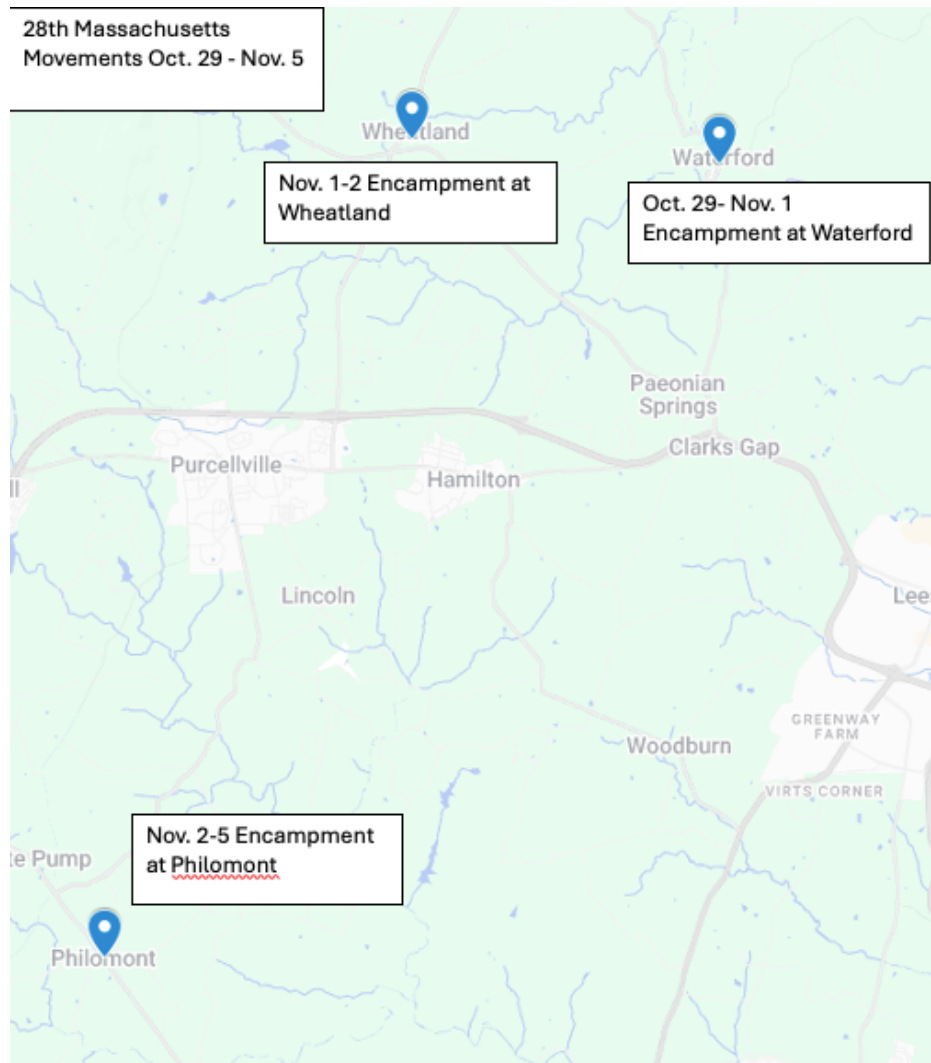


Figure 29: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements Oct. 29-Nov. 5, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

¹⁰⁷ Robert A. Hutchins, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. LI, No. II (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1897), 914-915

On November 5th, the 28th Massachusetts, along with the entire IX Corps, was already moving to cross the Rappahannock River at Waterloo, VA, on their way to encamp near Warrenton.¹⁰⁸ Marching through the snowy weather, the IX Corps reached Waterloo and the Rappahannock by the end of November 6.¹⁰⁹ There they would stay until November 15th, when Gen. Burnside assumes command of the Army of the Potomac and started moving his army towards Fredericksburg.¹¹⁰

During this time near Waterloo, there was a light combat skirmish against the IX Corps near (Fauquier) Sulphur Springs, VA. During the fighting, the 28th Massachusetts along with the rest of the First Division were forced to maneuver to secure the lines. On the morning of November 15, General Sturgis's Second Division had been attacked by confederate artillery fire which prohibited the movement of troops.¹¹¹ Brig. Gen. Ferrero mentions what he witnessed of the First Division maneuvers in his report: "Shortly after the

¹⁰⁸ C.K. Jr. "The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies Series I-Vol. LI, No. II (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1897), 927

¹⁰⁹ Wipperman, *Burnside's Boys*, 214

¹¹⁰ Robert N. Scott, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888), 83-84

¹¹¹ Edward Ferrero, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888), 4-5

silencing of the enemy's guns, I was relieved by General Burns, who occupied with his division the position I had held, and I resumed the march to Fayetteville.”¹¹²

What the 28th Massachusetts would have done here was deploy with the rest of the division into position, securing the route near the springs to allow for the divisions to continue maneuvering. This is evident after the fighting had finished because of the description (now IX Corps commander) Gen. Willcox gave: “General Burns’ division is in position on both sides of the pike at Sulphur Springs, picketing in both directions.”¹¹³ This meant that going forward from November 15, the 28th Massachusetts and the First Division were guarding both sides of the main road running through (Fauquier) Sulphur Springs.

On the night of November 15th, the 28th Massachusetts kept moving towards Rappahannock Station which they would eventually reach after midnight. Encamping at the station for over a full day, the 28th Massachusetts resumed the march on November 17th.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Ibid, 5

¹¹³ O.B. Willcox, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888), 4

¹¹⁴ John Ryan, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 64

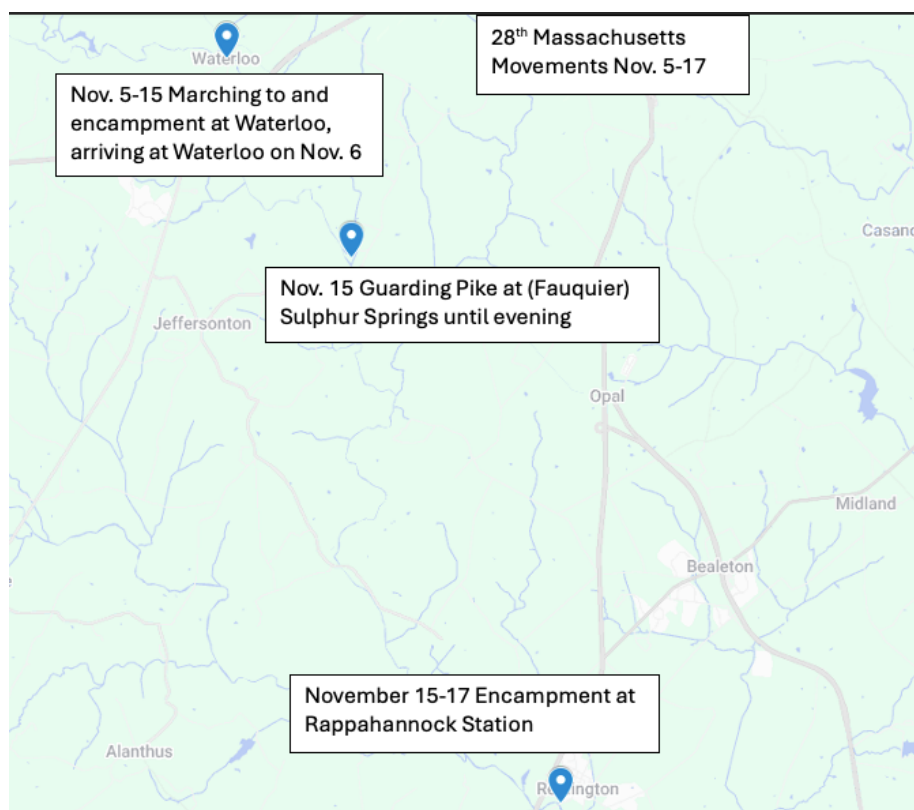


Figure 30: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements Nov. 5-17, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

There is good evidence to suggest that the night of the 17th was spent in the vicinity around Morgansburg, VA. Pvt. John Ryan, 28th Massachusetts, stated that, “On the morning of the 17th, we marched towards Fredericksburg, about ten miles, and resumed the march the morning of the 18th.¹¹⁵ Maj.

General. John Parke, Chief of Staff for the IX Corps, stated in his correspondence before the march that: “One of General Sumner's corps has moved beyond Warrenton Junction; the other is near Fayetteville. It is

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 65

probable his whole force will move down the direct road through Morgansburg and Hartwood.”¹¹⁶ By road, Morgansburg is around 10 miles from Rappahannock Station and 15 miles from Hartwood Church. Pvt. John Ryan confirmed this route by asserting that after resuming the march on the 18th, the regiment marched for another 15 miles until they encamped for the night at Hartwood Church.¹¹⁷

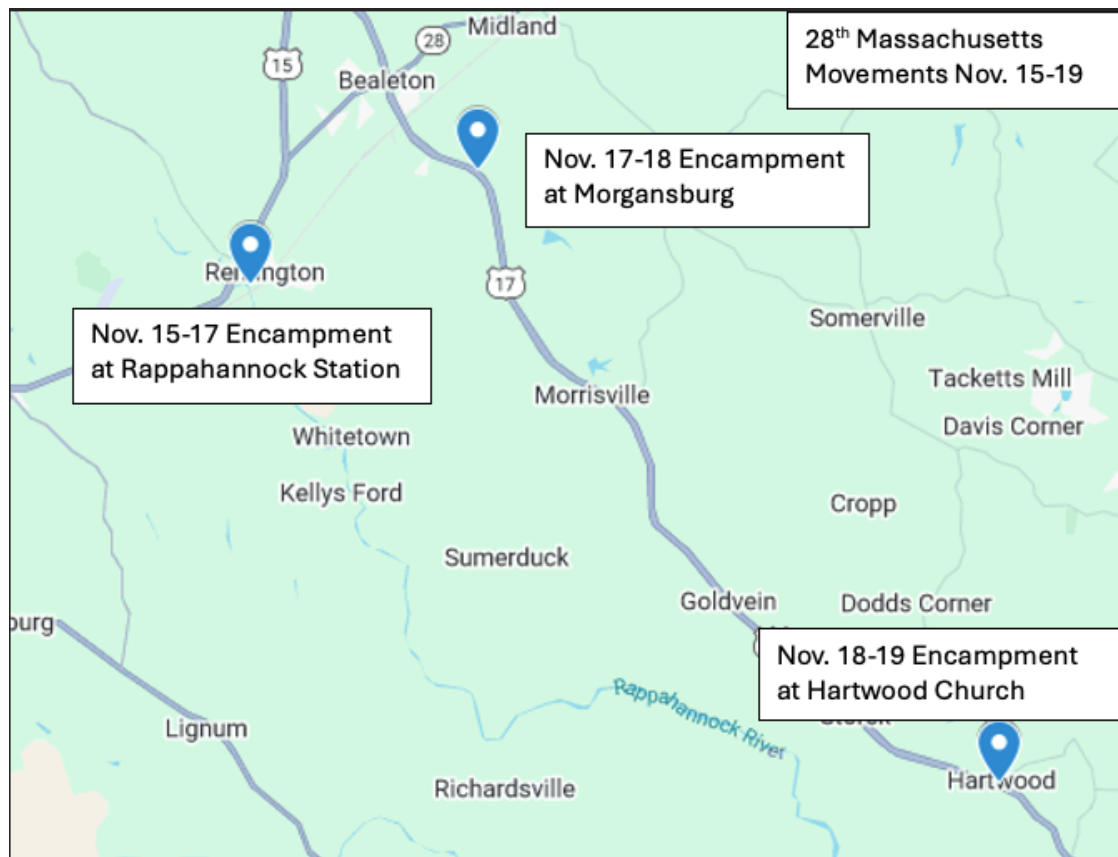


Figure 31: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements Nov. 15-19, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

¹¹⁶ John Parke, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888), 760

¹¹⁷ John Ryan, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 65

By November 19th, the 28th Massachusetts reached their encampment at their destination passing through Falmouth and settling in around Stafford Heights, which stood directly opposite Fredericksburg.¹¹⁸ Historian Darin Wipperman noted that shortly before transferring out of the IX Corps, the 28th Massachusetts would have, “...enjoyed the beautiful view of Fredericksburg as the grand division formed up on the opposite side of the river.”¹¹⁹ A few days later, on November 23rd, the 28th Massachusetts would transfer out of the Union’s IX Corps and into the famed “Irish Brigade”.¹²⁰ This brigade was commanded by Brig. Gen. Thomas F. Meagher in Maj. Gen. Darius N. Couch’s Second Army Corps.¹²¹ To cement this transfer, the 28th Massachusetts would move to leave their encampment with the IX Corps to move to where the rest of the Irish Brigade had been established just outside of Falmouth.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 65.

¹¹⁹ Wipperman, *Burnside’s Boys*, 219.

¹²⁰ Lawrence Frederick Cole, Margaret Cossé Richard, *Irish Green and Union Blue: The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh Color Sergeant 28th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers*, ed. by Lawrence Frederick Cole and Margaret Cossé Richard, (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1986, Kindle Edition), xxi

¹²¹ Robert N. Scott, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. 49.

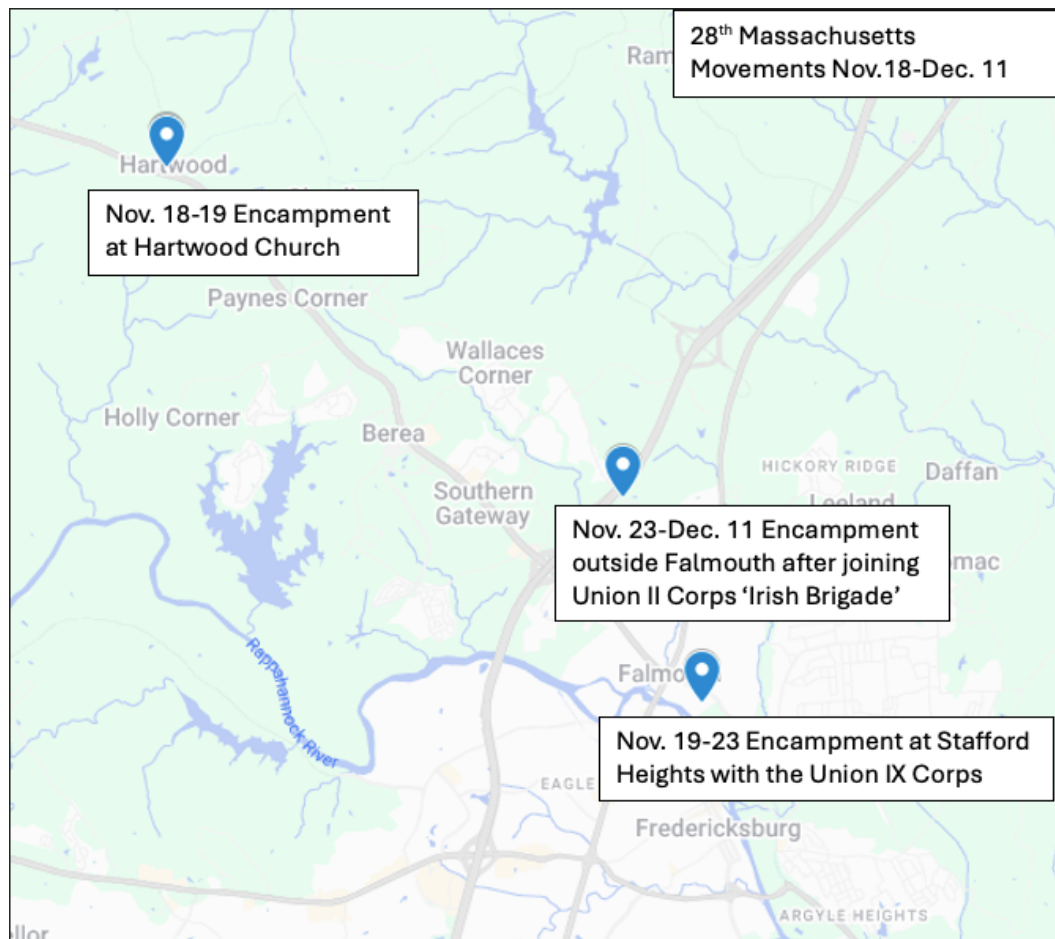


Figure 32: Above: 28th Massachusetts Movements Nov. 18-Dec. 11, 1862
Made with: **Google: My Maps**

Pvt. John Ryan, in his memoir years later, recalled the moment they joined the Irish Brigade in the field:

We broke camp and marched to the Irish Brigade which was encamped about a mile and a half from the town of Falmouth, Va...As we approached the Irish Brigade, General Meagher had the other four regiments all drawn up in line with open ranks. As we marched through, the other regiments, consisting of the 63rd, 69th, and 88th New York, and the 116th Penn., all presented arms and we brought our guns to a carry.¹²²

¹²² John Ryan, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade*, 71.

This moment would have been important to the Irish Brigade as it established a formal introduction into the brigade for the 28th Massachusetts. To help add to the support amongst the troops, Ryan noted that amongst their welcome, “General Meagher and his staff rang out, ”Three cheers for the 5th Irish Regiment of the Brigade.” The cheers were given with a will and were returned by the 28th. ”¹²³

Gen. Meagher, in his reports later in December, added a comment about the 28th Massachusetts joining the Irish Brigade:

The Twenty-eighth was originally destined for the brigade; it was raised specially for it. Its ranks were filled under the impression it would be one of the first regiments of the brigade. Under that impression hundreds of good and true men enrolled themselves in it, but, owing to some blunder, the Twenty-eighth was ordered to Port Koyal, and it was not until the other day that, through the friendly interposition of General Simmer, it renewed its associations with the Irish Brigade.¹²⁴

The 28th Massachusetts’s introduction to the Irish Brigade would also prove to open an opportunity to update the regiment’s appearance more fitting to be a part of the Irish Brigade. Gen. Meagher presented the 28th Massachusetts with regimental colors from the famed Tiffany & Co. in New

¹²³ Ibid, 71.

¹²⁴ Thomas F. Meagher, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888), 242.

York. This famous regimental would be referred to as the “Second Irish (or Tiffany Flag).” Shown here: (To learn more about the flag click on the picture)



Figure 33: ¹²⁵ Above: Second Irish Regimental ‘Tiffany Flag’
Photo Credit: ***Massachusetts State House Battle Flag Collection***

It should be noted that in Gen. Meagher’s welcome ceremony, he referred to the 28th Massachusetts as the Fifth Regiment of the Irish Brigade, however on the standards the 28th Massachusetts was officially designated as the “4th

¹²⁵ 28th Massachusetts Second Irish Regimental ‘Tiffany Flag’, Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division

Regiment”. This is likely because the 28th Massachusetts was the 5th regiment joining the Irish Brigade at the time. Fortunately, however, when Meagher placed the order for the colors, he ordered one for the “4th Regiment”, and the colors had not been claimed by any earlier regiment until the 28th Massachusetts’s arrival.¹²⁶

This chapter of the war from mid-July to early-December of 1862 was a trying time for the members of the 28th Massachusetts. Every company in the regiment combined for well over one hundred casualties and several killed during the fighting throughout Virginia and Maryland. These casualties would have created grieving, mourning, and loss from both family and friends in both the unit and back home. Several commanders in the command structure had been casualties, promoted, or transferred which would have changed leadership styles within the unit over this time as well. During this time, mileage and experience would have also help bolster this unit into a prime veteran unit. Having marched, picketed, fought, and camped over several types of terrain helped harden the 28th Massachusetts for the chapters to come.

¹²⁶ “Flags of the 28th Massachusetts (continued)”: 1862” *28th Massachusetts: Volunteer Infantry 4th Regiment Irish Brigade*, <https://www.28thmass.org/flags3.htm>



Acknowledgements:

There are many people to thank for their help in making this analysis possible. Some notable ones are Jerome Lynes, who helped frame this project and helped by sharing research databases. State House Curator Susan Greendyke Lachevre and the Massachusetts State House archive team for providing detailed information regarding the 28th Massachusetts colors. I would also like to thank those who did research for the public websites of the two 28th Massachusetts reenactor units (Company H in New England, www.28thmass.org and Company B in the Washington DC area, www.28thMassCoB.org). Both have provided very good leads historically.

I alone, Paul Hanna take responsibility for any errors and omissions in this document

Author: Paul Hanna, 2025

Contact: paul24426@me.com

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Albert, Allen D. ed., *History of the Forty-Fifth Regiment Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry, 1861-1865* (Williamsport, PA: Grit Publishing Company, 1912)

Christ, C.B. *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XXVII, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1902, Accessed July 13, 2025.

<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion011901rootrich/page/436/mod/e/2up>

Ferrero, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888

Hutchins, Robert A. *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. LI, No. II (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1897), 914-915

Jr. C.K. “*The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies* Series I-Vol. LI, No. II (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1897

“Losses in Massachusetts Regiments” in *Boston Daily Advertiser*, (Sept. 8, 1862). Vol.100 Issue 15000. Accessed July 13, 2025.

<https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752464852>

28th Massachusetts First Irish Regimental ‘Pilot Flag’, Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division.

28th Massachusetts ‘First National’ Flag, Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division.

28th Massachusetts Second Irish Regimental 'Tiffany Flag', Massachusetts State House Flag Collection, Massachusetts State Archives Division

Meagher, Thomas F. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888).

"Massachusetts Regiments," *The Boston Pilot*, Volume 25, No. 41, 4 Oct. 1862, Boston, MA. Accessed July 13, 2025.
<https://newspapers.bc.edu/?a=d&d=pilot18621004-01.2.17>

Mattern, H. W, and Ezra Ayers Carman. *Theatre of operations, Maryland Campaign, September*. (Washington, D.C., 1862) Map. Accessed July 13, 2025. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2009584566/>.

Michler, N. *Antietam*. S.I., Photo-lith. by the N.Y. Lithographing, Engraving & Printing Co., Julius Bien, Supt, 1867, Map. Accessed July 13, 2025.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/99447379/>.

Parke, John G. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888

Ryan, John, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade: Pvt. John Ryan, 28th Massachusetts*, ed. by Sandy Barnard, (Terre Haute, IN: AST Press, 2001)

Scott, Robert N. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888)

Selfridge, R.O., *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XII, No III. Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1885,

Sneden, Robert Knox. *Battle of the Antietam*. [1862-1865] Map. Accessed July 30, 2025.<https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00044/>.

Sneden, Robert Knox. *Plan of the Battle of Chantilly, Virginia: September 1st 5 to 9 p.m.* (1862-1865) Map. Accessed July 13, 2025.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/gvhs01.vhs00108/>.

Stevens, Isaac I. *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XII No. II, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1885, 544

“The Killed and Wounded,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Vol. 100, Issue 15009 No. 69. Thursday, Sept. 18, 1862, Boston, MA, Pg. 2. Accessed July 13, 2025 https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471_752122305

“The Casualties in the Late Battles,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Vol. 100, Issue 15010 No. 70. Friday Sept. 19, 1862, Boston, MA, Pg. 2. (Accessed July 13, 2025)
<https://www.genealogybank.com/nbshare/AC01250710025738988471752122347>

Willcox, O.B., *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I-Vol. XXVII, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1902. (Accessed July 13, 2025),
<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion011901rootrich/page/430/mod/e/2up>

Willcox, O.B. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Series I, Volume XXI, (Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1888),

Secondary Sources:

“Burnside Bridge: Antietam National Battlefield” National Park Service, (Accessed July 13, 2025) <https://www.nps.gov/places/antietam-battlefield-burnside-bridge.htm>

Cole, Lawrence Frederick, and Margaret Cossé Richard, *Irish Green and Union Blue: The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh Color Sergeant 28th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers*, ed. by Lawrence Frederick Cole and Margaret Cossé Richard, (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1986, Kindle Edition), xxi

“Flags of the 28th Massachusetts (continued)” *28th Massachusetts: Volunteer Infantry 4th Regiment Irish Brigade*, Accessed July 30, 2025.
<https://www.28thmass.org/flags3.htm>

“IX Corps (Union Army),” *In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. (Accessed July 13, 2025)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IX_Corps_%28Union_army%29#References

Darin Wipperman, *Burnside’s Boys: The Union IX Corps and the Civil War in the East*, (Lanham, MD: Stackpole Books, 2023),

Stevens, Hazard, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens*, Vol. II (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1900

“Regimental History: 1862” *28th Massachusetts: Volunteer Infantry 4th Regiment Irish Brigade*, (Accessed July 13, 2025)
<https://www.28thmass.org/history3.htm>

“The Civil War, Battle Detail: South Mountain,” National Park Service CWSAC Reference: MD002, (Accessed July 13, 2025)
<https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battles-detail.htm?battleCode=md002>

“The Civil War in the East: 28th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment,” *Civil War in the East*, 1862. <https://civilwarintheeast.com/us-regiments-batteries/massachusetts/28th-massachusetts>

United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park and Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 6. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96684567/>.

United States National Park Service, and Eastern National Park and Monument Association. *Troop movement map: Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, thru August 30, 1862 Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia*. [Washington, D.C.: The Service, 1985] Map 15. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96684567/>.

Williams, Donald C., "Battle Casualties, 1862-1865: 28th Massachusetts Regiment" in, *Campaigning with the Irish Brigade: Pvt. John Ryan, 28th Massachusetts*, ed. by Sandy Barnard, (Terre Haute, IN: AST Press, 2001)