

## SCENARIOS &amp; VARIANTS

# ON LITTLE ROUND TOP

## A Revision for Terrible Swift Sword

by Harry Roach, EDITOR, MILITARY IMAGES MAGAZINE

Since we did a little revision/correction of *Wilson's Creek* in this issue, it seemed not inappropriate to run a revisionist article on the system's parent game, *Terrible Swift Sword*. In case you didn't keep track, there are now six games in the system (with the promise of more to come if you all go for the series-style numbers). And if, by chance, you're one of the seven people in the world who don't have the original game, you should by all means go get a copy — and we'll keep on revising and spinning it off for you. —RAS

After numerous playings of the Little Round Top/Peach Orchard scenario of *Terrible Swift Sword*, it became apparent that it was almost impossible for the Confederates to reach Little Round Top in any strength. In the actual battle, Law's brigade and half of Robertson's reached the hill practically unscathed to begin their contest with Vincent's brigade of the Federal V Corps.

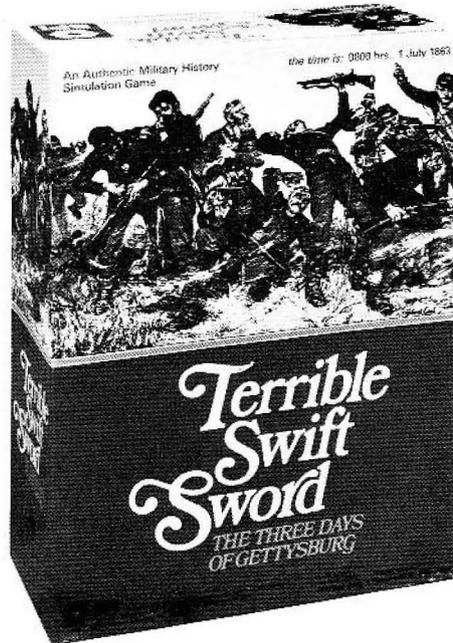
Research on the subject revealed major errors in the Initial Deployment instructions for the scenario, particularly on the Union side. Where the historic line formed a salient, the game instructions call for placement of the 1st Division/III Corps on a roughly straight north-south line from hex 0130 to 1627. In fact, the division's line ran south only to hex 0532 (the apex of the salient) then turned east for quite a distance before jogging southeast to encompass Devil's Den.

The dispositions given below more accurately reflect the actual locations of the troops, insofar as brigades are concerned. Regimental locations within the brigade line are arbitrary. If the player will set up Map C according to the following directions, the discussion will be easier to follow:

**Graham's Brigade (1/1/III):** All units placed as per original directions except 2nd N.J. Light Arty, 0531. Henry Hunt, Chief of Artillery for the Army of the Potomac, states that this unit was on the lower leg of the triangle, facing south. Battery E, 1st R.I., was at the apex facing west. There is one mystery unit for which no location is given: Battery K, 4th U.S. Hunt states that this unit was pulled from the right of the III Corps line and placed on "the left of the Smith House," but there is no Smith House on any map I have perused. A visit to Gettysburg to locate the monument of K, 4th U.S., would solve the problem. In the meantime, I have placed this unit at 0530, on the left of the Scherfy house. In addition, two units in the infantry reserve stacks should be eliminated: 5th N.J.

(3/2/III) and 9th Mass. (2/1/V). Both were detached on picket duty and did not participate in the fighting on this particular portion of the field.

**Ward's Brigade (2/1/III):** 1st U.S.S.S., 0925; 86th N.Y., 1025; 20th Ind., 1126; 99th Pa. & 4th N.Y. Lt. Arty, 1225; 124th N.Y., 1224; 3d & 4th Maine, 1324; 2d U.S.S.S., 1726. All sources agree that this brigade occupied Devil's Den with the exception of the 2d U.S.S.S., which was placed at the foot of Big Round Top. There is some evidence that Devil's Den was not as heavily wooded as portrayed on Map C, which seems to be based on the present-day foliage. Therefore I would treat hexes 1325, 1326, and 1226 as clear terrain hexes.



**DeTrobriand's Brigade (3/1/III):** 17th Maine & 40th N.Y., 0626; 3d & 5th Mich., 0625; 110th Pa. & Battery D, 4th N.Y. Lt. Arty, 0725. Confederate brigade commander Joseph Kershaw states that his first-wave unit passed through the Rose Farm (approx. hex 0831) and into the woods beyond without opposition. DeTrobriand's brigade then attacked him in two lines from across the Wheatfield. This brigade should thus be placed on the northeast side of the Wheatfield, not in the Rose Woods. DeTrobriand was followed by the brigades of Tilton (1/1/V) and Sweitzer (2/1/V), and Caldwell's division (1/II), who pushed Ker-

shaw back to the Rose Farm and were then enveloped and routed in turn by the brigades of Semmes and Wofford.

Which brings us to the subject of Confederate unit dispositions. In the interest of accuracy — if one wishes to play an historical scenario rather than a "what-if" situation — Confederate units should be assigned initial dispositions and a timetable as are the Federal units. I would suggest the following:

**Law's Brigade:** 44th & 48th Ala., 2131; 15th Ala., 2031; 4th & 47th Ala., 1932.

**Robertson's Brigade:** 4th & 5th Texas, 1832; 1st Texas & 3d Ark., 1733.

**Benning's Brigade:** 15th & 17th Ga., 2133; 2d & 20th Ga., 2033.

**Anderson's Brigade:** 8th Ga., 1834; 11th & 59th Ga., 1735; 7th & 9th Ga., 2033.

The division's artillery was massed on its left, so place it in line from 1434 to 1633. It is clear from the records that most of Hood's division formed up east of the Emmitsburg road "in heavy woods . . . at an acute angle" to the road, so treat this area as wooded terrain. General Warren on Little Round Top ordered the 4th N.Y. battery (hex 1225) to fire a shot into these woods "between Plum Run and the Emmitsburg road," thus revealing the Confederate location. When Hood's first wave attacked (Law on the right, Robertson on the left), the units became intermingled in traversing the rough ground. The 15th & 47th Alabama pushed aside the 2d U.S.S.S. and advanced to the summit of Big Round Top. The 1st Texas, 3d Arkansas, and 44th Alabama attacked Ward's brigade in Devil's Den and were joined on the left by the brigades of Benning and Anderson. Ward's brigade was pushed out of the Den after heavy fighting, and was then reinforced by the two brigades of U.S. regulars (2/V). While all this was going on, the 4th & 5th Texas and 4th & 48th Alabama marched *in column* up the Plum Run Valley to Little Round Top, where they formed in line of battle to attack Vincent's brigade (3/1/V). The 15th & 47th Alabama came down from Big Round Top and formed on their right. These latter two units were engaged in the famous fight with the 20th Maine.

**Kershaw's Brigade:** 3d & 7th S.C., 1135; 15th S.C., 1035; 8th S.C. & 3d bn., 0936; 2d S.C., 0836.

**Semmes's Brigade:** 10th Ga., 1335; 53d Ga., 1235; 51st Ga., 1136; 50th Ga., 1036.

**Wofford's Brigade:** 16th & 18th Ga., 0738; Cobb/Phillips, 0638; 24th Ga., 0539.

**Barksdale's Brigade** 13th Miss., 0636; 21st Miss., 0537; 17th & 18th Miss., 0436.

Cabell's artillery battalion was on Kershaw's right, 1234, 1334. Alexander's was on the left of Barksdale, 0137-0336. Kershaw states that his brigade was the first in McLaw's division to advance, followed by Semmes. Barksdale did not advance simultaneously. Kershaw's unit went forward with its center guiding on the Rose Farm (0831). After crossing the Emmitsburg road, the three left flank regiments faced left to attack the Peach Orchard line held by Graham's brigade (1/1/III), while the remainder of Kershaw's brigade passed into the Rose Woods. It is clear from Kershaw's description that hexes 0928, 0929, and 0930 should be clear terrain hexes, not wooded. The drawing at the bottom of page 334, *Battles & Leaders*, volume III, verifies this fact. Once in the woods, Kershaw was attacked by DeTroband.

Establishing a timetable for the Confederates presents few problems. The divisions were to attack in echelon from right to left, beginning with Hood's first wave, thus:

- 1600:** Law & Robertson advance
- 1620:** Benning, Anderson, & Kershaw
- 1640:** Semmes & Barksdale
- 1700:** Wofford

A few alterations also must be made in the Union timetable for release of reserve units:

- 1600:** 3/1/V & Battery D, 5th U.S.
- 1620:** balance of 1/V
- 1640:** begin arrival of 1/II

In addition, certain Union brigades should be given independent status and exempted from divisional command and control rules: Ward (2/1/III) fought his own private battle in Devil's Den; Vincent (3/1/V), Tilton (1/1/V), and Sweitzer

(2/1/V) all showed great initiative during the battle. Their division commander, James Barnes, was an especially ineffectual leader, and was relegated to command of a prison camp after the battle.

With these changes, the Second Day scenario more closely approximates the historical situation. The Confederates have a shot at Little Round Top.

### References

*Battles & Leaders of the Civil War.* Articles by Henry Hunt, Joseph Kershaw, and Evander Law are particularly relevant.

O.W. Norton, *The Attack and Defense of Little Round Top.* Published in 1913, this book remains the standard reference of this portion of the battle. It is a thorough, systematic analysis that leaves few questions unanswered.

William Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time.* This is especially helpful in the areas of Devil's Den and the Rose Farm. ■■

Detail of Terrible Swift Sword, Map C.

