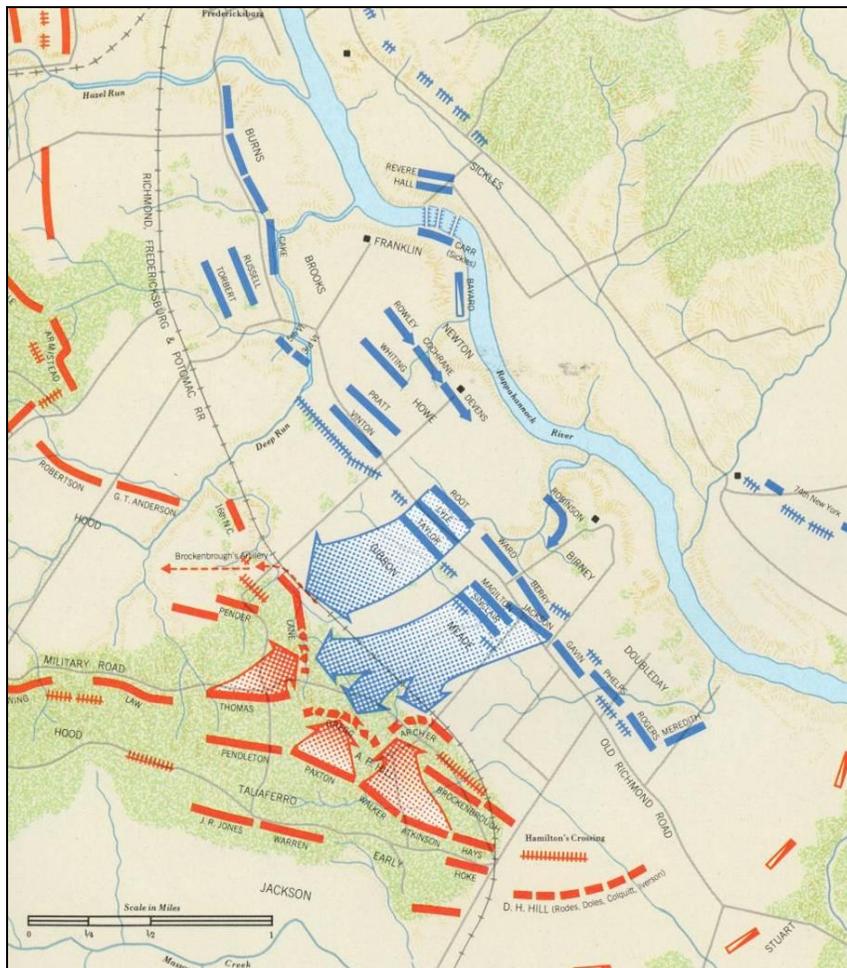


## CHAPTER 6 Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville

Soon after General McClellan did not pursue Lee's retreating army, President Lincoln again replaced him and made Ambrose Burnside General of the Army of the Potomac. After a period of 6 weeks of maintaining camp in the Sharpsburg, Maryland area, the Union Army of the Potomac (and the badly mauled members of the 24<sup>th</sup> NYSV) moved southward. Eventually the 24<sup>th</sup> NY regiment crossed the Rappahannock River just south of Fredericksburg, Va. On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1862 General Burnside ordered wave



**Fredericksburg** (24<sup>th</sup> Infantry was with Phelps at Union's far left)<sup>70</sup>



**Col. Timothy Sullivan & 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. & Adjutant. Robert Oliver, Jr.** <sup>65</sup>  
24<sup>th</sup> NYSV



**Maryland Heights at Harpers Ferry.** (Capt. Otis, 22<sup>nd</sup> NY Infantry)  
The 22<sup>nd</sup> NY was part of Hatch's Brigade with the 24<sup>th</sup> NY  
From *Remembering the American Civil War*, CD Volume 1 ([www.a2zcds.com](http://www.a2zcds.com))



**Approximate Location of 24<sup>th</sup> NY at Fredericksburg, Va** (Photos by R. Eslinger)

after wave of Union soldiers to try to penetrate the Confederate stronghold on Marye's Heights. Again, after suffering heavy casualties, the Union Army was forced to retreat back over the Rappahannock.<sup>32</sup> A letter dated January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1863 from Lewis Benedict<sup>3</sup> to his mother briefly mentioned the Battle of Fredericksburg, "we (the 24<sup>th</sup> NYS Infantry) was on the extreme left of the Army, we was not brought into action no more than a little skirmishing".

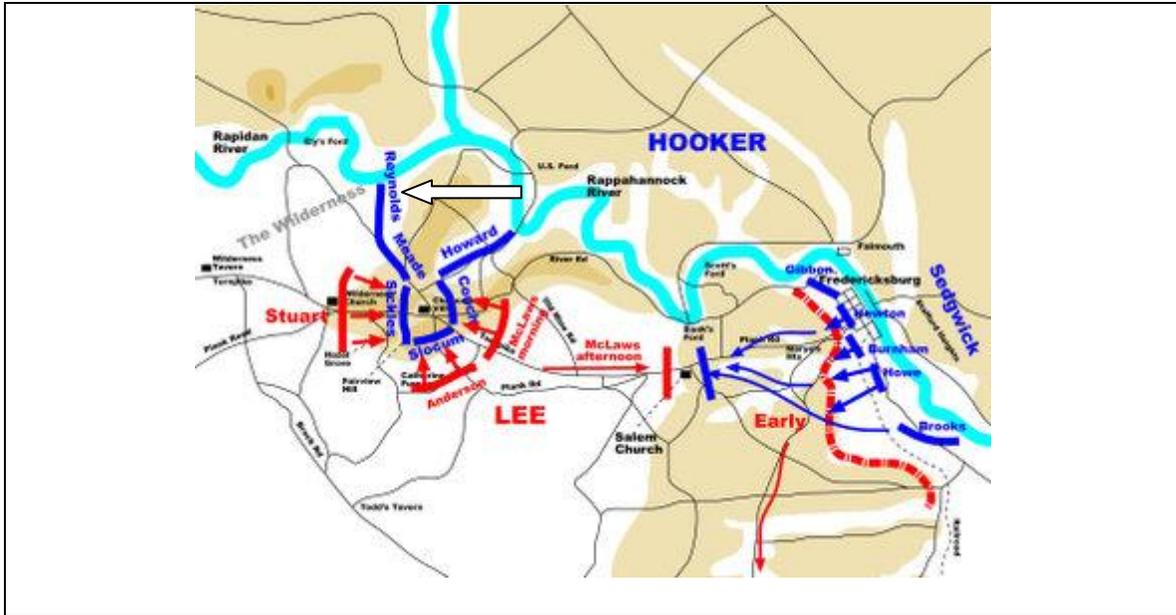
After the Fredericksburg disaster, the Union forces set up winter camp on the east side of the Rappahannock River near Belle Plain, Va.<sup>52,54</sup> Lewis Benedict<sup>3</sup> wrote in a January 1863 letter to his mother that they were doing their best to build comfortable winter quarters. Later that month, General Burnside tried to get the Army to move on muddy, impassable roads to attack Lee's forces, but was soon forced to return to camp. Quickly, Lincoln replaced Burnside with General Joseph ("Fighting Joe") Hooker. Stephen Scriber mentioned the poor weather and "Burnside's stick in the mud" march in one of his letters to the Pension Office. He also stated that at that point, he "had his first severe attack of rheumatism and contracted a very bad cold which settled all over my

body and especially in my head and lungs having been exposed to a continuous rain storm for three days and nights with very little rest and no change of clothing”.<sup>44</sup>



**Civil War Camp Scene** (probably Belle Plain, Va)  
24<sup>th</sup> NYSV wintered there in 1862-1863  
From National Archives College Park, MD<sup>65</sup>

In May of 1863, the 24<sup>th</sup> NYS Infantry was moving toward what would become the Battle of Chancellorsville. Apparently several of the men from portions of this particular unit laid down their arms just before this battle and were refusing to continue to fight since it had been 2 years since they enlisted (but not 2 years after they were



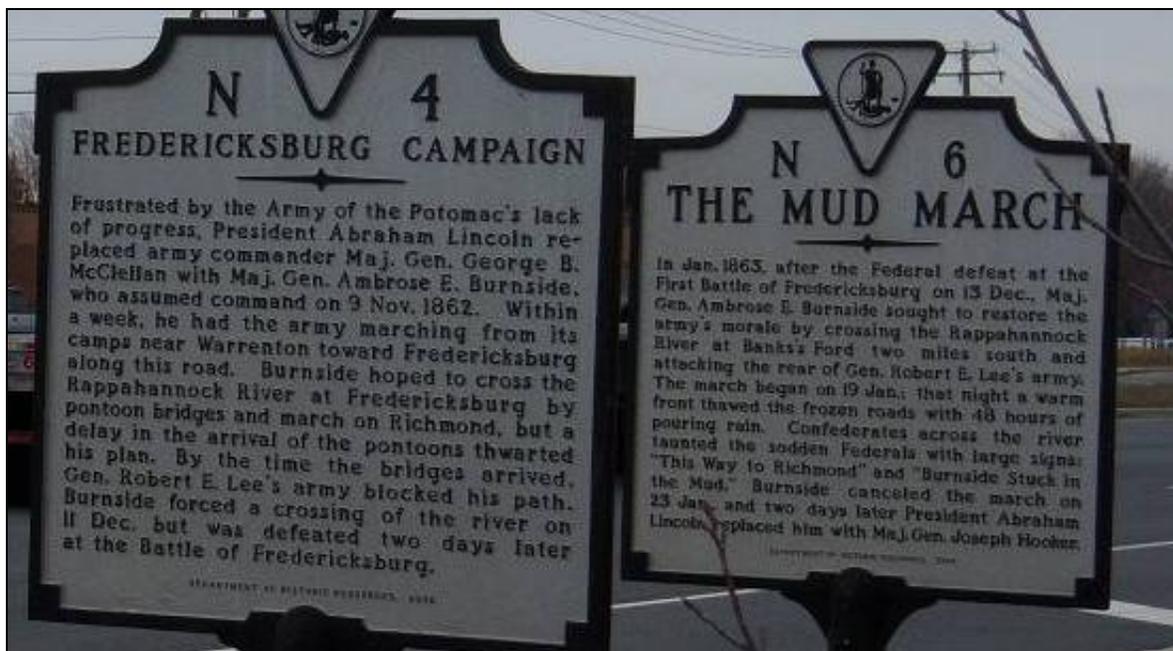
**Battle of Chancellorsville, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1863<sup>70</sup>**

officially mustered into service) and they felt their terms were up.<sup>46</sup> They didn't want to be shot at in their last few days. After being marched in front of a Wisconsin Regiment who pointed their loaded rifles at them, they were convinced to pick up their arms and go off to one more battle. Another NY unit also laid down their arms and refused to fight. They were actually sentenced to heavy labor (such as burying dead horses) until they also decided to return to the front.<sup>46,51</sup> General Hooker with the balance of the army, crossed the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, and above, and attacked Lee at Chancellorsville. After the battle had commenced the First Corps were withdrawn across the river, marched up to the United States ford and reinforced the army. The next day they were driven back across the river, and the 24<sup>th</sup> came back to the ground they had previously occupied, between Fredericksburg and Aquia Creek. They remained there until the middle of May, when they were ordered home to Elmira and mustered out.<sup>32</sup>

During the Battle of Chancellorsville the 24<sup>th</sup> was on the extreme right under Reynold's Division. After the battle and when the retreat was ordered the regiment

covered the movement as the rear guard and was the last to cross the Rappahannock River. The 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry served picket duty on this river until May 17<sup>th</sup>, when they were mustered out as their 2 years of service expired (May 29, 1863).<sup>19,34</sup>

During its service the 24<sup>th</sup> regiment lost by death; killed in action, 5 officers, 63 enlisted men; of wounds received in action, 1 officer, 22 enlisted men; of disease and other causes, 1 officer, 30 enlisted men. The 24<sup>th</sup> NYSV took part in the following engagements: **1861**, near Bailey's Cross Roads, Va (July 25<sup>th</sup>), near Fall's Church, Va (October 8<sup>th</sup>), **1862**, Falmouth, Va (April 17-18<sup>th</sup>), Massaponax, Va (August 6<sup>th</sup>), General Pope's Virginia Campaign (August 16-September 2<sup>nd</sup>), Rappahannock River, Va (August 22<sup>nd</sup>), Sulfer Springs, Va (August 22<sup>nd</sup>), Gainesville, Va (August 28<sup>th</sup>), Groveton, Va (August 29<sup>th</sup>), Bull Run, Va (August 30<sup>th</sup>), Little River Turnpike, Va (September 1<sup>st</sup>), South Mountain, Md (September 14<sup>th</sup>), Antietam, Md (September 17<sup>th</sup>), Fredericksburg, Va (December 11-15), **1863**, Pollock's Mill Creek, Va (April 29), and Chancellorsville, Va (May 2-3<sup>rd</sup>).<sup>15,36,64</sup>



Fredericksburg Historical Signs