

The Massive Battle of September 2-5, 1864

The Lamar Institute reported to the Henry County board of commissioners, August 20, 2007. The report, on page 7, stated the cavalry charge on August 20th was remembered as “*an epic event of the Civil War.*”

The next paragraph, page 7, referred to the military engagements at Lovejoy’s Station in September 1864 as:

The massive Battle of Lovejoy’s Station that occurred a couple of weeks later on September 2-5

Following the Battle of Jonesboro on September 1 – 2, Confederate forces withdrew south toward Lovejoy’s Station and Griffin. The area from the Flint River to within two miles of McDonough saw Union and Confederate troops and skirmishes.

Below are the specific communications from both Union and Confederate forces as recorded in The War of The Rebellion, Official Records, Series 1, Vol. 38, Part 5 (The Atlanta Campaign).

Also included is The Official Atlas of the Civil War, Plate 57, which depicts relative positions of the Union and Confederate forces on September 3-4, 1864. The map overlay provided by the Henry County Battlefield website is not consistent in placement of the lines of engagement in relation to present-day Nash Farm. The road configuration and relative location of the S. G. Dorsey house place the troop lines south and west of Nash property.

Although the lines of Union Gen. J. M. Schofield and Confederate Gen. S. D. Lee faced each other along and northwest of Lee’s Mill Road, there was no report of heavy engagement. However, these maps and descriptions of artillery and troop placement may support present-day discovery of canister and rifle artifacts at the northwestern quadrant of Nash Farm.

It is difficult to surmise from military communications of the day that a “*massive Battle of Lovejoy’s Station*” occurred during early September 1864. However, the Confederate retreat and troop movements continued until the final Union withdrawal from Atlanta in November.

The Civil War Sites Advisory Commission *Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields* in 1993 did not include events of September 1864 while classifying Lovejoy’s Station as a Class D battle site. The September engagements followed the fall of Jonesboro, and apparently had neither “*military, economic, or social significance nor the exceptional interpretive potential*” used to classify battlefields.

**War of the Rebellion
Official Records, Series 1, Vol. 38, Part 5 (The Atlanta Campaign)**

UNION COMMUNICATIONS

**HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
September 2, 1864-9.30 p.m.**

Major-General SHERMAN,
Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:

GENERAL: After a long and most tedious march over all sorts of roads, I was barely able to get one division in position on Stanley's left some time after dark. My artillery and trains are not even yet off the road. I found the country roads, by which I was compelled to march, very crooked and difficult. No enemy except cavalry pickets appeared on my flank during the day. I gained no positive information of the enemy's movements, but all reports corroborate the one I sent you this morning about the retreat from Atlanta, destruction of property, &c. General Garrard informs me he sent a regiment to the McDonough road and struck a rear guard retreating southward, but it was too strong for him to attack, **I have just received your dispatch of 8 p.m. and will feel out for the McDonough road in the morning. I understand you to mean the road from Fosterville to McDonough.** Please inform me if I am not right. I think I can reach that road if Lee does not come in on Hardee's right to-night. But the country is very open in that direction and hence it will be difficult to make any move not in plain view of the enemy without detaching my corps some distance from Stanley. But I will examine the ground carefully and proceed with due caution.
Very respectfully,

J. M. SCHOFIELD,
Major-General.

**HDQRS. MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
In the Field, September 2, 1864-11.20 p.m.**

General SCHOFIELD:

Yours of 9.30 is received. **The road want to watch is the one indicated as from McDonough to Fosterville, but there will be one to Lovejoy's.**

**SEPTEMBER 2, 1864.
General COX:**

We are to pursue parallel to the railroad. Hascall is on the Jonesborough and McDonough road, about two miles from Jonesborough and is about starting south. You may join him by taking the first road to the right; it is only about one mile and a half. Probably Reilly had better follow Hascall.
Respectfully,

J. M. SCHOFIELD
Major-General

**HEADQUARTERS FOURTH ARMY CORPS
Near Lovejoy's Station, Ga., September 3, 1864.**

The following-mentioned regiments will accompany the train of this corps that moves to the rear from Jonesborough early to-morrow morning. They will be under the temporary command of Colonel Dunlap, Third Kentucky Infantry, who will report to these headquarters for instructions without delay. The

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

regiments will march to Jonesborough this afternoon; The Third Kentucky Infantry Volunteers and Thirty-sixth Indiana Infantry Volunteers, the non-veterans of the Thirty-first Indiana Infantry Volunteers.
By order of Major-General Stanley:

J. S. FULLERTON,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

**HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND
Near Lovejoy's Station, September 3, 1864**

Major General J. C. DAVIS,
Commanding Fourteenth Army Corps:

GENERAL: The major-general commanding directs that to-morrow you send back to Atlanta all wagons of your corps not absolutely required to transport the stores now on hand. These wagons will be loaded with the captured arms in your possession and the cotton captured in Jonesborough. Your sick and wounded who are able to travel will be, sent back at the same time, and the whole guarded by a brigade to be detailed by yourself. The prisoners now in your hands you will send to Atlanta in charge of this brigade. You will direct the trains and commanding officer of the brigade to report to Major-General Slocum, commanding at Atlanta, and remain there until further orders. Direct your ordnance officer to retain charge of the captured arms until he can turn them over properly to the chief of ordnance of the department. All prisoners now at these headquarters will this a.m. be sent to be forwarded with the others.

Very respectfully,

WM. D. WHIPPLE,
Assistant Adjutant-General

**HEADQUARTERS SECOND CAVALRY DIVISION,
September 3, 1864.**

Brigadier General W. D. WHIPPLE,
Chief of Staff, Department of the Cumberland:

GENERAL: My daily reports have not been very regularly made during the past few days, but I have been doing all that I could to meet the requirements of the occasion. On yesterday morning, by heavy patrols to the north and east, I learned that Atlanta was evacuated, and **that Lee's and Stewart's corps had gone toward McDonough**; that I at once reported to General Sherman, as he was in doubt of the position of the enemy. Considering information the most valuable at the time, I have for two days employed what force I could spare from my division to obtain it. To-day I reported to General [Elliott] full information of the time and route of Lee's and Stewart's corps and the militia. I think I made Stewart's corps leave Atlanta and go to the Chattahoochee and return to Atlanta, on the 2nd instant instead of the 1st as was the case; it was an oversight on my [part] not intended. **Hood remained in Atlanta till daylight on the 2d, and passed eight miles east of here on the Atlanta and Griffin road** at 11 a.m. yesterday. It was impossible to make many captures, as all the roads to the east were strongly guarded. I have only few prisoners, but Hardee's, Stewart's, and Lee's corps, and the militia are represented. Yesterday I sent one company to Atlanta, it returned to-day.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

K. GARRARD,
Brigadier-General, Commanding

**HEADQUARTERS THIRD CAVALRY DIVISION,
Glass' Bridge, Flint River, September 3, 1864.**

Brigadier-General WHIPPLE,
Chief of Staff, Department of the Cumberland:

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

GENERAL: Captain Brink has returned, bringing me information desired in reference to our army. I had a scout last night inside the enemy's lines. Portions of Armstrong's and Ross' commands, mounted and dismounted, watch the enemy's left flank directly opposite me. The enemy, so far as I can learn, unless he has moved during the night, is entrenched about Lovejoy's Station his lines crossing the Jonesborough road and extending to this point. Several car-loads of wounded passed down the road yesterday. Did not stop at but passed through Griffin. Scouts report the enemy's wagon trains to be moving toward Griffin, many of them loaded with green corn. At 2 p.m. yesterday large trains were passing through Fayette Station. As soon as the enemy is forced back beyond Lovejoy's Station I will cross and press in toward Griffin, communicating with our army to the left.
Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. KILPATRICK,
Brigadier-General of Volunteers

**HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
Near Lovejoy's Station, Ga., September 3, 1864-9 a.m.**

Major-General SHERMAN,
Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:

GENERAL: Prisoners report that **Lee's corps joined Hardee yesterday afternoon, and that Stewart was at McDonough at 4 o'clock**. If this is true both are probably here now. The enemy's line has been considerably extended eastward since last evening, and is probably beyond my reach. **It appears to run along a high ridge immediately in front of the McDonough road and behind Walnut Creek**. I am feeling well to the left with skirmishers to see if I can reach the enemy's left on the McDonough road.
Very respectfully,

J. M. SCHOFIELD,
Major-General.

**HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
Near Lovejoy's Station, Ga., September 3,, 1864-6.15 p.m.**

Major-General SHERMAN:
Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:

GENERAL: **Colonel Garrard reports that he reached the McDonough and Fosterville road three or four miles from Lovejoy's Station. Citizens on the road say that troops, said to be Lee's corps, were passing this morning toward Lovejoy's**, and that stragglers were still passing when he reached the road. The people spoke of it as **a very large force with a great amount of artillery**. As near as Colonel Garrard could ascertain the column was three or four hours in passing. A negro also reports a large number of troops joining the force in our front to-day.
Very respectfully,

J. M. SCHOFIELD,
Major-General

SEPTEMBER 3, 1864-5 p.m.

Major J. A. CAMPBELL,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Army of the Ohio:

MAJOR: I have the honor to report that **I went across on to the McDonough and Fayetteville road, striking it between three and four miles from Lovejoy's Station**. Citizens report that infantry from Atlanta, said to be Lee's corps, was moving all the morning, and that the stragglers were still passing

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

when we reached the road. A large wagon train was moving on Thursday night and yesterday to Lovejoy's Station. **Last night Ross' brigade of cavalry camped just this side of the road, and moved on this morning to Bear Creek Station** below Lovejoy's. The force that moved on the road this morning had artillery. The people speak of there being a great deal of artillery, and of the infantry being very a great in quantity, but as near as I could ascertain it took the regular column some three or four hours to pass.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ISRAEL GARRARD,
Colonel, Commanding.

**HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
In the Field, September 3, 1864.**

Colonel ISRAEL GARRARD,
Commanding Cavalry Division, Army of the Ohio:

COLONEL: The commanding general directs me to inform you that the enemy's cavalry is reported formed on his right, threatening our trains, and he desires you to extend your right so as to connect with our infantry's left and protect our trains. Watch the country well on what will be your front and report any movement you may observe.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. A. CAMPBELL,
Major and Assistant Adjutant-General

**HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND,
September 4, 1864-12.m.**

Major-General SHERMAN,
Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:

GENERAL: Lieutenant Wharton my engineer, has just returned from an **examination of the enemy's lines** in front of Stanley. He reports them **very strong and still being strengthened by the enemy amid a constant and hot skirmish**. He believes the enemy intends to hold his present line.

Respectfully, &c.,

GEO. H. THOMAS
Major-General, U. S. Volunteers, Commanding

**HEADQUARTERS SECOND CAVALRY DIVISION,
September 4, 1864.**

Brigadier-General ELLIOTT,
Chief of Cavalry, Department of the Cumberland:

GENERAL: The rebel pickets were withdrawn from all roads to the east of this, except on the McDonough road, by 4 p.m. yesterday and their army may now be regarded as south of us. On the McDonough road the cavalry of the Army of the Ohio was skirmishing yesterday and drove in their pickets to within a few miles of McDonough. I do not know if they reached that point, but think not. My command will be on the Jonesborough and Flat Rock road to-day.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

K. GARRARD,
Brigadier-General, Commanding Division

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

**HDQRS. SECOND BRIGADE, THIRD CAVALRY DIVISION,
Camp in the Field, September 4, 1864.**

Captain ESTENS,
Assistant Adjutant-General:

I have the honor to report that scouting parties sent out from my command report my front strongly picketed by the enemy, apparently cavalry, on the right, and infantry or dismounted cavalry on the left. Several of their posts were driven in developing quite a strong force in position behind a swampy ravine running nearly parallel to the Glass road. The scouts also report a plantation road, extending from near James Bull's house, on the Glass road, through the plantations of Mr. Dorsey and Mr. Crawford. I also learn from citizens that the same road extends to Lovejoy's Station. The Glass road appears to be open from my position to Flint River, except small patrols of the enemy.

Very respectfully,

F. A. JONES,
Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding
NEAR LOVEJOY'S STATION,
September 4, 1864.

**HDQRS. CAVALRY DIVISION, ARMY OF THE OHIO,
September 5, 1864.**

Major J. A. CAMPBELL,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Army of the Ohio:

MAJOR: I have the honor to report that the scout to the Fayetteville road, at the point I struck it yesterday, found a rebel picket posted there. This was driven off, but no further information of the rebel position was ascertained. The scout toward McDonough was made by the First Ohio Squadron, under Major Rice. He has just returned bringing with him 15 prisoners. **He reached a point within three miles of McDonough, where he came onto a camp of a cavalry regiment.** He drove the pickets so rapidly as to surprise the camp, but they rallied in force sufficient to check him. He lost 1 man killed, the sergeant who led the advance guard. The information he obtained from citizens was, that **the enemy is holding all the roads leading south from the Fayetteville and McDonough road, and that there are some troops-cavalry probably-at McDonough;** this is not corroborated by the cavalrymen captured. They say that the troops marched from McDonough at daylight this morning, and that there is nothing there now but the provost guard.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ISRAEL GARRARD,
Colonel, Commanding Division

**HEADQUARTERS SEVENTEENTH ARMY CORPS,
Near Lovejoy's Station, Ga., September 5, 1864.**

Lieutenant Colonel WILLIAM T. CLARK,
Asst. Adjt. General, Department and Army of the Tennessee:

COLONEL: I have the honor to report **that the skirmish firing along my front was unusually heavy during the whole of last night.** This morning General Woods reports that the enemy constructed last night a flank work in front of General Logan's right center, through an open field and perpendicular to the main line. The impression prevails that our position on the right flanks the enemy's.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

FRANK P. BLAIR, Jr.,
Major-General

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**HEADQUARTERS FOURTH ARMY CORPS,
Near Lovejoy's Station, Ga., September 5, 1864.**

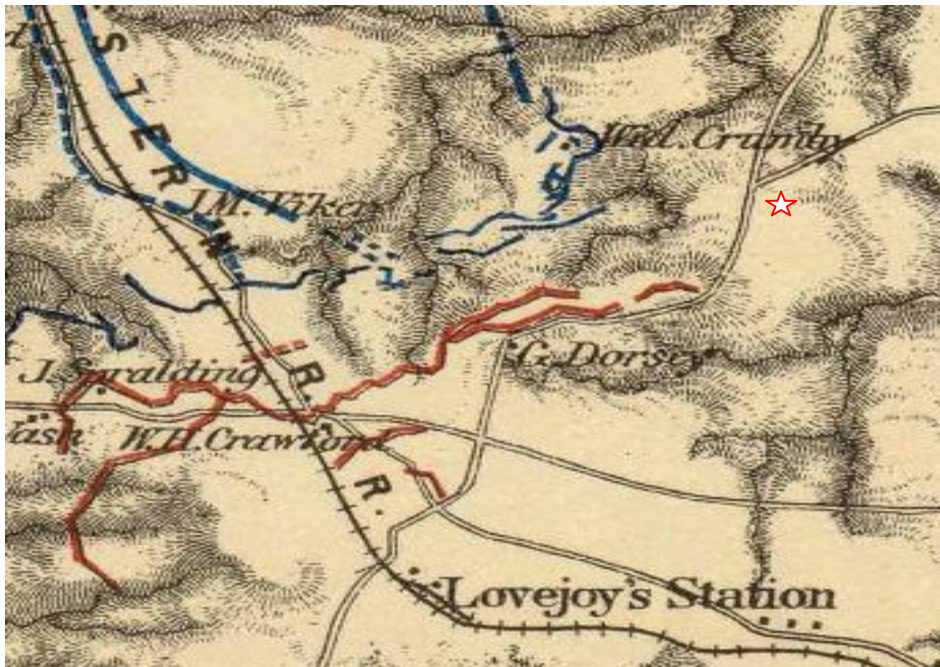
Orders of the day for the Fourth Army Corps for to-day, September 5, 1864: In accordance with instructions received from headquarters the **troops of this corps will withdraw to-night** to the position they occupied on the night of the first instant, just beyond Jonesborough. After withdrawing to the field to the rear of the one in which corps headquarters is situated, the route of march will be along the east side of the railroad. The order of march will be, first, General Newton's division; second, General Kimball's; third, General Wood's. The troops will be drawn off at 8 p.m. exactly by headquarters time, and the pickets will be drawn off at exactly 12 p.m. Colonel I. C. B. Suman, Ninth Indiana Infantry, is hereby detailed as special field officer of the day for to-day. He will report at these headquarters for orders at 5 p.m., and division commanders will send their picket officers to report to him for instructions at the same time and place. All headquarters wagons, ambulances, except six to a division, artillery wagons, ammunition wagons, except five to a division, and such artillery as can be withdrawn without attracting the attention of the enemy, will at once be sent beyond Jonesborough just to the rear of the position to be occupied by the troops to-night.

By order of Major-General Stanley:

J. S. FULLERTON,
Assistant Adjutant-General



Atlas PLATE 57



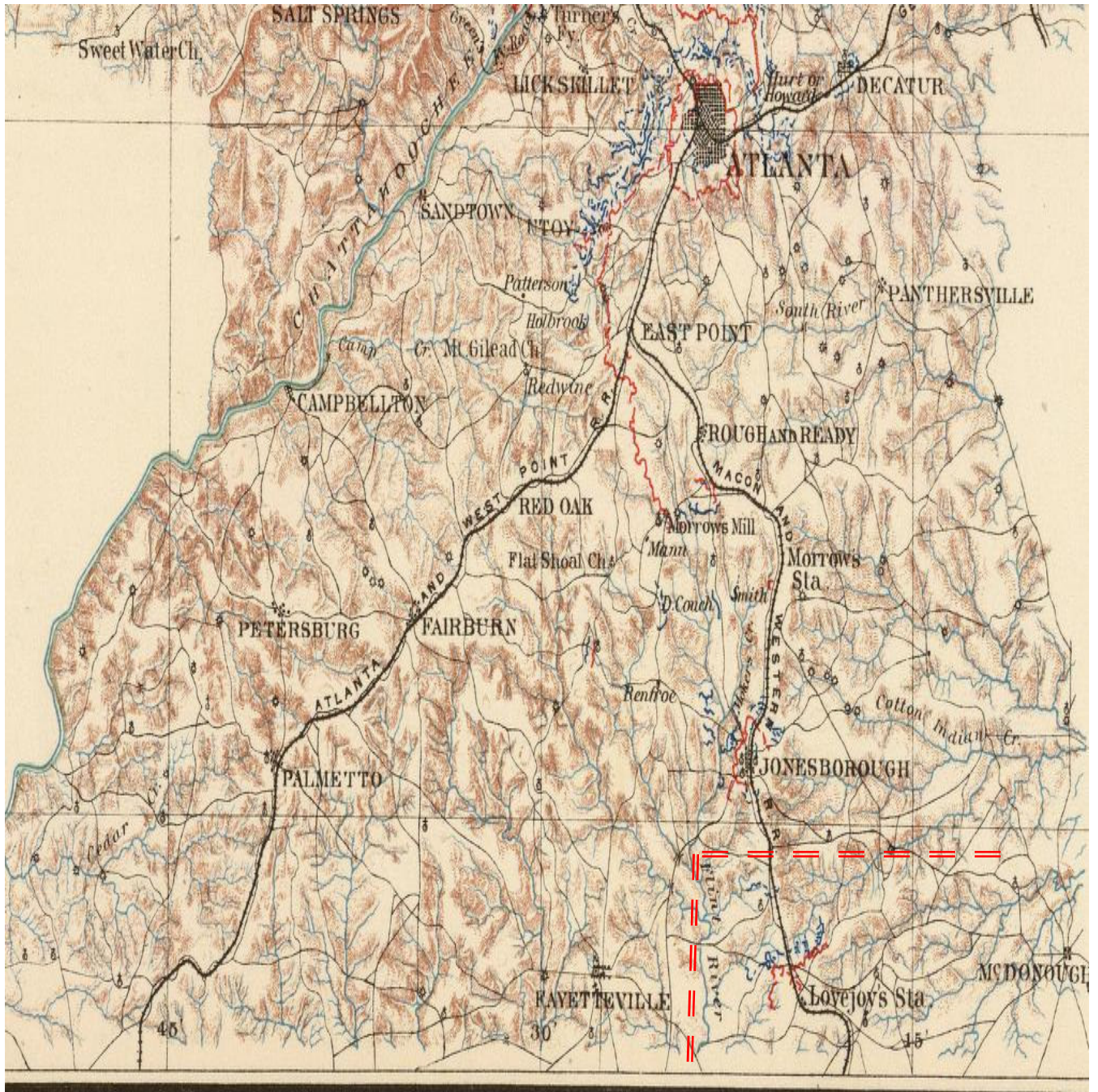
1877 RUGER MAP

Comparing the road configurations and placement of Union and Confederate forces, both maps depict the same relative positions.

Using the S. G. Dorsey house as the common road position, neither the Union nor Confederate forces were positioned on the Nash Farm property.

The  denotes location of Nash Farm

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864



War of the Rebellion, Official Atlas, Plate 57
 September 2-5, 1864

Confederate line withdrew from Atlanta and Jonesboro to form a horseshoe north of Lovejoy's Station. This Plate depicts the line of engagement east and west of the Macon & Western Railroad, Southwest along Lee's Mill Road then west to McDonough-Fayetteville Road

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

**War of the Rebellion
Official Records, Series 1, Vol. 38, Part 5 (The Atlanta Campaign)**

CONFEDERATE COMMUNICATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2, 1864--6.30 p. m.

Lieutenant-General STEWART,
Commanding Corps:

From information recently received from General Hardee, and the artillery firing now going on, General Hood thinks it important that you take a very early start in the morning and move to his assistance. Be certain you have good guides, well informed. Do not bear too far north, as it is reported the enemy moved out on the McDonough road from Jonesborough to-day. **General Hardee's line of battle crosses the railroad, running east and west, about half a mile in front of Lovejoy's Station.** From your present position **you should come into the road leading to Lovejoy's at or near Mount Carmel Church, approaching Hardee's position rather from the north.** Should he be driven from his position to-night I hope to inform you in time. That would make it necessary for you to move south on the Griffin road.

[F. A. SHOUP,
Chief of Staff]

SEPTEMBER 2, 1864--6.50 p. m.

Lieutenant-General LEE,
Commanding Corps:

General Hood desires you to leave a brigade in your rear as a vanguard, if there be any wagons or artillery not yet come up, if you think necessary.

[F. A. SHOUP,
Chief of Staff.]

LOVEJOY'S STATION, September 3, 1864.

General BRAXTON BRAGG, Richmond:

On the evening of the 30th the enemy made a lodgment across Flint River, near Jonesborough. We attacked them on the evening of the 31st with two corps, failing to dislodge them. This made it necessary to abandon Atlanta, which was done on the night of September 1. Our loss on the evening of the 31st was so small that it is evident that our effort was not a vigorous one. On the evening of September 1 General Hardee's corps, in position at Jonesborough, was assaulted by a superior force of the enemy, and being outflanked was forced to withdraw during the night to this point, with the loss of 8 pieces of artillery. The enemy's prisoners report their loss very severe. I send a bearer of dispatches to-morrow.

J. B. HOOD,
General.

LOVEJOY'S STATION, September 3, 1864.

General BRAXTON BRAGG, Richmond:

Major General Edward Johnson has been assigned to command General P. Anderson's division.

J. B. HOOD,
General

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LOVEJOY'S STATION, GA., September 3, 1864--1.45 p. m.
General BRAXTON BRAGG, Richmond, Va.:

For the offensive, my troops at present are not more than equal to their own numbers. To prevent this country from being overrun re-enforcements are absolutely necessary.
J. B. HOOD.

LOVEJOY'S STATION, GA., September 4, 1864--1 p. m.
General BRAXTON BRAGG, Richmond, Va.:

Should the enemy move to the east or west I shall endeavor to strike him with my entire force on his flank and rear. I think his move will be down and west of Flint River.
J. B. HOOD.

LOVEJOY'S STATION, GA., September 4, 1864.
General B. BRAGG, Richmond, Va.:

Owing to the wanton neglect of the chief quartermaster of this army a large amount of ammunition and railroad stock had to be destroyed at Atlanta. He had more than ample time to remove the whole and had repeated instructions. I am reliably informed that he is too much addicted to drink of late to attend to his duties. Am greatly in want of an officer to take his place. Can you not send one?
J. B. HOOD.

LOVEJOY'S STATION, September 4, 1864.
General BRAXTON BRAGG:

I think the officers and men of this army feel that every effort was made to hold Atlanta to the last. I do not think the army is discouraged.
J. B. HOOD,
General

LOVEJOY'S STATION, GA., September 4, 1864--11.30 a. m.
His Excellency President DAVIS, Richmond, Va.:

Unless this army is speedily and heavily re-enforced Georgia and Alabama will be overrun. I seen no other means to avert this calamity. Never in my opinion was our liberty in such danger. What can you do for us?
W. J. HARDEE,
Lieutenant-General

SEPTEMBER 4, 1864.
Lieutenant-General LEE, Commanding Corps:

General Hood desires you to relieve Colonel Presstman's regiment engineer troops on the right. Please direct Colonel P. when relieved to report with his command to these headquarters. If you can spare him, please let Captain Coleman report to General Hood.
[F. A. SHOUP,
Chief of Staff]

[SEPTEMBER 3, 1864.--For Hardee to Jefferson Davis, reporting action at Lovejoy's Station (September 2), see Part III, p. 697, below]

His Excellency President DAVIS.
LOVEJOY'S STATION, September 2, 1864.

The enemy attacked my whole line fiercely at Jonesborough yesterday, turning my right flank at the same time. The assault was everywhere repulsed, except upon Lewis' and Govan's brigades, which gave way, but reformed about 150 yards in rear of their original line, and maintained their position steadily. I was occupying in single rank the line of both Lee's corps and my own of the day previous. My only reserves had to be thrown on my right flank to prevent the enemy from turning my position. I lost a few prisoners,

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including Brigadier-General Govan, and 8 pieces of artillery. My loss not heavy in killed or wounded. The loss of the enemy believed to be greater than in any previous engagement of the campaign. Prisoners report that General Sherman commanded in person, and that there were six corps in my front. The enemy reached the Decatur road before dark, compelling me to retire to this place, four miles and half in rear of my position of yesterday.

W. J. HARDEE,
Lieutenant-General.

**NEAR LOVEJOY'S STATION,
September 3, 1864.**

His Excellency JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Richmond, Va.

The enemy approached my position cautiously from Jonesborough yesterday, and about sunset attacked a portion of Cleburne's line. The attack was easily repulsed and with considerable loss to the enemy.

W. J. HARDEE,
Lieutenant-General.

**His Excellency JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Richmond, Va.**

September 2.-Our troops marched all night, and **the advance of the wagon train reached McDonough at 2 p.m.** General Stewart was ordered, with his command, to the support of General Hardee at Lovejoy's Station, and a courier was sent to General Hardee telling him to hold his present position, if possible, until General Stewart joined him. General Lee was instructed to follow General Stewart in the morning. **General Hardee's corps had a desperate engagement with the whole Yankee force yesterday, in which he lost two 4-gun batteries and was forced to retire.** The enemy's loss was immense, ours comparatively small. The enemy entered Atlanta at 11 a.m. yesterday with colors flying and bands playing.

September 3.-**General Lee's corps passed through McDonough at 9 a.m. on its way to join the army at Lovejoy's Station.** Major General G. W. Smith, commanding Georgia State Troops, was ordered to proceed to Griffin, and, in case of raid on that place or any point in the vicinity, to make such disposition on his troops as may be deemed best to resist the enemy. General Jackson was instructed to keep his scouts out well in the direction of Greenville and give early information if the enemy advanced in the direction of Macon and Columbus Railroad. **There was some lively cannonading and sharpshooting along our lines to-day, but with no important results.**

September 4.-Our army is all united at this point. Stragglers still continue to come in. General Morgan was ordered to report to General Jackson at Griffin. Brigadier-General Lewis was directed to mount his command at once, using blankets if saddles could not be procured. Major Beecher, quartermaster, was instructed to confer with Major Hottel in regard to increasing the railroad transportation for supplies and stores for this army. The chief commissary was directed to keep on hand five days' supply of hard bread. **All quiet along the lines. No change in the position.**

September 5.-General Ferguson was instructed to **seize all tobacco and flour in the hands of merchants at McDonough and forward it to Griffin.** The corps commanders were directed to use every means in their power to gather the absentees of their respective commands with as little delay as possible. General Morgan was ordered to return to the right with his command and assume command. No change in the position.

September 6.-**The enemy has abandoned his position in our front, falling back beyond Jonesborough.**

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

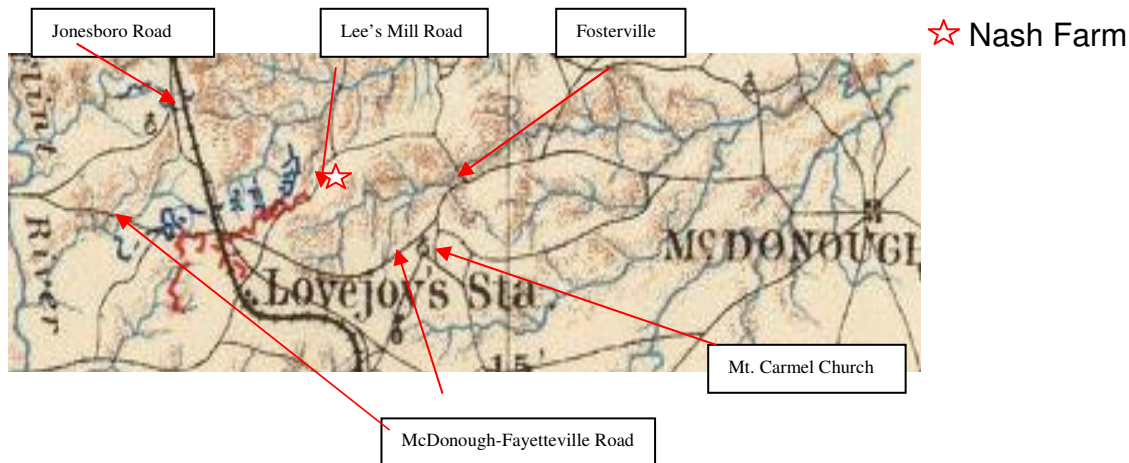
Summary

Lovejoy in September 1864

The events of early September must be kept in proper perspective. Atlanta had fallen, Jonesboro was in flames. The Union forces were all involved in a massive clean-up operation.

After dark on September 2, Schofield had taken up a position on Stanley's left. He reported no enemy activity except cavalry pickets on his flank during the day. This activity happened within a couple of miles of Jonesboro. Gerrard sent a regiment from Jonesboro toward McDonough and struck a Confederate rear guard that was retreating southward.

General Sherman instructed Schofield to scout the road from McDonough to Fosterville, but advised there was "also a road to Lovejoy's." The official map, Plate 57-1 clearly depicts this area. Also, the 1877 Ruger Map provides good detail of the area and troop positions.



Schofield advised General Cox to join Haschall, who was on the Jonesboro-McDonough Road saying, "You may join him by taking the first road to the right." There was no indication of Cox's exact position, but the description places him near or east of Noah's Ark Church.

On September 3 Union communications directed forces to march to the rear. They were directed to send all wagons, captured arms and prisoners to Atlanta.

Gerrard reporting on Enemy locations said Confederates S. D. Lee and Stewart's corps had gone toward McDonough. General Hood moved south on the Atlanta-Griffin Road. Portions of Armstrong and Ross' commands were entrenched near Lovejoy's Station with lines crossing Jonesboro Road.

Judson Kilpatrick was positioned west of the Macon & Western Railroad and reported Confederate wounded and wagon trains moving south toward Griffin. Garrard reached

Lovejoy's Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

the McDonough-Fayetteville Road 3 – 4 miles from Lovejoy’s Station and learned that Lee’s Corp had passed by earlier.

Hardee’s line crossed the railroad, east and west, one-half mile in front (north) of Lovejoy’s Station. The eastern Confederate lines at Lovejoy’s were positioned “along a high ridge immediately in front (north) of McDonough Road.”

On the 3rd, Hardee reported that Union troops approached his line cautiously from Jonesboro. There was “lively cannonading and sharpshooting along the lines, but with no important results.”

Gen. Thomas reported a “constant and hot skirmish” south of Stanley’s line, which was east of the railroad but northwest of Lee’s Mill Road. Skirmishes and troop movements occurred along that line to the west. References were made to the plantations of Thomas Crawford and John Dorsey, which were on the waters of Flint River and Shoal Creek. The Thomas Crawford property, years later, became the Lovejoy Plantation owned by Betty Talmadge.

On September 4th, S. D. Lee’s Corp had joined Hardee at Lovejoy’s Station, and Stewart was in McDonough. Lee was ordered to relieve Colonel Presstman on the right. Stewart was advised he could “come into the road leading to Lovejoy’s at or near Mt. Carmel Church.” General Hardee reported, “All quiet along the lines. No change in position.”

By September 5th, the action near Lovejoy’s was ended. Union Major Rice reportedly encountered a Confederate camp within three miles of McDonough, and Garrard reported that Confederates controlled all the roads south from the McDonough-Fayetteville Road. As ordered, Union forces near Lovejoy’s had withdrawn north of Jonesboro.

The Henry County Battlefield website and the Lamar Institute report refer to a “massive battle” on September 3 - 4 that included the Nash Farm property. There is no official military communication that indicates General S. D. Lee even engaged Union forces. Reports of skirmishing west of the railroad, and “All quiet” hardly support the battle Henry County has portrayed.

The Henry County website offers this passage:

On September 3rd, Schofield received a dispatched from General Sherman to feel for the Confederate right flank towards the McDonough & Fosterville roads, (Babb’s Mill Road). Schofield replied he would feel for the McDonough & Fosterville Roads if Lee’s Corps was not marching from the direction of McDonough. Schofield’s 23rd Army Corps found Stephen D. Lee’s Corps at a location he described, “The enemy’s line has been extended last evening, and is probably beyond my reach. It appears to run along a high ridge immediately in front of the McDonough Road and behind Walnut Creek, (Henry County). I am feeling well to the left with skirmishers to see if I can reach the enemy’s left on the McDonough Road.” (This is the exact location of the property located on

Lovejoy’s Station, September 2 – 5, 1864

Babb's Mill and McDonough Roads). Walnut Creek starts at a springhead and is located on the property. The high ridge is located on the back of this property. Stewarts Corps arrived at location from Atlanta via McDonough adjoining on Hardee's right flank by connecting to Lee's left on this property. A sharp engagement was initiated here running all along the lines extending on the McDonough Road towards County Line Church. (A half mile east this property).

Note the official maps, one created in 1877 and specifically Plate 57-1 which is used by Henry County to substantiate the location of troop positions.

McDonough-Fayetteville Road runs well south of the Nash property, and in fact runs south of Babb's "Old Mill." The position described as "*The high ridge is located on the back of this property*" is actually south and east of the Nash Farm.

However, the Fosterville Road as leading east from Lee's Mill Road was called McDonough Road in some military reports. Given the "*high ridge*" and "*behind Walnut Creek*" location, Plate 57-1 shows that position north of Lee's Mill Road and south of the intersection with Fosterville Road. It is consistent with the indicated northern branch of Walnut Creek, and places troop lines west of Nash Farm.

The county website further states:

September 2, 1864.... "Dawn creeps low and quiet over the fields of Nash Farm, a haze of pale gray fog tinged with fire. Slowly, too, Confederate General Stephen D. Lee's Army Corps rouse themselves. Along the old McDonough road, men yawn, scratch at the dirty tattered butternut material of their dew-soaked uniforms and huddle over the few embers that have smoldered through the night. A ragged double file of Georgia infantrymen slouch against their rifles as a caisson rattles past."

Then as fast as the blink of an eye, the sharp crack of gunfire north of the McDonough Road breaks the morning's stillness. "Everybody down!" yells a startled lieutenant. Across the field before them sweep the Yankee skirmishers, and behind them a denser wave of blue moves with startling speed. The massed forces of the Federal Army charge at a dead run toward the Confederate "right flank" now located at Nash Farm. Southern men load and fire as fast as they can, tearing paper cartridges with their teeth as the woods behind them echo with crashing volleys. But still the Federals come, their commanding officers mount on horses with their swords flashing as they rally their men forward.

As Stephen D. Lee's men get ready to fire their first volley, just about every other man on his front ranks falls mortally wounded in a fusillade of Yankee bullets. It was a struggle just to stand up as bullets thundered all around, kicking up the dirt and knocking men off their feet with powerful sickening thuds. The Southerners fired their second volley into the main Federal line and it is more deadly and immediate than their first. Now both armies go at it as though they know it would be their last leap at glory of the Atlanta Campaign.

Then suddenly from behind, the rebel yells of Confederate General A.P. Stewarts Corps charge forward with a counter-attack with battle flags waving all along his lines. Yankee

cannons roar back in reply and the screech of the death angel gathered up more dead. Behind Lee's Corps on the high ridge south of Walnut Creek, bands could be heard playing jaunty airs of "Bonnie Blue Flag" in the heat of battle, and then onward came the splendor of A.P. Stewart's full frontal attack.

The Confederate right flank at the Nash Farm drove the U.S. 23rd Army Corps some ½ mile distance back to the swamps and ravines where their charge originally started. Then just as fast as the morning battle started, it ended with S.D. Lee's Corps withdrawing back to their original positions.

<http://www.henrycountybattlefield.com/History/Somewhere.htm>

In contrast the following passage is found on page 218, *General Sherman and His Great Campaigns* (Lincoln Room, University of Illinois Library. Published 1864 as "The Adder's Den"):

At daybreak on the 2d, the Fourth and Twenty-third Corps advanced in pursuit of the retreating rebels, who came to bay near Lovejoy's Station, six miles beyond Jonesboro', toward Macon, taking position on a wooded ridge behind a swamp bordering a creek. Some skirmishing was had with the enemy's first line until night which was spent by our troops in entrenching. The enemy being found in strong position, and his retreat being assured, no further advance was attempted.

There appears a great effort to romanticize the events occurring near Lovejoy's Station. A "massive battle" as the county describes, however, is not supported by official records.

Note the County's **Battlefield Map September 1864**

(<http://www.henrycountybattlefield.com/History/NashMaps.htm>) is the same as Edward Ruger's 1895 map depicting the Fifth Epoch of the Atlanta Campaign. This map clearly designates the intersection of Lee's Mill Road, Fosterville Road and Babbs Mill Road. The T. E. Nash farm is situated at that intersection, well north of the Confederate troop lines. Troop positions were west and north of Lee's Mill Road, while Nash's property was east and south of it.

Note the county's depiction of the Infantry Battle on September 3rd. The Nash Farm, located south and east of Lee's Mill Road is shown as the focal point of military engagement. None of the 1877 (Ruger), 1895 (Ruger) or Plate 57 (v. Glúmer) maps used by the Official Atlas place the troop lines at this location.

(<http://www.henrycountybattlefield.com/maps/LOVEJOY%20STATION%203.pdf>)

The county website states locations for Confederate campsites from September 2 – 17, and claims discovery of artifacts. Of the nine campsites shown at the county website, five are in Clayton County and two are south of the property purchased by Henry County. (<http://www.henrycountybattlefield.com/maps/Campsites.pdf>)

In each map or overlay produced by Henry County direction, distance and location is shifted north or east of officially reported sites. Descriptions of physical landmarks like “the high ridge behind Walnut Creek” are incorrectly stated. Inclusion of Nash Farm property is the county’s apparent goal. Single-minded interpretation of battle orders, maps and physical land features are used to present a false rendering of actual events.

The following excerpt from *Autobiography of Oliver Otis Howard, Major General, US*, tells of the engagements at Lovejoy’s but does not support the “massive battle” or the “early morning attack” as claimed by the county.

The morning of September 2nd our combined forces followed Hardee’s movement as far as Lovejoy’s Station.

We came upon Hardee’s skirmishers, where he was waiting for us, near Lovejoy’s; the approaches to his position were exceedingly difficult; yet, as rapidly as possible, my command was extended into his line the Fifteenth Corps on the left, the Seventeenth on the right, while the Sixteenth was held in reserve.

By strengthening our skirmish line and pressing it along from right to left Hardee’s gave back, until by our sudden dash a favorable height of great importance to us was seized and firmly held. And then by the usual process our main lines were moved nearer and nearer to the Confederate works, which, strange to say, were as well constructed and as strong as if the Confederates had had a week to prepare them.

It was between three and four in the afternoon when I was ready to move forward to the assault, at that hour I received orders from Sherman not to take the offensive, but wait where I was for the present.

General Thomas had also moved one corps forward from Jonesboro (Stanley’s). He marched along the east side of the railroad. He had left Davis’s corps at Jonesboro to gather up the captured property, and to care for the wounded and bury the dead. Stanley struck the enemy’s lines about midday, and he had the same difficulty in developing the lines, in making his approaches to the enemy’s works, that I had had; so that it was near dark when he was ready to make an attack. Thomas, probably not aware of my orders, pushed his troops well forward and had a lively combat.

About half and hour later one of Stanley’s divisions made an endeavor to carry the enemy’s works but did not succeed. After this partial attack, a little later in the day, Schofield’s army came up to support the left of Thomas. The effort resulted in about 100 prisoners, several of whom were commissioned officers.

Now we notice that from this time on, the two armies were facing each other, and each commander had full purpose to do nothing which would bring on a general action, though, as we were very near together, we had each day upon the skirmish line many men wounded and some killed. We thus watched each other and skirmished for four days.

This is all there was of the affair at Lovejoy’s Station, and indeed the time had come for a rest and recruitment of the troops.

Military communication recorded in War of the Rebellion, Official Records, Series 1, Vol. 38, Part 5, that seems pertinent to the county's depiction is General Hardee's report of September 3rd:

There was "lively cannonading and sharpshooting along the lines, but with no important results."

Larry Stanley
McDonough, Georgia