

Thus from Petersburg to Appomattox they dragged their weary and emaciated bodies, fighting by day and by night the hosts that had enveloped them. But, alas ! the end was at hand — the end came.

The scene that ensued when these heroes of so many battles were called upon to lay down their arms can never be described by human pen. Brave men wept like children, and tore their hair in the delirium of their grief, and tears coursed freely down the bronzed cheeks of the great chieftain as he witnessed the affection and devotion of his children.

“ Go to your homes and be good citizens,” he said to them ; but where were those homes to be found ? The torch of the incendiary had been there in their absence, and but little had been left. And where were the survivors of the Second Maryland to go ? They were denied this poor privilege by the fanatical set in their native State, and wandered for months through Virginia, partaking of the little left her noble people, but that little was freely bestowed.

Following is General Lee’s last order to his troops :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,  
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, April 10, 1865.

*General Orders No. 9.*

After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard-fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them, but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that must have attended a continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection.

With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.

[SIGNED.]

R. E. LEE, *General.*

*Official :*

[SIGNED.]

O. LATROBE, *Lt.-Col. & A. A. G.*

[SIGNED.]

R. H. FINNEY, *A. A. G.*

[SIGNED.]

P. G. JOHNSON, *A. A. G.*

*To Captain John W. Torsch, Commanding Second Maryland Infantry.*