

The main body retreated across the river, rapidly pursued by Lomax, who came up with them within a few miles, when a running fight ensued to Brandy Station, often before the scene of heavy cavalry fighting.

Before reaching Brandy Station the brigades of Lomax and Wickham united, as had also the two columns of the enemy, for Wickham had been heavily engaged at Raccoon Ford. Here the enemy's cavalry met the infantry sent to support them, when they turned upon their pursuers, and the fight was renewed with redoubled fury, and charges and counter charges were made, until both sides paused from sheer exhaustion. The left of the Confederate line then crossed the road leading from Culpeper Court House to Brandy Station, and the battle was resumed.

Whilst it was raging fiercely, a short time before dark, a heavy dust in the direction of Culpeper warned the Confederates that reinforcements of the enemy's cavalry were rapidly approaching from that town.

Fearing an attack in the rear from this new enemy, General Fitz Lee immediately drew back his left, which was then in danger, and re-formed parallel to the road by which they approached. The Federal column came forward in splendid style, the sabres flashing in the rays of the declining sun, and to an inexperienced observer it would have seemed as though everything would have been swept from before it. Not so the gallant men who stood in its way awaiting the attack. But the enemy was evidently not seeking a fight, for suddenly he moved to the left upon discovering the Confederates in his path, and sought to pass without a collision. But this did not suit General Lee, who immediately ordered a charge, and Federals and Confederates were soon dashing along in most admirable confusion until the infantry was reached, when General Lee was compelled to retire out of range. A short time after General J. E. B. Stuart, with Hampton's Division, came down the Culpeper road, and then was ascertained the reason why the enemy had wished to pass so rapidly. That General had defeated them at Culpeper, and was then in hot pursuit.

General Thomas L. Rosser, then Colonel of the Fifth Virginia Cavalry, says of this incident in McClellan's "Stuart's Cavalry" :

My regiment, with the First Maryland and Fifteenth Virginia Cavalry, extended across the road upon which these troops were coming up in our rear. Not knowing who they were, I sent to Fitz Lee to learn something about them, but before hearing from him they came near enough for me to observe that they carried the Federal flag : and to prevent being crushed between these two commands I withdrew my regiment, and advised the other Colonels to fall back so as to avoid the heavy blow in our rear. We did so, and re-formed perpendicular to Buiford and parallel to the direction of march of the advancing column from the rear, and we were in good order when the head of Kilpatrick's column got opposite us. These troops were moving at a full gallop : they were not charging upon us, for we