

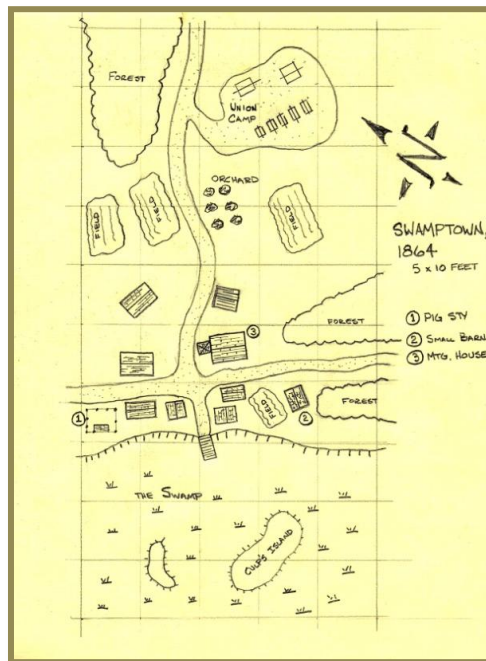
The Battle of "Swamptown"



May, 1864- Somewhere along a tributary of the Mississippi River

The Final Spring Campaign of the Civil war has begun. In the east, the Battle of the Wilderness has just ended, and in the West, the Union Army of the Ohio, the Army of the Tennessee, and the Army of the Cumberland are all pushing deep into Georgia. Along the Mississippi, Confederate forces have been scattered by the Union advance and one small group is desperately short on food, clothing, and ammunition. This is the lost and fictional story of their attempt to procure supplies and keep fighting the "Damn Yankees". And now to a little swampy town down south where the skeeters are as big as Minnie balls...

Actual Totally Simulated Confederate Recon Map



Our Stage

The game was played on a 5 x 10 foot table. At one end was the swamp, towards the middle the town, and at the far end, the Union Camp.

The Players and Their Forces

The Confederate forces were commanded by two honorable gentlemen of culture and learning, Michael and Richard who developed a crafty plan to assault the town from the swamp with two platoons of infantry and even an old cannon from the Mexican war. Two cavalry units are riding along the bank, shadowing the boat force. They will enter the stage on a roll of a 10 on a 10 sided die when they hear gunfire. Those Damn Yankees will never know what hit them. The Confederate objective is to capture and remove (via boat) \$100 (ah, those are Yankee dollars) worth of supplies, which are scattered about the town. The loot is represented by modeled markers with the amount hidden under them.

Your humble author commands the Union forces and my name is Miles. My meager force consisted of a small detachment of ten men guarding the town which, unfortunately, included the character "Drunken Billy Bats" – more on him later. Outside of the town were an encampment of two Union cavalry units and a single platoon of infantry. Their orders were to ride/run to the sound of gunfire. Oh yes, both my cavalry and town detachment are armed with Spencer repeating rifles and carbines. Apparently, the ability to fire multiple shots per turn is viewed as an advantage. The Union's goal – prevent those dastardly rebels from stealing supplies.

The Approach

The photo below shows the initial approach of the waterborne rebels, under the watchful eye of Colonel Richard, who is a very experienced wargamer and comes equipped with his own tape measurer.



The rebels progressed through the swamps and their forces got a little mixed-up as some boats progressed faster than others due to command difficulties. They managed to make landfall without incident by turn four.



Upon hearing the rebels making landfall, the two 5 man Union detachments sprang into action – one group including that drunkard, Billy Bats, headed for the red barn on the far side of table and the other took up a position within the pig sty, although there was some grumbling about that. Unfortunately, as they were heading for the barn, Mr. Bats failed his *backbone test* and had to roll on his special reaction table. Quite frankly, we were hoping he'd just pass out, but no, he decided to charge the whole Confederate army and promptly got himself captured after collapsing at the end of his charge.



First Shots

The Union group in the red barn got off the first shots and causes some minor casualties. Unfortunately for them, the confederate response was a bit large and included a blast from their cannon! The Union lost another man and was forced to retreat from the barn.



Reinforcements!

With part of the town guard chased off, the Confederates begin looting and start to tally up almost 25 Yankee dollars of loot in a few turns. Of course, captured loot needs to be transported to the boats which will reduce the number of men at the front – an interesting tactical situation.

In addition to the looting, the initial firing has alerted both Yankee and Confederate reinforcements...activation die rolling begins in earnest. The first to arrive are the Confederates who approach the town cautiously.



On the next turn, the Union cavalry activates. The Union cavalry advances to the town in two groups, one goes overland down the right side of the table and dismounts to form a skirmish line. The second unit advances to the town's crossroads rapidly setting up a dramatic sequence of events.....



CHARGE!

On the next turn, the Union cavalry gets the first Cue card and charges the first unit of advancing Confederate cavalry and puts them to flight! The routing Confederate cavalry runs through the second rebel cavalry unit. The second Confederate cavalry unit fails their *Backbone test* and flees the table, never to return to the battle.



On the next turn, victory turns to disaster as the rebels get the first go and rally their remaining cavalry. They also order the infantry to drop their loot and charge the Union from the rear....



Captain Daring, the Confederate commander, leads the infantry charge himself. His “Adie de camp”, the fanatical 6’ 6” Swede wades right in by his side. The Union cavalry are astonished as the mighty Swede simply grabs them off their horses and tosses them to the ground. The rest of the Confederate infantry gives the Union troopers what for with bayonet and pistol. The resulting fight is short and sharp and results in the Union cavalry detachment surrendering – both sides are down one cavalry unit each.



The rebel victory is also short lived as the other Union cavalry unit has dismounted along the tree line and pours fire from their Spencers into the remaining Confederate cavalry and routs them from the table.

Both sides have taken losses and the rebels realize they had better get their loot and get-out-of-town. The next few turns see the action shift to the left side of the table as the rebels return to looting, in earnest. Unfortunately, one of the civilians on the table is the infamous Red Butter, always more interested in protecting his own rather than the “Cause”. Run by the game’s referee, he uses his *Influential* attribute to ward off rebel looters from a small house belonging to one of his many lady friends. The Rebels failed to resist his charm, and after moaning in agony at the referee’s horrible fake southern accent...“Now you boys don’t want to loot this here ...” they moved on to other pickings. The current tally was approaching 65 Yankee dollars. It got awfully tricky on the next turn when a batch of rebels found a whiskey barrel - fortunately a sharp eyed Sergeant saw them and supported the ensuing *Backbone* test with his *Command* rating. The lads grumbled but packed the whiskey barrel off to the boats without partaking.



The Infantry Arrives

Finally, the Union Infantry activates and advances down the road in a desperate gamble to drive the rebels off before they capture enough supplies...



PIG STY ALAMO!

While the Union infantry is advancing to the town, the rebel supply search takes them to the left side of the table where a 5 man Union detachment is fortified in a Pig Sty. The Union squad is blocking access to some critical plunder – the pigs (mmmm, bacon). Those pigs must be captured at all costs and the Confederates launch an all out assault on the Ala-sty. The boys in blue defend valiantly and even employ a Ketchum grenade to good effect.



Despite having 2 casualties of their own, the Union forces are overwhelmed and fall in a legendary defense of their porcine brothers.



With the capture of the pigs, the rebel loot total stands at over \$100 Yankee dollars – now to get it to the boats and off the table before more of that Union infantry arrives!

The Final Assault

While the rebels were finishing off the pig sty, the last Union infantry unit made it into town and charged the Confederates in a last ditch attempt to drive them off.



After a few rounds of a closely fought melee, the rebels break amid some surrendering and others routing toward the docks. Units that are fleeing drop their loot. The rebels, who have made it back to the boat, try to support their comrades by firing on the Yankee breakthrough but it has little effect.



With the last of the rebels forced out of town and back onto their boats, it's time to count up the loot to see who won. The final tally was 98 Yankee dollars, just 2 short of the goal – a very close fought victory for the Union!