The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Summer, 2013

President's Gavel.

On May 21, I took a drive up to Westfield, NJ, for a benefit for the New Jersey 150th Committee. The occasion was to see the premier of the up & coming movie "Copperhead" staring Billy Campbell, Angus Macfadyen, & Peter Fonda. Let me say it was worth the trip. It was a decent movie as it showed one of the stories of the home front of the Civil War. Ron Maxwell the director was there and did a very interesting Q&A after the movie. He was also the director of "Gettysburg" (1993) & "Gods & Generals" (2003). "Copperhead" (2013) is to be released on June 28, 2013.

As defined in Wikipedia a Copperhead was a member of a vocal group of Democrats in the Northern part of the Union who opposed the American Civil War and wanted an immediate settlement with the Confederates. Republicans started calling antiwar Democrats "Copperheads", likening them to the venomous snake. The Peace Democrats accepted the label, reinterpreting the copper "head" as the likeness of Liberty, which they cut from copper pennies and proudly wore as badges. They comprised the more extreme wing of the "Peace Democrats". The most famous Copperhead was Ohio's Clement L. Vallandigham, a Congressman and leader of the Democratic Party. Republican prosecutors accused some leaders of treason in a series of trials in 1864.

Copperheadism was a highly contentious, grassroots movement, strongest in the area just north of the Ohio River, as well as some urban ethnic wards. Some historians have argued it represented a traditionalistic element alarmed at the rapid modernization of society sponsored by the Republican Party, and looked back to Jacksonian Democracy for inspiration. Others argue that the Copperheads damaged the Union war effort by fighting the draft, encouraging

desertion, and forming conspiracies while other historians feel the draft was in disrepute and that Republicans greatly exaggerated conspiracies for partisan reasons. Some historians also argue the Copperheads' goal of negotiating a peace and restoring the Union with slavery was naive and impractical, for the Confederates refused to consider giving up their independence. Copperheadism was a major issue in the 1864 presidential election; its strength increased when Union armies were doing poorly, and decreased when they won great victories. After the fall of Atlanta in September, 1864, military success seemed assured. Copperheadism collapsed.

I want to keep the Roebling Museum event on June 22nd & 23rd fresh in your mind. Everything seems to be coming together. We have, I think, our main attraction Professor Lowe and his Civil War Balloon. We will also have artillery and cavalry as well as Generals Warren & Buford in attendance. Different organization will be doing there promoting as well. The hours will be 11 AM to 4 PM and, since no food will be available, picnicking is permitted and is suggested on the grounds. Hope to see you either as a volunteer or just to attend.

Upcoming speakers shall be:

June 6, Dr. David Martin – New Jersey at Gettysburg.

July 11, William Moore - "Lincoln's War Years" September 5, Mike Plunkett - "Patty Gone For a Soldier"

October 3, Dr. James Green - "Civil War Balloons"

See you at the next meeting!

Your obedient servant!

Bruce. ♦

Meet Your Fellow Members:

Here's another entry in our biography series initiated as a way for members to get to know each other better. This month The Gazette highlights Bruce Sirak the President of the Camp Olden CWRT.



When I was 10 years old, my family visited Gettysburg, where I learned about one of the greatest battles ever fought on American soil. That vacation inspired me to develop a strong interest in the Civil War era, an admiration for patriotism, and great appreciation for all U.S. veterans.

Now, I am not able to put down any book about U.S. history and I have expanded my interest in history to include all world wars. After attending the 125th Reenactment of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1988, I became a Civil War reenactor. Each year, thousands of people relive that time in history -- and others -- carrying oldstyle weapons, acting out battles and wearing reproduction period clothing, such as the 100 percent wool uniform I've worn in the middle of July. I portrayed a private in the 28th Massachusetts Co. B, a regiment of the famed Irish Brigade. Over the years, I have participated in numerous battle reenactments and attended festivals and school programs. My experience has given me a much better understanding of what it might have been like to be a soldier during the Civil War, where often you were so close you looked your enemy in the eye. After advancing from reenacting the character of a front-line soldier, I now portray Charles Smith Olden, governor of New Jersey during the first part of the Civil War (1860 to 1863). A former state senator and treasurer of what was then The College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), he may be best known for building Drumthwacket, now New Jersey's official governor's residence.

No Civil War battles were fought in New Jersey, but the state contributed a great deal to the Union's fight. I firmly believe that New Jersey's citizens should be extremely proud of our state and its veterans from the Civil War era.

Deep down I have great respect for our military service men and servicewomen who put their lives in harms way for the freedom that we sometimes may take for granted. Veteran's Day is a special day set aside to honor all who served, living and dead. Conversely, Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who died in battle as a result of wounds in battle. Many people confuse the two holidays.

Recently, I attended an event where I overheard a veteran talking about when he was a medic during World War II. I immediately approached him, extended my hand and said, "Thank you for serving." His reply to me was, "I didn't do much." As he continued to tell us his story, he seemed very grateful that people were taking the time to listen; he seemed so proud all of a sudden. I believe that if you ever obtain any knowledge that a person is a veteran, a firm handshake and simple thank you is well deserved.

Every year I try to do something special on Veteran's Day because I do not view it as just another day off. In my opinion, Veteran's Day is to honor our servicemen servicewomen. On past Veteran's Days, I have marched in parades; put out flags in cemeteries; and participated in other events. This year, I am planning on finding re-enactors who will portray soldiers from the different time periods of American conflicts. These reenactors will participate in the ceremony at the Veteran's section of the Riverview Cemetery in Trenton. If all goes well, this could even become an annual event.

I never served in the military, but four of my brothers served in the Armed Forces. I also have two sons-in-laws who were in the Marine Corps and served in Iraq. I am extremely proud of all of them. I often worry for the safety of our soldiers serving their country in the military, but I know that they're proud to be doing so. You may be familiar with the saying, "Freedom is not free." It's absolutely true.

I live in Burlington Township and am a founding member and current president of the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum in Hamilton Township. The Round Table is named for New Jersey's first training camp during the Civil War.

It is a pleasure being part of Camp Olden. ♦

In Remembrance -

Mario Florio died suddenly on May 11, 2013. He will be remembered for his teaching career, Army Reserve service and many community activities. As a member of Camp Olden Civil War Round Table, Mario appreciated the history lectures and always offered a list of upcoming local events. From his own travels, he often described historic sites the club might enjoy and provided brochures for members to use. He particularly enjoyed catering "hospitality" for meetings. His carefully chosen treats always included fruit, something sweet and something salty. The best part was always his decorations. There were Eagle blow-ups for football time, flags for Veterans Day and Memorial Day and special decor for holidays.

The many contributions Mario made will be missed by round table members. ◆

Gettysburg and Vicksburg – 150 Years Ago:

July marks the 150th anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg. Following are two quizzes related to these events.

Culp's Hill Quiz:



While much attention is paid to Chamberlain's defense of the Union left flank, it is possible that the defense of Culp's Hill was more important because had the Confederates taken Culp's Hill,

the Union position on Cemetery Hill and the Union army's lifeline, the Baltimore Pike, would have been untenable.

- 1. Culp's Hill was an important position on the Union right flank because:
- a) It commanded the Hanover Road
- b) It was the tallest hill near Gettysburg
- c) It dominated the flank and rear of the Union's Cemetery Hill position
- d) None of the above
- e) All of the above
- 2. Which of the following statements is not true?
- a) Culp's Hill consists of two hills, an upper and a lower.
- b) Severe fighting at Culp's Hill raged from July 1 to 2.
- c) Union General George Greene's troops defended Culp's Hill on the night of July 2.
- d) Trees were felled on Culp's Hill to make it a better artillery position.
- e) Culp's Hill was once one of the most popular sites on the Gettysburg battlefield.
- 3. Which Confederate division attacked Culp's Hill on the evening of July 2nd?
- a) General Edward Johnson's
- b) General Richard Ewell's
- c) General Jubal Early's
- d) General Henry Heth's
- e) General John Bell Hood's
- 4. Which of the following was not a reason the Confederates failed to attack Culp's Hill on July 1?
 - a) There were reports of large numbers of Union troops on the flank and rear of the Confederate left flank.
- b) Union troops were found atop the hill during a Confederate reconnaissance.
- c) The troops slated for such an attack were slowed by a lengthy wagon train.
- d) Union Artillery atop Culp's Hill covered the entire field of attack.
- e) Robert E. Lee's orders were discretionary to attack the hills south of Gettysburg "if practicable."
- 5. Confederates had to cross Rock Creek to attack Culp's Hill on July 2 and July 3. Which of the following is not among Gettysburg's other streams, creeks and runs?

- a) Clapsaddle Creek
- b) Plum Run
- c) Steven's Run
- d) Marsh Creek
- e) Rose Run
- 6. Culp's Hill has been crowned since 1895 with a steel observation tower. Where are the other steel observation towers at Gettysburg?
- a) Cemetery Ridge and Big Round Top
- b) Big Round Top and Oak Ridge
- c) Cemetery Ridge and McPherson's Ridge
- d) Seminary Ridge and McPherson's Ridge
- e) Oak Ridge and Seminary Ridge
- 7. On July 3, Lt. Col. Charles Mudge of the 2nd Massachusetts said:
- a) "Halt, you damn Rebels!"
- b) "Well, it's murder, but it's the order."
- c) "Tell my father I died with my face to the enemy."
- d) "Oh, that I could see my mother."
- e) "Let us cross over the river and rest in the shade of the trees.
- 8. Of the six Union brigades positioned on Culp's Hill on the afternoon of July 2, how many were ordered to leave Culp's Hill in order to support the Union left flank?
- a) None
- b) Two
- c) Four
- d) Five
- e) Six
- 9. On July 3, Union artillery on which hill laid down an incessant fire against Confederate positions near Lower Culp's Hill and Spangler's Spring?
- a) Wolf Hill
- b) Cemetery Hill
- c) Casino Hill
- d) Libby Hill
- e) Power's Hill
- 10. Whose Confederate brigade captured abandoned Union trenches on Lower Culp's Hill on the evening of July 2?
- a) Gen. William Smith's
- b) Gen. George Steuart's
- c) Gen. Evander Law's
- d) Gen. Isaac Avery's
- e) Gen. James Walker's ◆

Answers to quiz on page 11

Vicksburg Campaign Quiz



Think you know a thing or two about the 1863 Vicksburg Campaign? Take our quiz and find out.

- 1. In 1863, the city of Vicksburg sat on a bluff above what famous American river?
- a) Mississippi
- b) Missouri
- c) Rappahannock
- d) Arkansas
- e) Potomac
- 2. Name the top Union and Confederate commanders of the 1863 Vicksburg Campaign?
 - a) William T. Sherman and Braxton Bragg
 - b) Ulysses S. Grant and John Pemberton
 - c) Ulysses S. Grant and Albert Sydney Johnston
 - d) William T. Sherman and John Pemberton
 - e) Henry Halleck and Joseph E. Johnston
- 3. Abraham Lincoln claimed that "Vicksburg is the key. The war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket." What made Vicksburg so important?
 - a) Vicksburg was the site of the only major cannon foundry in the Western theater. The Vicksburg cannon works supplied more than 50% of all Confederate artillery pieces.
- b) Vicksburg was a major port for Confederate blockade runners bringing critical supplies to the South.
- c) Vicksburg was Confederate President Jefferson Davis' hometown and thus had huge symbolic value to the Confederacy
- d) Confederate control of Vicksburg would block Union use of the Mississippi and would protect a vital Confederate agricultural supply line to the trans-Mississippi.
- e) Confederate control of Vicksburg would prevent the Union from conducting a successful invasion of Louisiana and Arkansas.
- 4. Union attempts to take Vicksburg in late 1862 and early 1863 met with little success. Ulysses S.

Grant was forced to suspend an 1862 offensive when his key supply base at Holly Springs, Mississippi was captured in a raid led by this Confederate general:

- a) James Longstreet
- b) Earl Van Dorn
- c) John Hunt Morgan
- d) Phil Sheridan
- e) JEB Stuart
- 5. On April 16, 1863 Admiral David Porter, in support of Grant's new offensive against Vicksburg, would successfully maneuver his gunboats and empty troop transports past the bristling defenses of Vicksburg. What key observation led to the Federal navy's success in slipping past Vicksburg?
- a) That Confederate gunners would not be able to see his naval forces during a moonless, nighttime move
- b) That the poor state of Confederate artillery shells and gunpowder rendered most of their river cannons unusable
- c) Intelligence sources had informed Porter that most of the Confederate artillerists had been redeployed to the landward defenses
- d) That the Confederate guns high upon the Vicksburg bluffs would have trouble hitting ships travelling closest to the Vicksburg side of the river.
- e) That newly installed iron plates atop Union ships would defeat most Confederate artillery hits.
- 6. After his successful landing at Bruinsburg, Mississippi on April 29-30, 1863, Grant's forces would move inland. Before laying siege to Vicksburg, Grant would engage Confederate forces in a number of important preliminary battles. Which of these was NOT one of those battles?
- a) Meridian
- b) Raymond
- c) Champion Hill
- d) Jackson
- e) Big Black River Bridge
- f) Port Gibson
- 7. Despite securing a victory at the Battle of Raymond (May 12, 1863), the surprisingly strong Confederate attack upon his flank forced

Grant to first attack a Confederate army in his rear at Jackson before moving on Vicksburg. Who was the commander of this Confederate relief army located at Jackson?

- a) P.G.T. Beauregard
- b) A.P. Hill
- c) Stephen D. Lee
- d) Joseph E. Johnston
- e) John Bell Hood
- 8. Many consider the Union victory at the Battle of Champion Hill (May 16, 1863) to be the decisive battle of Grant's 1863 Vicksburg Campaign. Which of the following was NOT a significant outcome of this battle?
- a) Jefferson Davis would direct Stephen D. Lee to replace John Pemberton as the head of the Army of Mississippi.
- b) The numerically inferior Confederate army would suffer almost 1,500 more casualties than their Union attackers
- c) That Pemberton's only remaining option was to retreat into his lines around Vicksburg and await his fate
- d) General William Loring's much needed division would independently retreat towards Jackson and away from Vicksburg.
- e) Confederate Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman would be killed in a rearguard action toward the end of the battle
- 9. After several bloody and ineffectual attacks against the entrenched Confederate defenders around Vicksburg, Grant settled into a siege of the city. Looking for a way through the defenses, Grant's forces detonated an explosive-filled mine underneath the 3rd Louisiana Redan position on June 23, 1863. What effect did this mine explosion and Union attack have on the Confederates?
- a) Little to no impact. Despite 26 hours of unabated fury, Union forces were unable to bring about a true breakthrough and the breach was subsequently sealed.
- b) The June 23rd attack forced the Confederates to fall back to their reserve lines around Vicksburg
- c) Grant's more numerous soldiers were able to pour through the sudden gap in the Confederate lines forcing Pemberton to

- surrender his army the next day.
- d) The loss of the 3rd Louisiana Redan eliminated the last route of retreat for Pemberton's forces
- 10. General Pemberton, sensing that the time had come to surrender the city of Vicksburg, rode out to meet Grant and to seek terms. What surrender terms did Pemberton ultimately accept from Grant?
- a) Immediate and unconditional surrender of the city and its garrison
- b) The offer of parole to the entire Vicksburg garrison. ♦

Answers to quiz on page 11

Special Event:

JUNIOR CAMP OLDEN DAY will be held at the *Civil War and Native American Museum*, 2202 Kuser Road Hamilton, NJ, on Saturday, June 15th, 2013, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

Young persons 8 to 13 years of age can once again enlist as a Civil War soldier or participate as a lady of the Civil War period. Soldiers and ladies will join in military drills, camp life activities, music, games, songs, crafts and FUN! The fee is \$30 per participant. For information or reservations contact Bob Dunphy at 609-585-5108 or www.campolden.org and email webmaster. ◆

Other Events:

Sat., June 1 & Sun., June 2 - Discover the Civil War at Allaire State Park, Farmingdale, NJ! Meet the soldiers, shop at period stores, and experience encampment life! This event will be a non-combatant Civil War living presentation of a Training Camp for new recruits in New Jersey service. Throughout the day speeches, artillery demonstrations, witness battalion drills, musket cleaning, dress parades, and a farewell at the train station as troops leave for the front! In addition, explore our 1836 Industrial Village! \$5 parking fee for this event.

Dr. David Martin will be giving a series of lectures on *New Jersey at Gettysburg* in June as follows:

June 5 – Camden County Community College

June 12 – Roebling

June 19 – Bergen County Community College All programs are free and start at 7:30 PM

Sat., June 22 & Sun., June 23 - Civil War Exhibit / Encampment at the Roebling Museum. This exhibit explores the role of Washington A. Roebling and other engineers during the Civil War and Gettysburg. A living history encampment of Civil War re-enactors on the Museum's lawn will showcase a soldier's life on the battlefield - featuring a historic hydrogen balloon!

The grounds are open free of charge. Regular admission applies to visit the Museum.

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

Roebling Museum is located at 100 2nd Avenue, Roebling, New Jersey

\$6.00 Adults; \$5.00 seniors and children 6-12; Free for members and children under 6 ◆

Ongoing Exhibit:

Macculloch Hall Historical Museum:

A retrospective of James E. Kelly's Civil War artwork will be exhibited at the Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Avenue, Morristown, New Jersey from March 10 through October 31. Nearly two dozen historical sculptures and drawings will be on display, many for the first time publicly—including "Sheridan's Ride," "General Reynolds at Gettysburg," "General Sherman's March to the Sea," and also nearly a dozen bas-reliefs of Civil War commanders including Alexander Webb, Fitz John Porter, Horatio Wright, Alfred Pleasonton, and many more. This exhibit was aided through the efforts of historian and author William Styple. The Museum is open to tour the house and view exhibits on Wednesdays, Thursdays & Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. Adults \$8; Seniors & Students \$6; Children 6 - 12 \$4. Members and children under 5 are free. The last tickets for admission are sold at 3 p.m. (973) 538-2404 ext. 10. ◆



Who Am I?



I was born in 1833 to a politically well-connected family in Pennsylvania. My grandfather, Andrew was a U.S. Congressman and Senator from 1791 to 1813; his first cousin Andrew Curtin went on to become the Keystone State's governor during the Civil War. After attending a local private school, I received an appointment to the United States Military Academy, graduating in 1855 alongside William W. Averell, Alfred T. A. Torbert, and Alexander Webb. My antebellum assignments as a dragoon took me to the Indian frontier and California.

In January 1862, I was made colonel of the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry and capably lead the regiment through the Peninsula and Maryland campaigns before receiving a commission as brigadier general that November. I was given a division in early 1863 and led it during Stoneman's Raid during the Chancellorsville campaign. The rest of May was spent patrolling the Virginia countryside in search of the Gray Ghost, John S. Mosby.

The Gettysburg campaign brought a revitalized spirit to the Army of the Potomac's mounted troops, beginning with the Battle of Brandy Station. I marched my division into the Confederate rear, and surprised J.E.B. Stuart in his headquarters on Fleetwood Hill. My own delays on the march to Brandy Station and my lengthy preparatory bombardment, however, allowed the Confederates to meet the Union threat. Nevertheless, the Yankee troopers fared well against their gray-clad counterparts. In the next weeks, my horsemen fought at Aldie and again at Middleburg as the two armies moved north. On July 3, my division was covering the direct path to the Union rear at Gettysburg when

they were attacked by Stuart's Confederates. The Federals responded with a series of mounted charges that drove the Confederates from the field and secured the Union army's rear. After the battle, I aggressively pursued the Lee's retreating army to the Potomac and beyond.

After an autumn and winter spent mostly in skirmishing with Mosby, I commanded my division during the Overland Campaign in 1864 and led raids against Lee's supply lines outside of Petersburg until February 1865, when I abruptly resigned from the army.

After the war, I accepted Ulysses S. Grant's offer to serve as U. S. Consul to Prague and also wrote an account of my division during the Gettysburg campaign. The majority of my time, however, was spent at home in Reading, Pennsylvania, where I died in 1916. (Courtesy of Civil War Trust.)

Who Am I? (Answer on page 11) ♦

Civil War Sesquicentennial -

Below are some of the major events which occurred 150 years ago from June of 1863 to August of 1863:

June 7, Milliken's Bend

June 9, Brandy Station / Fleetwood Hill

June 17, Aldie

June 13-15, Second Winchester

June 17, Aldie

June 17-19, Middleburg

June 28, Meade replaced Hooker as commander of the Army of the Potomac.

June 20, West Virginia admitted to the Union

June 28 Donaldsonville

June 30 Hanover

July 1-3, Battle of Gettysburg

July 4, Vicksburg falls

July 4, Helena

July 6-16, Williamsport / Falling Waters

July 8, Boonsboro

July 9, Port Hudson falls

July 16, Secessionville

July 18, - Fort Wagner South Carolina

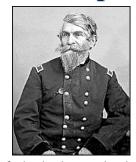
July 23, Manassas Gap / Wapping Heights

August 17-23, Charleston Harbor

August 21, Chattanooga

August 21, Massacre at Lawrence Kansas ♦

Hero of the Right Flank at Gettysburg -- General George Sears Greene at Culp's Hill



The Union left had almost broken late on the afternoon of July 2, 1863, the second day of fighting around Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Lieutenant General James Longstreet's Rebels had hit the Federals hard for more than an hour, storming up Little Round Top, the key high ground on the Union left flank. Only the heroics of Colonel Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and his tiny 20th Maine had prevented the hill's capture.

Major General George G. Meade, commanding the Union Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg, responded to the threat on his left by ordering up reinforcements just after 6:00 p.m. Reserve units from Major General John Sedgwick's VI Corps, brigades from Meade's old V Corps, and battered portions of the I Corps all answered his call. Meade then called for the XII Corps, which was guarding the Union right on Culp's Hill.

Upon receiving Meade's instructions, Major General Henry Slocum requested permission to leave one of his two divisions on Culp's Hill as a precaution. But Meade was adamant in his call for all available troops and allowed Slocum to pick only one brigade to stay behind. So Slocum made his choice: the weight of Meade's questionable decision would fall on the shoulders of Brigadier General George Sears Greene, an austere 62-year-old Rhode Islander who commanded a veteran brigade of New Yorkers, the 3d Brigade of the XII Corps' 2d Division.

Strengthening the Union left at the expense of the right "nearly proved a calamity to the whole army," Colonel Lewis R. Stegman of the 102d New York, in Greene's brigade, later wrote. "It was a suicidal move." Meade had taken a risky gamble that his right was secure for the day,

even though Confederate batteries had just exchanged fire with Federal artillery on Culp's Hill between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. Greene, however, approached the predicament calmly.

As a descendant of Nathanael Greene, George Washington's second-in-command, and as the father of two Union soldiers and a Federal naval officer, Greene seemed to have Yankee blue in his blood. He had graduated second in his class from the U.S. Military Academy and afterward spent 13 years in uniform. For the next 25 years, he worked as a civil engineer, rising to the top ranks of his profession before the Civil War drew him back into the army.

When Greene first arrived at Culp's Hill early on the morning of July 2, he immediately realized his position demanded breastworks. Disregarding the objections of his division commander, Brigadier General John Geary, Greene ordered construction to begin. The result was an imposing rampart of wood, stones, and earth that would give Confederate attackers few targets.

The breastworks offered a measure of security, but the fact remained that Greene's troops on the hill's ridge held an incredibly vulnerable and tenuous position. When the other five XII Corps brigades headed south in response to Meade's order just before 7:00 p.m., Greene's five regiments — a total of just 1,350 men — had to occupy all the vacated works. As dusk set in, Greene ordered his 60th, 78th, 102d, 137th, and 149th New York to stretch out in a line one man deep, with one foot of space between the men. The fortified trenches were nearly half a mile long, and as Green inspected them, he wondered if he had enough manpower to hold his ground.

It was already too late to do anything more than wonder, however. By 7:15 p.m. skirmishers led by Lieutenant Colonel John C.O. Redington of the 60th New York spotted Confederates crossing Rock Creek, near the foot of Culp's Hill. As the drab butternut-and-gray mass approached, the skirmishers fired a few volleys and raced up the rocky, wooded hill for the safety of the breastworks. As they frantically leapt over the works, Greene dispatched a courier to XI Corps commander Major General Oliver O. Howard and to Brigadier General James S. Wadsworth of

the I Corps' 1st Division with an urgent plea for reinforcements.

The Confederate advance was long overdue. Miscommunication and vacillation had plagued General Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia all day. Lee had planned for Longstreet's First Corps to attack the Federal left while Lieutenant General Richard Ewell's Second Corps hit the Union right. He later amended the plan so that Longstreet would attack after Ewell first made a feint. Ideally, Ewell's display would then expand into a full assault. This scheme, originally set to unfold in the morning, was postponed until the late afternoon because Longstreet failed to move.

As dusk settled in, Ewell launched an entire division at Greene's single understrength brigade. Three brigades under the command of Major General Edward Johnson waded through Rock Creek and stormed up the rise through the near-darkness created by the canopy of leaves that blocked the fading sun.

Random shots rang out as the Confederates approached the top of Culp's Hill. Federals crouched anxiously behind their bulwarks, listening to the ominous footfalls in the woods. Suddenly, the lead Confederate ranks appeared out of the shadows, and Greene's officers ordered the New Yorkers to open fire. Scores of Southerners dropped as the New Yorkers' burst of flame and lead found its mark. Rebel officers pulled their shocked troops back into the woods to regroup.

For the adrenaline-charged Union troops, the respite was brief. Their shaken attackers reorganized quickly and opened fire from behind large rocks and trees. But it soon became clear that with the Federals heavily entrenched on high ground and shrouded in darkness and smoke, Johnson's men could not capture the hill with long-range fire. The order to charge came again.

About 8:00 p.m., Confederates under the command of Brigadier General George H. Steuart assaulted Greene's extreme right. Holding the position were the 456 men of Colonel David Ireland's 137th New York, a hefty regiment by mid-war standards. As the Confederate fire intensified, the 71st Pennsylvania arrived to reinforce the hill. Greene

immediately posted them to Ireland's right, momentarily slowing Steuart's momentum. Strangely, however, the 71st stayed on the line only long enough to exchange several volleys with the Confederates, and then withdrew suddenly at the height of the attack. Such an unintelligible retreat left the Union right, as Greene put it, "in a very critical position."

About this time, units from the I and XI Corps began to reach Culp's Hill. Greene sent the 147th New York into the heart of his lines; the 6th Wisconsin, under the command of Colonel Rufus Dawes, to take and hold the breastworks to the 137th New York's right; and the 14th Brooklyn to Ireland's immediate aid.

Ireland, whose men had been fielding fire from three sides, desperately moved his line through the dark, smoky air behind a traverse of stacked wood, rocks, and brush that stood perpendicular to the brigade line. His new position faced the attackers and temporarily kept them at bay, but he needed more men to hold it. The Federal reinforcements arrived just in time to help stop Steuart's determined troops. Even though they gained part of the vacant Union works, the Confederates were unable to push through the thin, defiant line.

Meanwhile, the fighting raged on all along the line. The Confederates made four separate charges between 7:00 and 10:00 p.m., but each met the same bloody end.

Though 755 men from the I and XI Corps bolstered the five New York regiments, Greene never had more than 1,350 troops in line to face 4,000 to 5,000 Confederates. He maintained his bristling defense of the hill by using his limited resources wisely, rotating troops to and from the battle line to restock their cartridge boxes and clean their weapons. The eager Union troops cheered on their comrades as they raced back and forth, pushing each other to greater and greater heights of fervor and determination. Greene rode up and down the line, showing no regard for his personal welfare.

About 10:00 p.m., the Confederate attacks ceased, though sporadic musket fire continued for some time. At the same time, Union Brigadier General Thomas Kane's 2d Brigade of the 2d Division returned and was followed soon

by the other XII Corps units. For the second time that day, a Union flank had bent but not broken. The left flank had been severely pressed on Little Round Top, but Chamberlain and his 20th Maine had stood firm. Now the right flank had been tested, and it too had been saved by a small, gutsy force and a gallant leader.

Fire opened up again about 4:00 a.m. the next day as the Confederates tried one last time to take Culp's Hill. But lacking a demonstration by Longstreet on the Union left, and with the entire Union XII Corps back in place on the hill, three more Confederate attacks proved fruitless. Ewell withdrew his frustrated forces late in the morning, and tired Federal soldiers fetched water down at Rock Creek. There, they tallied the awesome price their foes had paid trying to unseat them. Greene reported 391 dead Rebels immediately in front of his works. His men found another 150 corpses on the creek's banks and roughly 2,000 muskets strewn all over the hill. Adding the 130 prisoners captured, Greene estimated the Confederate losses at 2,400, including several officers. By contrast, the 3d Brigade's losses amounted to a mere 307 killed, wounded, and missing.

Greene's service as a field commander did not end at Gettysburg. The aging general fought on until a Confederate bullet struck him in the face at the Battle of Wauhatchie, Tennessee, in October 1863. Though he briefly returned to the battlefield in 1865, his duty had been served. He was brevetted a major general of volunteers before he marched in the Grand Review of the Armies in Washington just after the war. He performed his last act as an officer as a member of a courts-martial panel, on which he served until early 1866.

After the war, Greene returned to civil engineering and worked diligently to compile his proud family's genealogy. He lived until 1899 — a vigorous old warhorse until the end.

The magnitude of Greene's heroic defense of Culp's Hill cannot easily be overstated. Had Ewell's forces overwhelmed the small Union force, the Federal rear would have been exposed to direct attack, and the Army of the Potomac, with Confederates already in place in its left and center fronts, would then have been encircled.

The fight that Greene's stalwart men put up on the night of July 2 ranks among the best of any Civil War brigade. Anything less than their tireless, courageous effort would have given the Confederates victory.

Although Greene credited others for the victory, he was the true hero. Since his reentry into the army as the 60th New York's colonel in January 1862, his hard-driving style had brought him much praise and a promotion. He had led a division at Antietam in September 1862, skillfully managing limited resources to give his men every advantage possible. At Gettysburg Greene remained conspicuous, constantly moving along his lines to encourage his besieged troops.

important Greene's most contribution Gettysburg was his early-morning decision to construct breastworks. At that point in the war, many officers on both sides still opposed their use. Without the protection of breastworks, Greene's heavily outnumbered brigade probably would have been swept from the hill, to the great peril of the Union army. Under Greene's direction, the works were perfectly located, and constructed not only to protect the defenders but also to conceal them. Thus the 4,000 to 5,000 attackers did not know their enemy was a mere 1,350 men. Greene's 25 years as an engineer, designing and building railroads and waterworks such as the Central Park Reservoir in New York City, had paid off. And his aggressive leadership style made him the ideal man to lead the defense of Culp's Hill.

Joshua Chamberlain became a national hero after the Battle of Gettysburg. Glory, however, did not immediately come to George Sears Greene. Part of the reason for Greene's relative obscurity is that even his fellow Rhode Islanders were slow to lionize him. They reserved most of their adulation for another native of their state, the equally devoted but less skilled Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, partly because Burnside had marched off to war in 1861 in command of Rhode Islanders. Greene, on the other hand, was employed in New York when the war broke out, and he received his commission in 1862 from the Empire State's governor, Edwin Morgan. Consequently, he led New York troops almost exclusively during the war. Still, the main factor in Greene's passage into obscurity may well have been that Meade did not properly credit Greene or his scrappy New York troops in his official report on the Gettysburg Campaign. Meade later agreed that Greene's efforts were heroic and countered that he did not properly credit the Rhode Island general only because his subordinates had misinformed him. He made some meek attempts to have the record changed, but with little effect.

Others had immediately realized the importance of Greene's efforts and had never forgotten it. In 1888, Longstreet gave Greene and his New Yorkers "the credit of having successfully prevented the Confederates from turning Meade's right flank." Longstreet left Greene with the highest praise: "There was no better officer in either army." •

This article was written by Eric Ethier and originally published in the December 1997 issue of Civil War Times Magazine.

Upcoming Meeting -

Our next meeting will be **June 6**, 2013 at 7 PM at the Hamilton Public Library located at 1 Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. Drive; Hamilton, NJ. It will feature Dr. David Martin discussing the "New Jersey at Gettysburg" ◆

Future speakers shall be:
July 11, William Moore
"Lincoln's War Years"
September 5, Mike Plunkett
"Patty Gone For a Soldier"
October 3, Dr. James Green
"Civil War Balloons" ◆



Answers to *Culp's Hill Quiz*: 1-c, 2-b, 3-a, 4-d, 5-a, 6-e, 7-b, 8-d, 9-e, 10-b.

For further information see:

http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/gettysburg/gettysburg-powers-hill-2010/culps-hill-quiz/culps-hill-quiz-answers.html.

Answers to *Vicksburg Quiz*: 1-a, 2-b, 3-d, 4-b, 5-d, 6-a, 7-d, 8-a, 9-a, 10-b.

For further information see:

http://www.civilwar.org/education/contests-quizzes/quizzes/vicksburg-campaign/vicksburg-campaign-quiz-answers.html •

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Jot down a couple of lines and send your photos and your thoughts to the Gazette email address: *oldennewsletter@optonline.net*. The mailing address is C&M Mazzocchi, 1430 18th Ave. Wall, NJ 07719.

For meeting and other information visit us on the Web: www.campolden.org. ◆

Answer to "Who Am I?" Brigadier General David McMurtrie Gregg (1833 – 1916) ♦

