



Military Collector & Historian

Journal of the Company of Military Historians



The Newark City Guard, 1845

Company of Military Historians

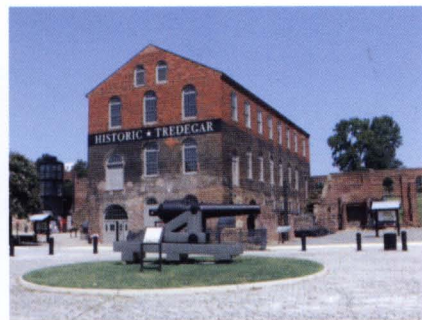
66th Annual Meeting

27-31 May 2015

Downtown Richmond Omni Hotel
100 South 12th Street, Richmond, VA 23219



We invite you to attend the 66th Annual Meeting of the Company of Military Historians in Richmond, Virginia. Pay tribute to Virginia's early colonial days and Civil War legacy at inspiring, interactive historical attractions. Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy, a commercial center for the slave trade, and the site of several major battles—in fact, the entire downtown was burned to the ground days before President Abraham Lincoln walked the streets. Richmond, Virginia was “ground zero” during the Civil War.



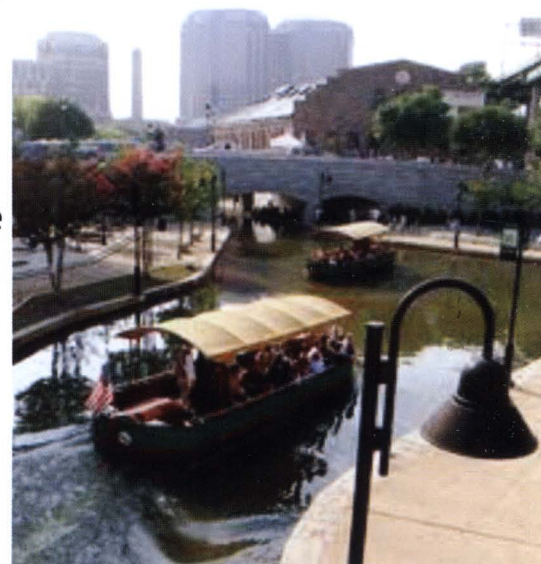
We will stay at the Richmond downtown Omni Hotel, located in Richmond's Historic Shockoe Slip. Our hotel's location is within minutes walking distance to numerous inspiring historical attractions, including the American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar, the Museum of the Confederacy, and the Manchester Slave Trail. Nearby are numerous battlefields such as those of the Overland Campaign, Peninsula Campaign, Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Siege of Petersburg, Cold Harbor, Beaver Dam Creek, Drewry's Bluff, Fort Harrison, Gaines' Mill, Malvern Hill, and Pamplin Historical Park & The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier. See the war from the perspectives of Confederate, Union, and African Americans.



Our meeting rooms at the hotel are large, convenient and immediately adjacent to the room where members may set up their military history themed displays. Parking is located underneath the hotel for easy access. Many local restaurants are within a few blocks walking distance.

Meeting highlights will include:

Narrated historical tour of the James River and Kanawha Canal so you can visualize Richmond from the perspective of its evolution as an eighteenth century colonial trade center into the South's largest industrial center by the mid-nineteenth century and the importance of this historical river to Richmond's development. Presentations on items of material culture from the American Revolution, War of 1812, and the Civil War . . . and more. The meeting is designed to enable you to visit the area's historic museums, grand homes, the Virginia Capital designed by Thomas Jefferson, nearby battlefield parks, and more.





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What Uniform is Washington Wearing in Houdon's Statue?

Marko Zlatich

HOUDON's statue of George Washington is the most famous representation of the modern Cincinnatus. In this original study of the uniform depicted in the statue, a nationally recognized authority on Revolutionary War uniforms explains how Houdon used clothing to enrich the symbolic meaning of his subject.

Thanks to the Society of the Cincinnati, it is now possible to study the dress depicted by Jean-Antoine Houdon in his famous statue of George Washington close up. Although more than forty bronze copies of the statue have been cast in the last 150 years, this is one of the only examples—the society believes it is the only one in the United States—that is not mounted on a high pedestal. The installation of the statue at ground level on the lawn of the society's headquarters at Anderson House is in keeping with Houdon's original intention for the display of the statue and offers the opportunity to study the statue in detail.

Houdon's Washington is widely regarded as one of the greatest portrait sculptures ever created and is justly famous for its faithful portrayal of its subject. Houdon went to great pains to depict Washington accurately. He crossed the Atlantic to visit Washington at Mount Vernon and took careful measurements of Washington's body and made a plaster mask of the general's face. Contemporaries praised the startling accuracy of Houdon's portrait. Lafayette said when he saw the statue he half expected it to speak.

An artist who invested so much attention on creating an accurate portrait of his subject's face and body undoubtedly invested as much thought and care in costuming his subject appropriately. The decision to depict Washington in modern dress, rather than in the toga and sandals of a Classical hero, was deliberately made and informed by conversations between Houdon and some of the most thoughtful men of the time, including Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin West, and Washington himself. Houdon's presentation of Washington in modern dress as a modern Cincinnatus returning home from war created an immediate sensation. But the details of the uniform

Washington wears in the statue did not excite much comment from the general's contemporaries.

Curiously, the uniform Washington is wearing in the statue is not precisely like the uniforms depicted in any of the several life portraits of Washington painted during the war—leaving the careful student of Revolutionary War uniforms to ask: What uniform is it?

The Virginia government began considering how Washington should be attired as soon as the decision to commission the statue was made. In the summer of 1784, the Virginia legislature resolved to commission a statue of the general. The governor's council recognized the commission was beyond the skill of any American sculptor and advised Gov. Benjamin Harrison to have the statue carved in Europe. The council further recommended the sculptor use a copy of a recent portrait of Washington by Charles Willson Peale as a basis for the statue.¹

Acting on the council's advice, Gov. Benjamin Harrison dispatched a copy of a Peale portrait of Washington to Thomas Jefferson, the American minister to France, on 30 October 1784. This was a copy by Peale of an original portrait ordered by the state of Maryland commemorating the surrender at Yorktown. The portrait included views of York and Gloucester as well as, "French and American officers with their Colours displayed, and between them the British with their Colours cased." It still hangs in the Maryland State House in Annapolis. Harrison confessed to Jefferson he had little knowledge "in the Science of devices, Emblems &c" and left these details to be worked out by Jefferson and his colleague in France, Benjamin Franklin. Additional details—such as costs, placement of the statue when received and, scheduling of the work—were to be left for future decision.²

Jefferson received the portrait on 15 April 1785. Shortly thereafter he wrote to Harrison "no statue could be executed so as to obtain the approbation of those to whom the figure of the original is known, but on an actual view by the artist." Jefferson and Franklin had approached Houdon about the commission. The sculptor was delighted by the challenge, but insisted he would have to travel to Virginia "to take the true figure by actual inspection and mensuration." Jefferson and Franklin agreed and delayed completing a contract with Houdon until the expenses of the trip and artist's fees could be determined and the parties reached an agreement on "habit, attitude, devices &c."³

Houdon visited Washington at Mount Vernon in the fall of 1785. Over the two weeks from 2 October to 17 October, he made extensive measurements and notes and prepared a

MARKO ZLATICH served six years in the U.S. Army Reserve. He has an MS in foreign service from Georgetown University. A prolific contributor to both MUIA and this Journal, he is also author of General Washington's Army, Volumes 1 and 2, and other publications related to his specialty—uniforms of the Continental forces. Retired from the World Bank in 1988, he has since worked as a volunteer researcher in the Armed Forces History Collections, Smithsonian Institution, and in the headquarters of the Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, D.C.

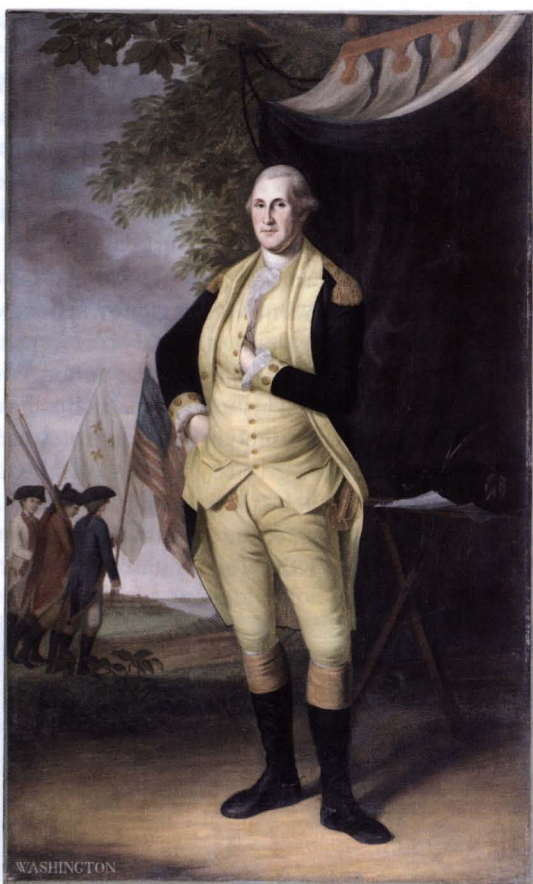


FIG 1. *George Washington* by Charles Willson Peale, currently in the Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

plaster life mask of his subject. Washington's step-granddaughter, Nelly Parke Custis (then six years old), entered the room where Washington lay during this procedure, his face covered by a plaster-of-Paris mask and quills stuck up his nose for breathing. Unfortunately Houdon's manuscript notes and sketches for the statue do not survive; his method can only be assumed by analogy. Houdon's method of measuring his subject in this case was probably similar to the method he employed in preparation for creating his portrait of John Paul Jones. Houdon's measurements of Jones' body were so accurate they were used to identify the bones of the naval hero, lost in the jumble of an abandoned Paris cemetery, more than a century after Jones' death.⁴

Washington and Houdon undoubtedly discussed how the general would be dressed in the statue, but no notes or other documentation of such discussions are known to have survived. It is nonetheless clear how the statue was to be posed and dressed remained to be determined when Houdon returned to France at the end of 1785. Jefferson wrote to Washington in January 1786 Franklin had left France "before what is called the costume of the statue was decided on." Jefferson confessed he was not comfortable making this decision on his own. "I cannot," he wrote to Washington "so well satisfy myself, and I am persuaded I should not so well satisfy the world, as by

consulting your own wish or inclination as to this article." Jefferson asked Washington if he had a preference for any "particular dress ... to be adopted" for the statue. Jefferson's ambivalence about the dress suggests that Houdon had not shown Jefferson any sketches or produced any notes or even a small plaster model of the statue. The artist had returned to France with detailed anatomical information upon which to base his statue, but no clear guidance on how to dress America's hero.⁵

Washington replied on 1 August 1786, in his typical self-effacing manner, explaining to Jefferson he would be "perfectly satisfied with whatever may be judged decent and proper. I should even scarcely have ventured to suggest that perhaps a servile adherence to the garb of antiquity might not be altogether so expedient as some little deviation in favor of the modern custom." Several months passed before Jefferson responded to Washington that "modern dress for your statue" was agreeable not only to him, but was consistent with the view of a trio of expatriate American artists—Benjamin West, John Singleton Copley, and John Trumbull—who felt placing "a modern in an antique dress as just an object of ridicule as an Hercules or Marius with a periwig & chapeau bras."⁶

The decision to attire the statue in modern costume was a significant step forward, but it left the precise kind of modern costume unresolved. Should it be military or civilian? Washington was a unique kind of military hero—a modern Cincinnatus.

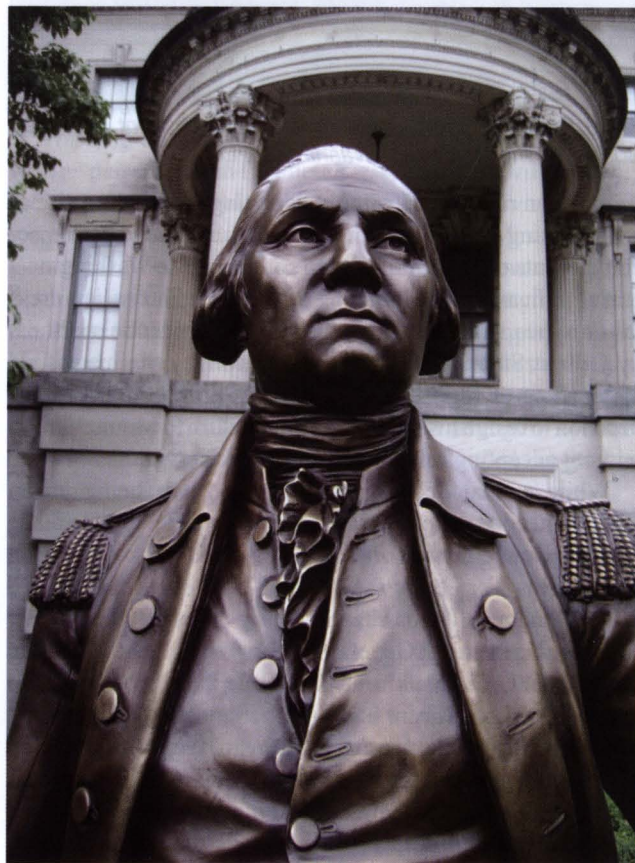


FIG 2. *Statue of George Washington, bust*. Courtesy, Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.



FIG 3. Statue of George Washington, full view, front. Courtesy, Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

As Houdon recognized, simply depicting him in the attire of a conquering hero, sword in hand and surrounded by the accouterments of war, would fail to communicate Washington's real significance. Yet depicting Washington in civilian dress (as he appears in the austere republican presidential portraits by Gilbert Stuart) would also fail to convey the magnitude of Washington's greatness, which was immortalized by his decision to resign his commission and return to Mount Vernon without accepting rewards for his public service.

While a final decision on this issue was being made, Houdon needed a model to strike the intended pose. He made do with Gouverneur Morris, a young New Yorker living in Paris. In his diary entry for 5 June 1789, Morris noted: "Go to M. Houdon's. He has been waiting for me a long time. I stand for his statue of General Washington, being the humble employment of a manikin." Morris' role in the creation of the statue was slight. There is no intimation in any source that Morris—with one leg missing, lost to a carriage accident—wore a uniform while striking a pose for Houdon. As a "manikin" his function was not that of a life model but as a form on which was placed drapery or other clothing. Such drapery was used by Houdon, so Jefferson explained, as "the actual costume he formed for the President's statue. It consisted of

a gilet [waistcoat], and cloak which fell behind the back so as to shew the form of the body clear of it." Jefferson described this garment in order to obtain a copy of it made of "light cheap silk, couleur d'ardoise" (slate gray). Notwithstanding Jefferson's interest in obtaining a copy of Houdon's pattern for clothing the statue, it was Jefferson's intention to place "the original order to make the statue in the real costume, to wi[t] the military uniform."⁷

But what military uniform was it? This question is not as simple to answer as it might seem. Washington owned and wore at least ten different uniforms during a military career spanning more than forty-five years. Only one of these uniforms—apparently the last—survives. This uniform, which is now on display in the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of American History, seems to have been given by Martha Washington to the general's step-granddaughter, Elizabeth Parke Custis. Her husband, Thomas Law, donated the uniform to a museum, the Columbian Institution, in 1825. The Smithsonian acquired it



FIG 4. Statue of George Washington, full view, back. Courtesy, Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

in 1883. This uniform was apparently made for Washington after 1789. Its most distinctive element—a high or “rise and fall” collar—reflects a fashion in male costume, civilian and military, that became common in the early republic but which was not characteristic of Washington’s Revolutionary War uniforms, all of which have coats with low collars. Washington’s surviving uniform was not the source for the uniform in which Houdon dressed his statue.

In a study completed in 2001 for the Military History and Diplomacy Division of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, I documented nine earlier uniforms worn by Washington between 1754 and 1789—two assembled prior to the Revolutionary War and six made for Washington’s use between April 1775 and the end of 1782. Evidence about these uniforms is found in correspondence, tailoring bills, ledger entries for cloth purchases, and other documents in Washington’s surviving papers. Portraits of Washington executed from life during the Revolutionary War offer additional documentation of the six uniforms assembled for Washington between the outbreak of the war and the end of 1782.⁸

The uniform coat is the most important and distinctive article documented in these archival and graphic sources. Coats were the most expensive part of any uniform. Military officers—especially ones as conscious of dress as Washington—were particular about the materials, cut, and details of their uniform coats. Washington’s documented Revolutionary War uniform coats consistently adhered to the fashionable Prussian cut. His blue uniform coats were faced with buff collars, lapels, and cuffs. The pattern of the cuffs and the lapels on Washington’s coats varied over time. Charles Willson Peale’s full-length portraits document three distinct cuff patterns: the portraits of 1776–1778 have round “dragoon” cuffs with false inverted chevron button holes; the portraits of 1779–1781 have round cuffs with pointed edges and buttons with vertical closed button holes; the portraits of 1781–1784 have round cuffs with straight edges and four buttons. The coats in these portraits have a low or cape collar and long lapels. The skirts reached no further than mid-thigh.

The uniform coat on Houdon’s Washington is not precisely like that of any of these documented uniforms. Like the coats in the Peale portraits, the coat on the statue has a cape collar and long lapels, but its round cuffs lack buttons and buttonholes. More importantly, the coat on the statue is cut much longer in the skirt than the coats depicted in the Peale portraits. The length of the skirt on the statue—twenty inches from waist to hem ranging with the bottom breeches button—is more consistent with the later surviving coat now in the Smithsonian. The epaulettes also vary from those in the Peale portraits. In the painted portraits, Washington has two stars on his epaulettes arranged in a row along the strop. Houdon awarded Washington four six-pointed stars. Rather than sculpting raised stars, Houdon engraved them into the statue—probably a decision based entirely on convenience.

What source did Houdon use to arrive at this design? Although Jefferson and Houdon himself had rejected the idea

of using a painted portrait as a model for his statue, the Peale portrait sent by Harrison—still presumably in Jefferson’s possession after Houdon returned from Virginia, probably provided Houdon with the basic source for the uniform. Except for the coat, the basic elements of dress—waistcoat, breeches, and boots—are the same in the Peale portraits and the Houdon statue. The absence of certain details further suggests Houdon relied on the portrait in modeling the uniform. The pocket and the rear folds of the coat, which are not visible in Peale’s two-dimensional portrait, lack details in the statue. The lack of buttons on the cuff in Houdon’s statue is a bit more difficult to explain, but the cuffs are partly obscured by shirt ruffles in the Peale portrait. Houdon may have distrusted what details he could discern in the painting and decided to leave them plain.

The last uniform coat made for Washington during the Revolutionary War for which evidence survives—the uniform coat he probably wore when he resigned his commission on 23 December 1783 and was wearing when he arrived home to Mount Vernon the next day—seems to have been assembled in Philadelphia in early 1783. Writing to merchant Daniel Parker of New York in January 1783, Washington requested “as much superfine Buff Cloth (not of the yellow kind) as would make me a Vest Coat Breeches and facings to a Coat; and that It was my wish to get as much Buff Silk-Shag as would line a Coat and Vest-Coat.” The clothing being made up from materials sent by Parker and possibly other sources, was still coming to Washington in March 1783 when he reminded Parker “to bring me a Buff lining of any kind from Philadelphia, sufficient for a Coat and Vest-Coat.”⁹

Washington’s intention was to combine these materials with a “pair of French Epaulettes ... such as you will probably see upon ... any Field Officer in the French Service,” which were to be attached to “a frock Coat.” The Massachusetts Historical Society owns a pair of epaulettes matching this description, said to have been worn by Washington during the Siege of Yorktown and on the day of his resignation from his commission, 23 December 1783. The epaulettes consist of woven gilt lamé on yellow silk. They were given to the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1804 by Washington’s former aide-de-camp, David Humphreys, who attended the general at the resignation.¹⁰

The coat Washington ordered in the beginning of 1783 was a “frock coat,” a long-skirted style like the one depicted in the Houdon statue, but in no other contemporary portrait of the general. Houdon must have seen it at Mount Vernon and noted its design, particularly the long skirt—its most distinctive feature. Although never a slave to fashion, Washington always preferred to have household furnishings and clothing in the latest taste. The frock coat, which was coming into fashion, undoubtedly appealed to his sense of style. He may even have suggested it to Houdon when the two discussed the relative merits of clothing the statue in antique or modern attire. Preferring modern attire, Washington would have wanted the coat depicted in the statue to be the most fashionable he

owned. The decision to depict Washington in a long-skirted coat—a rising fashion for civilian as well as military costume—reflected and amplified the symbolic complexity of the finished statue.

Guided by his conversations with Washington, West, and Jefferson, Houdon decided upon an extremely sophisticated approach to depicting the general. He presented Washington's person with clinical accuracy, down to the emerging double chin of a middle-aged man who had devoted the prime of his adult life to his country. His subject is clearly a powerful figure—as Washington was—returning home from war weary but unbowed, casually putting aside his cape and laying down his sword. Yet Houdon was not attempting literal realism. He surrounded Washington with republican icons—the fasces and the plow—symbolizing Washington's role in establishing the new nation and his self-effacing retirement from public life.

Houdon's depiction of Washington's dress contributes to the overall effect of the statue by blurring the distinction between the military and the civilian as Washington steps across a literal and metaphorical threshold between military and civilian life. In pure white marble (and in cast bronze), the blue and buff of the uniform vanishes. As the modern visitor walks around the statue in front of Anderson House—seeing the statue as Houdon intended—it is not readily apparent where the general's uniform coat ends and the country gentleman's plain but fashionable frock coat begins. Washington steps forward, making the transition from military hero to republican gentleman, a plow resting beyond his sword, the gentlemen's walking stick replacing the sword.

This article first appeared in *Cincinnati Fourteen; Journal of The Society of the Cincinnati*, 46, no. 1 (Fall 2009) and is republished through the courtesy of the Society of the Cincinnati.

Notes

1. Benjamin Harrison to Thomas Jefferson, 20 July 1784, in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian Boyd, et al. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1950-), 7: 378–379 (hereafter PTJ).
2. Charles Willson Peale to Benjamin Harrison, 30 October 1784, in *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, ed. Lillian Miller (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1983), 1: 422; Elaine Rice Bachman, "'Something better than a mere Copy', Charles Willson Peale's portrait of George Washington for the Maryland State House," *The Magazine Antiques* (February 2007): 70.
3. Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Harrison, 12 January 1785, PTJ, 7: 600.
4. *George Washington, Jean Antoine Houdon Sculptor: A Brief History of the Most Famous Sculpture Created of America's Immortal Patriot Issued to Commemorate the Bicentennial of his Birth 1732–1932* (Providence: The Gorham Co., 1932), 21.
5. Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, Paris, 4 January 1786, in *The Papers of George Washington*, ed. W. W. Abbot, et al. (Charlottesville, VA: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1983-), Confederation Series 3: 490 (hereafter PGW).
6. George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, 1 August 1786, PGW, Confederation Series 4: 184; Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 14–[15] August 1787, PGW, Confederation Series 5: 290.
7. Jared Sparks, *The Life of Gouverneur Morris with Selections from his Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers* (Boston, MA: Gray & Bowen, 1832), 1: 311; Thomas Jefferson to William Short, 25 August 1790, PTJ, 17: 422.
8. Marko Zlatich, *Documentary History of George Washington's Uniform*, draft study prepared for Armed Forces History Collections, Division of the History of Technology, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, 2001. The purpose of this study was to document the history and use of a three-piece suit of military uniform owned by George Washington, from 1789 until his death in 1799.
9. George Washington to Daniel Parker, 22 January 1783 and 19 March 1783, Washington Papers, Washington, DC: Library of Congress Microfilm Publication, Series 4, reel 90, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
10. [Massachusetts Historical Society], *Witness to America's Past: Two Centuries of Collecting by the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston MA: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1991), 115.



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Gaiters for the Army of the Potomac in the Civil War

Frederick C. Gaede and Juanita Leisch Jensen

A previous *MC&H* article examined a pair of gaiters made under a contract signed on 10 March 1862 by Mrs. H. J. Moore of Newton, Massachusetts.¹ Moore delivered twenty thousand pairs to the Philadelphia Depot and was paid fifty-five cents per pair. This was a rare example of a woman exercising financial independence and entrepreneurial initiative as a government contractor during the war. Since then new information, as well as several additional pairs of gaiters of the same pattern, have come to the attention of the authors, warranting an update.

This pattern of gaiter had its origins in a letter from Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster General, USA (FIG 1), to Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, Deputy Quartermaster General, USA (FIG 2), at the Office of Clothing and Equipage, part of the Schuylkill Arsenal near Philadelphia. On 5 December 1861, Crosman was informed:

The General in Chief calls for the issue to the troops of Gaiters. I have offers from France of the French gaiters, intended to be used with the short baggy pantaloons of the Zouave Uniform at the following prices, viz. Leggings of leather, covering the calf of the leg, down to the ankle, per pair \$1., Gaiters of leather, short, covering the foot and ankle only, 85 cents. Gaiters, same fashion of linen, 40 cents. Ten thousand of the same articles purchased under contract with the French Government contractor by the American Minister, and just received here,² are at 3.85, 3.60, and 1.48 francs respectively, about .77, .73 and .29 cents, and in this is included a charge "for speed" (as the order was for quick delivery) beyond the regular contract price with the French Government. These leggings and leather gaiters are made of russet leather, soft and pliable; the leggings having black leather straps at the upper and lower edges. For our troops wearing the common uniform a gaiter covering the foot and ankle, as high as the uniform Cavalry boot leg, seems desirable. You are requested to procure samples of such as you think suitable both in linen and in leather, and send them here for examination and approval as soon as possible. There are some leggings now in use by Zouave Corps. Please send specimens of such of these as you find in the market with approximate prices. The experience of the Army in the late muddy roads has shown that for a winter campaign in our climate, something of this kind is necessary to enable the troops to make a day[']s march in comfort

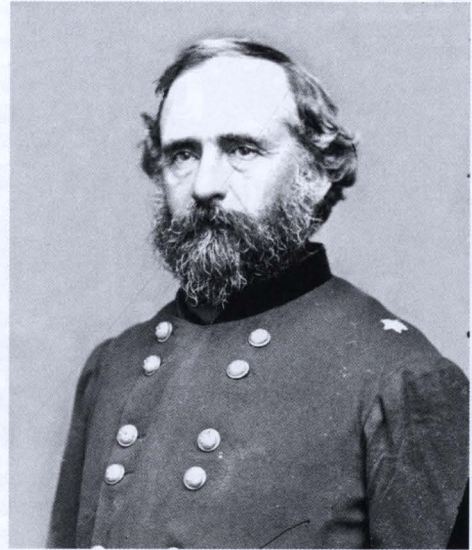


FIG 1. One of the most able officers to serve the Union, this image shows Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs shortly after his promotion to Quartermaster General of the United States Army on 15 May 1861. (That occurred one day after having been promoted to colonel of the 11th U.S. Infantry.) Interestingly, his newly earned stars are sewn directly to his uniform coat and not part of either straps or epaulettes. Detail from "General Meigs, U.S.A.," LC-DIG-cwpbh-01062, Prints and Photographs Division, Brady-Handy Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.



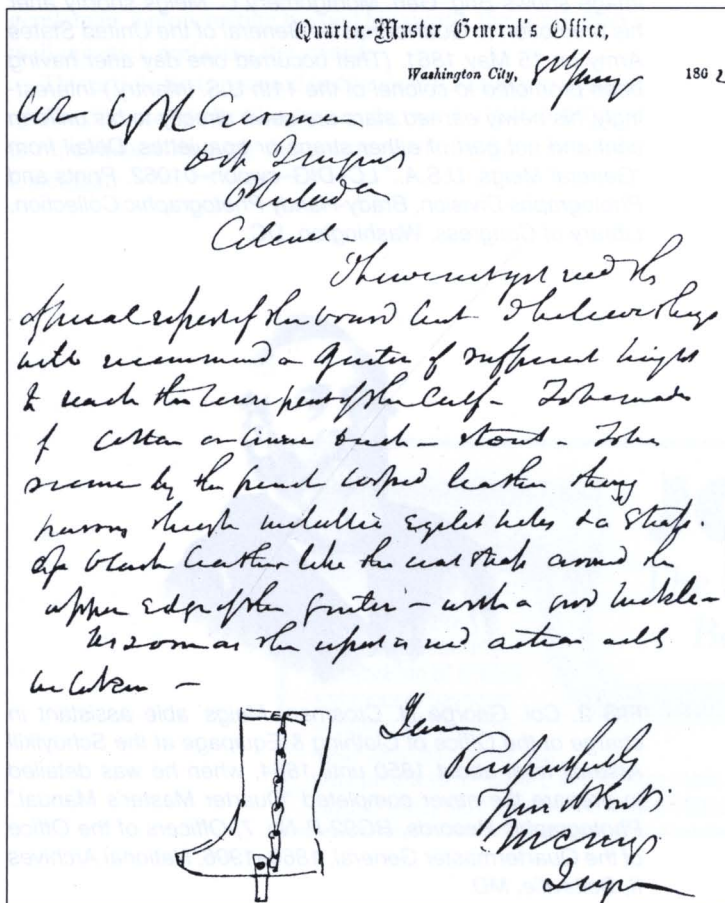
FIG 2. Col. George H. Crosman, Meigs' able assistant in charge of the Office of Clothing & Equipage at the Schuylkill Arsenal from about 1850 until 1864, when he was detailed to prepare the never completed "Quarter Master's Manual." Photographic Records, RG92-P, No. 7, Officers of the Office of the Quartermaster General, 1860–1906, National Archives II, Beltsville, MD.

FREDERICK C. GAEDE is a Fellow, life member, former editor of *MC&H*, and current manager of the Company's Endowment Fund. Fred continues a long interest in U.S. Army accouterments.

JUANITA LEISCH JENSEN is a nationally known speaker and writer on civilians and their lives and roles in the Civil War. Her books, *Who Wore What* and *Introduction to Civil War Civilians* remained in print for fifteen years and eight printings. Juanita is a member and Fellow in the *Company of Military Historians*. She received the Robert L. Miller Award for her exhibit, "Essential to the Cause: Women's Roles in the Civil War" at the Company meeting in Newport News, VA. Juanita focuses her studies on material culture evidence of militarily significant roles of civilians.



FIG 3. Image of Co. I, 12th New York Infantry, as it appeared ready to leave for Washington in 1861. Their gaiters are typical of what Colonel Crosman would have found commercially available. They have similarities to what QM General Meigs would propose, with the major exception of tabs and buckles to close them. Brady Files B-1048, Courtesy Photographic Records, National Archives II, Beltsville, MD.



and health, and without destruction of these [sic; their] shoes, socks and trousers.

Very respectfully,
MC Meigs
QMGenl³

Crosman clearly wasted no time in responding to Meigs' request for samples, as a number of contractors soon thereafter contacted the colonel wanting to submit samples of what they had been making privately for individual units.⁴ Crosman, no doubt, had various styles readily available, with a typical style having tabbed closure straps shown in FIG 3 on members of Co. I, 12th New York Infantry.

Barely a month later, Meigs informed Crosman a decision was imminent about a gaiter pattern.

Quarter-Master General's Office
Washington City, 8th January 1862

Colonel—I have not yet recd the official report of the board but I believe they will recommend a Gaiter of sufficient height to reach the lower part of the calf. To be made of cotton or linen duck—stout. To be secured by looped leather thongs passing through metallic eyelet holes + [sic; and] a strap of black leather like the strap around the upper edge of the gaiter—with a [sic] iron buckle.

As soon as the report is recd action will be taken.

I am
Respectfully
Yr obt servt
MC Meigs
QMGenl

FIG 4. General Meigs' letter of 8 January 1862 notifies Lieutenant Colonel Crosman of the pending adoption of a new pattern gaiter for the U.S. Army. At this point it was not intended to restrict its issue to the Army of the Potomac.



FIG 5. Co. F, 7th Pennsylvania Reserves, in May 1862 during the Peninsula Campaign. Courtesy Brad Pruden.

As seen in FIG 4, Meigs included his own sketch of what he thought the gaiter design would look like, helping to confirm this pattern for the new gaiter.⁵ Not surprisingly, within a week the board approved the very design the quartermaster general had advocated and Meigs again wrote Crosman on 15 January:

Colonel, I enclose [a] copy of the order of the Major General and the action of a board of survey [*sic*] upon ponchos and leggings. They have recommended a legging of linen or cotton duck, secured by a looped leathern thong, passed through eyelet holes and fastened at top by a buckle and strap. ... The leggings with thongs and all, should not, I hope, cost more than fifty centers [*sic*] per pair.

The only difference in the approved pattern from Meigs' original description seems to have been the straps at top and going under the bootee were of a natural leather color and not dyed black.⁶

On 31 March, Meigs directed "the leggings were ordered to be sent to the Army of the Potomac for issue to troops in campaign, and should be issued to no others."⁷ Although Meigs may have intended his order to be temporary in nature—until stocks of the new gaiter pattern built up so it could be made an item of general issue—the restricted issue of this pattern gaiter to the Army of the Potomac appears to have continued indefinitely. There was even a General Orders, Number 3, from the headquarters of III Corps, Army of the Potomac,



FIG 6. Unidentified 111th New York Volunteer infantryman. Courtesy Mike McAfee.



FIG 7. The top band of leather is clearly visible in this detail from the letter in FIG 3, without the mat.



FIG 8, above middle. Unidentified member of the 6th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. As the Iron Brigade, it coincidentally was designated the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division, I Army Corps, Army of the Potomac. Courtesy Mike McAfee and the late Herb Peck.

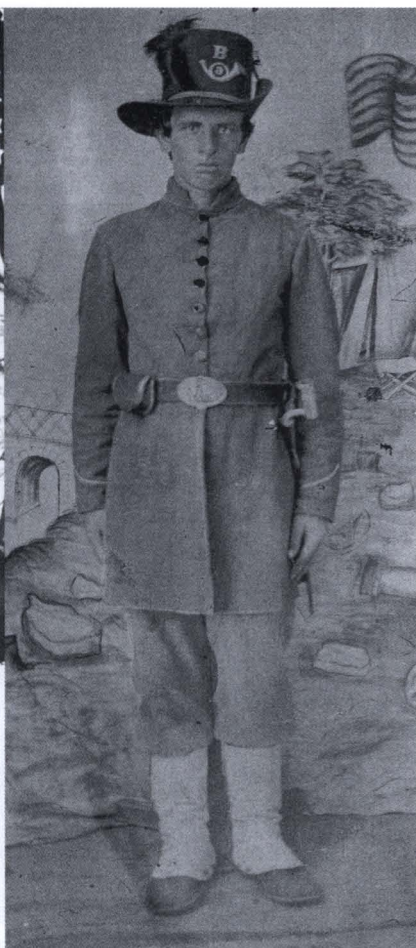


FIG 9, right. Another unidentified member of the 6th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. The only brigade of the Army of the Potomac in which all of the units were from the west, the Iron Brigade was always in the thick of it.



FIG 10. Unidentified Federal soldier in zouave uniform wearing the new pattern gaiters. Courtesy the late John Henry Kurtz.



FIG 11. Four members of the 4th Michigan Infantry all wearing the new gaiters. MOLLUS Collection, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.



FIG 12. Outside views of a complete pair of this pattern gaiter. When worn, the loops would have been linked into each other with the top loop over the leather band. Courtesy Jan Gordon.

dated 19 February 1863 stating, "The infantry of this Corps will hereafter wear as part of their uniform the 'Canvas or leather Leggings' issued by the Quartermaster Department. Commanding officers will see that the necessary supply is obtained upon proper requisition and issued to the troops. By Command of Brigadier General Sickles."⁸

Even though virtually none of the new pattern were on hand when what would be known as the Peninsula Campaign opened, there is visual confirmation that some units of the Army of the Potomac promptly received the new gaiters and used them during the 1862 campaigns in Virginia. Although images showing soldiers wearing this pattern are uncommon, those that are identified can be associated with the Army of the Potomac. For example, FIG 5 shows Company F of the 7th Regiment, Pennsylvania Reserves, photographed at Falmouth, Virginia, in late May 1862. This image confirms a letter written on 24 May 1862 by Pvt. Leo Fuller of the regiment documenting his receipt of a "pair of white leggings."⁹ Note at least six pairs of the new gaiter pattern are proudly



FIG 13. Inside view of the same gaiters. Courtesy Jan Gordon.

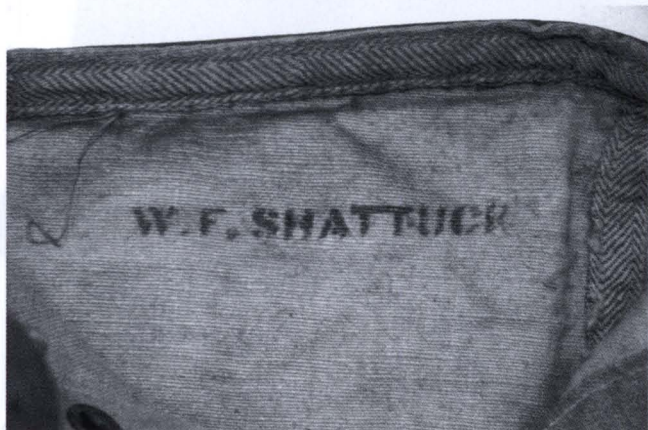


FIG 14. Shattuck's maker's mark inside one of the gaiters. Courtesy Jan Gordon.



FIG 15. Inside of a gaiter showing the leather loops were made of a continuous piece of buckskin to preserve the leather's strength. Courtesy Jan Gordon.



FIG 16. Top of the gaiter showing the distinctive buckle used with these gaiters. Courtesy Jan Gordon.

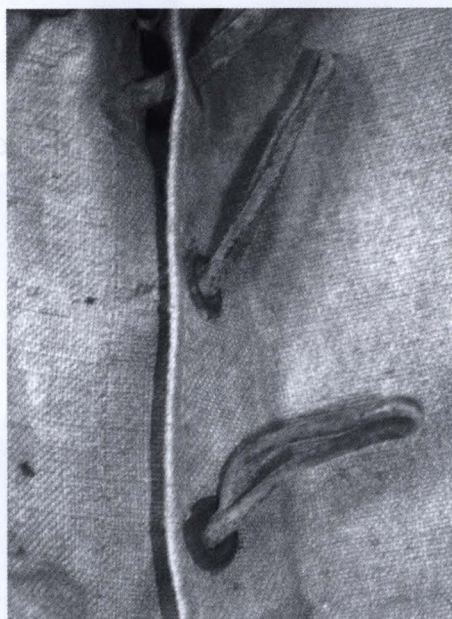


FIG 17. Close-up of the loops and brass eyelets. Courtesy Jan Gordon.



FIG 18. The natural leather strap to go under the bootee is about two inches wide and secured by four copper rivets and burrs. Courtesy Jan Gordon.

displayed in the front row.

Other examples include the unidentified soldier from the 111th Pennsylvania Regiment shown in FIGS 6, 7. Two unidentified soldiers from the Iron Brigade's 6th Wisconsin are shown in FIGS 8, 9. An unidentified Federal soldier in a zouave-style uniform is wearing this pattern gaiter in FIG 10. Finally, from a well-known series of 1862 images of the 4th Michigan Infantry—many of which show new gaiters on soldiers—one with four pairs on unidentified soldiers has been selected for FIG 11. It is difficult to determine if the leather parts of the gaiters in these images are natural in color and just photographed dark or were actually dyed black.

In addition to the previously described pair delivered by Moore, two other pairs will be illustrated here. The first is a pair in CMH member Jan Gordon's collection, not laced up so additional details to those seen on CMH member Don Troiani's pair (made by Mrs. Moore) can be illustrated. A few dimensions first: overall height 10½ inches; leather band at top ¾-inch wide and 19 inches long; leather bootee strap at bottom 2 inches wide. Overall exterior views are provided in FIGS 12, 13. The interior close up in FIG 14 has the name of the maker, William F. Shattuck of New York City. As included in the list of known contracts for this pattern gaiter below, his single recorded contract was for ten thousand pairs to be made of "linen duck," dated 18 March 1862. Although the delivery depot was not noted in the contract, it was undoubtedly Philadelphia. He was paid fifty-five cents per pair (the same as Moore). Some of the tape covering to the seams of the linen canvas (linen duck) is also shown in FIG 15. Additional details of this intact and scarcely used pair can be seen in FIGS 16–18.



FIG 19. One each of the Gordon and Jensen pairs for comparison. Note the use of single needle sewing machines resulted in stitch lines that wandered considerably. Courtesy Jan Gordon, Juanita Leisch, and Les Jensen.



FIG 20. One of this pair has been opened to reveal interior details. Note instead of a woven tape this pair had raw edged cloth applied over the seams. Courtesy Juanita Leisch and Les Jensen.



FIG 21. Outside of one gaiter opened fully. Courtesy Juanita Leisch and Les Jensen.

FIG 22. Interior of the same gaiter.
Courtesy Juanita Leisch and Les Jensen.



FIG 23. W. H. Johnson's maker's mark showing his location and size of the gaiter. Courtesy Juanita Leisch and Les Jensen.



FIG 24. Detail of the buckskin thongs and interior finishing. Courtesy Juanita Leisch and Les Jensen.

The second pair illustrated was bought in 2004 at an estate auction near Gettysburg by Jerry Coates and sold to The Horse Soldier, which in turn sold the pair to the late John Henry Kurtz. They were acquired from the Kurtz collection by coauthor Jensen and her husband in 2009. As required, the contractor of this pair, William H. Johnson, stamped his oval mark on the inside (FIG 23). It appears Johnson had two contracts for gaiters—the second of which went badly for the contractor as subsequent correspondence, discussed below, revealed. Other than missing the top bands of leather and buckles (which were in place at one time and appear purposefully removed), this pair is also in remarkably good condition. The two pairs can be compared in FIG 19 and the Johnson pair further illustrated in FIGs 20–24.

In spring 1863, the earlier stock of gaiters having been exhausted, proposals for a new supply was requested by Crosman. Samples were submitted by the bidders and David Etter, an inspector at the quartermaster depot in Philadelphia, was called upon to evaluate the samples. He filed his letter report to Colonel Crosman on 2 May 1863. His complete comments are presented here.

Col. G.H. Crosman

Sir—I have examined the sample Leggings sent in by H. C. Brolosky and find the stitching around the buckle straps have been stitched with a single thread which in my opinion is not strong enough to wear well. I pronounce it bad workmanship.

In other respects it is up to Standard quality. These leggings ought to have a stay on the back part where it comes in contact with the heel of the Shoe.

The Sample Leggings sent in by [Mrs.] H. J. Moore I find the quality of the linen is not quite up to Standard, that is not as good in my opinion as the material used in her former contract.

Whyatt & Co. [*sic*; Hyatt] no faults to find with their sample, except the heads of the rivets attached to the Strap which passes under the Shoe ought to be on the outside instead of the inside, it prevents the foot from being cramped thereby, the smooth side of the rivet should be on the inside of the legging next to the Shoe. The Soldiers complain the straps which pass under the Shoe and attached to the leggings are not at all times long enough for comfort.

Respectfully your
Obedient Servt.
[David] Etter¹⁰

Interestingly, none of these three firms received contracts in 1863 for gaiters according to the Treasury Department records in the National Archives. Only D. W. Whitney and William H. Johnson, both of New York City, received contracts that year. Even though Johnson's work was known to the Department through an 1862 contract, a new examination of samples did not spare him from problems. Why a sample of Whitney's work was not examined or noted by an inspector is not known.

Johnson's second contract is known only through correspondence. Dated 21 May 1863,¹¹ it was for another twenty-thousand pairs to be made of "Linen Duck," the material of this extant pair and the same as specified for the Shattuck-made pair. Although Johnson's mark is shown in FIG 23, it is not known if this pair is from his first or second contract, or survives from the eight thousand J. J. Morris bought from Johnson and delivered to the QMD in 1864. The "8" obviously

refers to the size of the pair. Further information is provided in the compilation below and other details of this pair are in FIGs 20–24. His problems were detailed in two letters dated 20 February 1864 and 9 April 1866 to Crosman. The latter has a bit more detail so it is excerpted here. Although nearly three years had passed since accepting the contract, and nearly a year after the end of the Civil War, Johnson wrote Crosman about

... the circumstances connected with my Army Leggans [*sic*] contract. On the 21st of May 1863 I entered into contract to furnish 20,000 pairs of Linen Duck Army Leggans. I had three pairs made up as Samples and submitted them to Mr. Etta [*sic*; Etter] who was the Inspector of Leggans at that time. Mr. Etta decided that two pairs were acceptable,¹² but he would like the foot straps $\frac{3}{4}$ of an In. longer (They were the usual length upon the Samples) I consented to make them longer. I immediately made arrangements with Frederick Stevens Esq. for extra length foot straps and he got up new dyes [*sic*; dies] for the purpose. With this change I began to forward the Goods to the Schuylkill Arsenal. In the meantime Mr. Etta was removed and Mr. Neal Campbell directed the inspection of Leggans. The samples accepted by Mr. Etta were not given to Mr. Campbell to inspect by but some other sample and the goods were rejected. The goods delivered were in all respects substantially equal to the samples accepted by Inspector Etta. And Mr. Campbell in the Whitney court martial case testified that they were all right except a second row of stitching [*sic*] upon the end of the top strap, which I would have had done when made if I had known it was required or desirable as it would not have cost $\frac{1}{2}$ per pr and it has since been done. Mr. Campbell also said there was some imperfect riveting [*sic*] that has also been examined and perfected. And you have recv'd abt Apl 1864 under contract with Mr. J. J. Morris (of firm Field, Morris & Co., Bdway, NY) 8,000 pairs of the same Leggans. You will probably recollect a reference you made of this matter to Mr. Campbell as to what was required to be done to the Leggans to make them acceptable to the Govmt. Mr. Campbell decided that the additional sewing on end of the top strap and a thorough examination of riveting was required before they would be received. Arrangements were made in Phil for the additional work which was completed at a large expense for what was in Phil and the balance [*sic*] was done in NY and all ready



FIG 26. "Manassas Junction, VA. Soldiers beside damaged rolling stock of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad." Detail from Digital ID cwpb 00260, Reproduction Number LC-B8171-0593, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

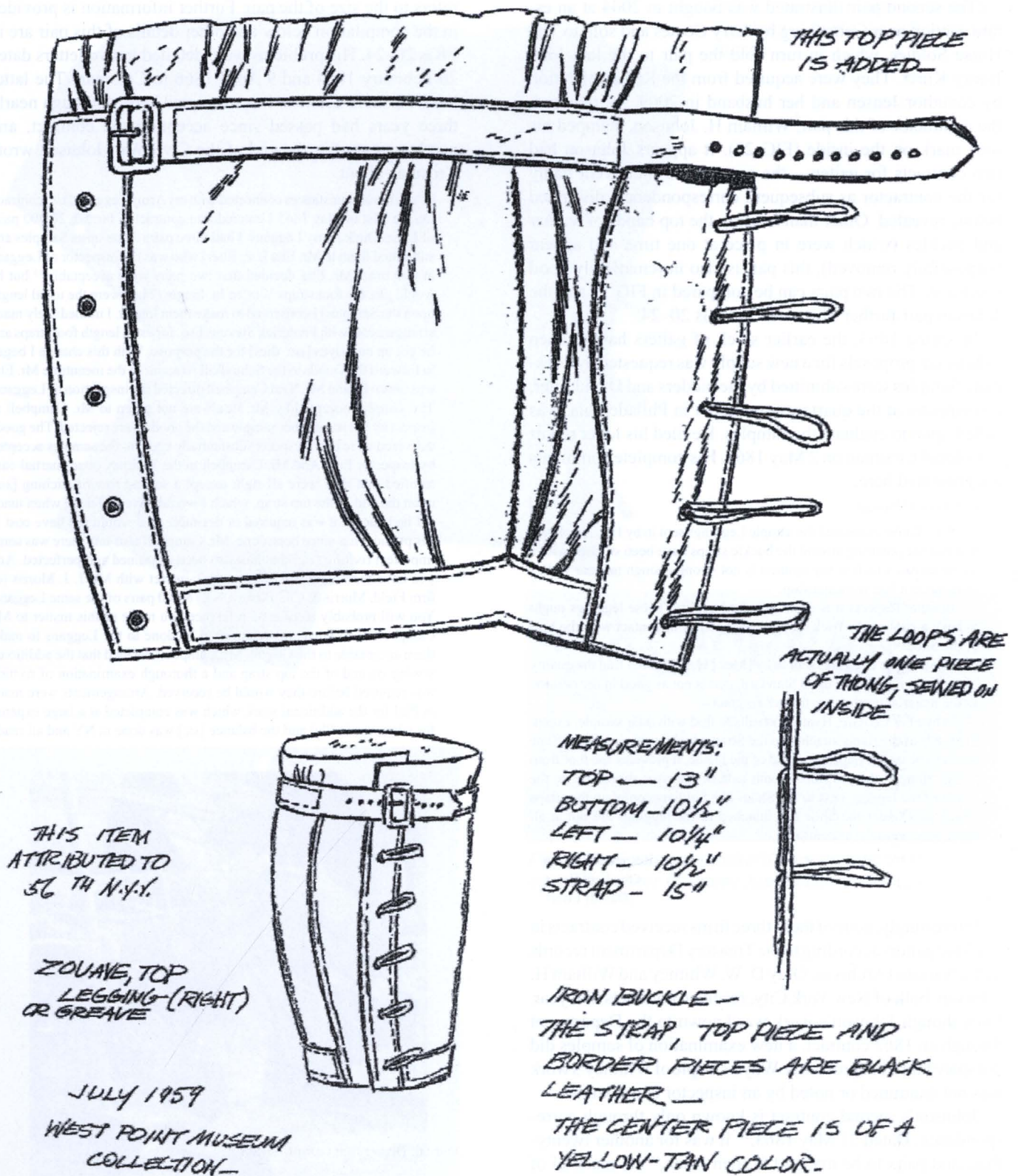


FIG 25. Sketch of gaiters in the West Point Museum made by the late George Woodbridge. Note the leather is black in this case and a piece of cloth has been added to the top. Whether an individual soldier's modification or done for an entire unit (a company?) remains unknown. Courtesy Deborah Woodbridge and the West Point Library.



FIG 27. Edwin Forbes, "Washing Day—Column on the March, May 15, 1864," from Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., *The Civil War: The Artists' Record* (Meriden, CT: The Meriden Gravure Co., 1961), No. 110.

within Ten days for delivery. In the meantime it seems the order from Washington was rescinded and they were not received. And they are still on hand except the 8,000 pairs you bought under Mr. J. J. Morris proposal. Although not wholly blameless in this matter that I should have put my own judgment and acted upon it as I was the only responsible party in the matter. I have always felt confident that as they were made for the Govmt that they would eventually be received as the equity and facts in the case would fully justify. If there is anything else I can be of service in explaining I will do so by letter or in person as may be required.

Respectfully your
Wm. H. Johnson
157 Duffield St.
Brooklyn NY¹³

Another pair of this pattern is part of a 14th Brooklyn ensemble, now in the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, New York.¹⁴ Yet another complete pair in



FIG 28. Reattributed here as veterans of Co. B, 17th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, taken during the summer of 1864. Currently captioned "6th Maine after the Battle of Fredericksburg," Brady Collection, NWDNS-111-B-68, National Archives II, Beltsville, MD.

the collection of CMH member Paul Loane is known to the authors, but not illustrated here. A final gaiter attributed to the 56th New York Volunteers was sketched by the late George Woodbridge at the West Point Museum in July 1959 and it is shown in FIG 25 (next page).

Despite the initial order to restrict their issue to just one army, not all soldiers of the Army of the Potomac were able to get a pair of the new gaiters immediately. The six contracts let in spring 1862 resulted in deliveries well into the summer. Considering the logistics involved during a campaign, it is a wonder the 7th Pennsylvania got theirs by the end of May. Consequently, some soldiers had to rely on the tried-and-true method of keeping road dirt from entering the bottoms of their trousers by rolling their socks over them. FIG 26 is a detail from the well known image of three Federal soldiers standing next to a row of burned railroad cars after the Battle of Second Manassas (28–30 August 1862).¹⁵ Edwin Forbes' sketch in FIG 27 shows a "Column on the March" in May 1864 with their trousers also "bloused."

Although likely, a pattern originally intended for general



FIG 30. Unidentified soldier wearing the distinctive jacket and dark pants of Gosline's Zouaves, 95th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment. Part of the Army of the Potomac and apparently recipients of the gaiters unique to that army. Back marked "P. Kellmer, Photographer, Broad Street, Hazleton, Pa." Courtesy Jan Gordon.

SALE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY.

OFFICE OF ARMY CLOTHING AND EQUIPAGE, {

NEW YORK, May 5th, 1864. }

WILL BE SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION AT DEPOT
of Army Clothing and Equipage, corner Laight and Washing-
ton streets, New York city, on THURSDAY, the 10th day of May next,
commencing at 10 o'clock A. M., certain quantities of non-regula-
tion and condemned Clothing and Equipage, consisting of say
about

9,000 Uniform Coats,	7,500 Knapsacks,
600 Uniform Jackets,	8,000 Haversacks,
7,500 Great Coats,	8,000 Blankets,
100 Trousers,	1,000 Leather Stocks,
100 Caps,	20 Drawers,
100 Socks,	100 Shirts,
4,000 Stockings,	500 Bedsocks,
200 Gaiters,	400 Mittens,
3,000 Leggings,	250 Cap Covers,
15,000 Kilt Blouses,	20 Pickaxes,
800 Fannel Frocks Coats,	200 Mees Fans,
1,000 Blankets, Woollen,	100 Camp Kettles,
60 Blankets, Rubber,	60 Spades,
40,000 lbs. Hospital Tents	30,000 lbs. Common Tents,
and Vests,	30,000 lbs. Shelter Tents, etc.
30,000 lbs. Wall Tents and Poles,	
and various small articles of clothing and equipage. Samples of	
the above articles can be seen at the depot, and further information	
obtained.	
Terms cash in government funds. Ten per cent down, and the	
balance before the goods are taken from the depot, which must be	
within three days of sale, under forfeiture of the goods and ten per	
cent.	

Brig.-Gen. D. H. VINTON,
D. O. M. General U. S. A.

FIG 29. Advertisement for the sale of gaiters and leggings stored at the New York Depot in 1866. New York Tribune, Thursday, 10 May 1866

issue to all foot soldiers of the U.S. Army, this pattern gaiter never achieved that goal. The numbers contained in the known contracts were not sufficient to sustain issues and replace worn out gaiters to even keep the Army of the Potomac continuously supplied. The image in FIG 28, for example, purportedly shows a company of the 6th Maine after the Battle of Fredericksburg. However, details connected to the image support a more plausible identification as one taken of veterans from Co. B, 17th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in 1864.¹⁶ Note, by that time only a few of the soldiers still have gaiters.

Thus it is not entirely surprising that this gaiter pattern is not mentioned in the draft of the never published 1865 "Quarter Master's Manual."¹⁷ Apparently Crosman considered the issue of these gaiters limited and never included them in the comprehensive listing of all items of current issue from the Office of Clothing and Equipage, Schuylkill Arsenal (which included the Philadelphia Depot), that he was assembling. With the convincing written and visual record presented here, and the noted restriction of its issue to just one Federal army during the Civil War, this gaiter pattern should be termed, in the authors' opinions, the "Army of the Potomac Pattern Gaiter."

Among the many contracts let during the Civil War by the Quartermaster Department for clothing and equipage—the originals of which now reside in the holdings of the National Archives, only nine surviving contracts were recorded for what the authors are describing as the Army of the Potomac gaiter. Details can be found in TABLE A.¹⁸

TABLE A - Summary of the Nine Known Surviving Army of the Potomac Gaiter Contracts

Contractor City	Date	Delivery Quantity Pairs	Depot	Price
Howes, Hyatt & Co. New York City	10 March 1862	20,000 linen duck	Philadelphia	.56 per pair
[Mrs.] H. J. Moore Newton, Mass.	10 March 1862	10,000 cotton duck; 10,000 linen duck; sizes 6, 7, 8, and 9	Philadelphia	.55 per pair
Edward Robinson New York City	10 March 1862	10,000	Unk..	.58 per pair
Edward Phelan	18 March 1862	20,000	Philadelphia	.53 per pair
William F. Shattuck	18 March 1862	10,000 linen duck	Unk.	.55 per pair
William H. Johnson	11 May 1862	20,000 linen canvas; 12 oz duck	Philadelphia	.60 per pair
William H. Johnson	21 May 1863	20,000* linen duck	Unk.	
D. W. Whitney	26 June 1863	20,000 Canvas	Philadelphia	.64 per pair
Isaac Haber & Co.	4 April 1865	10,000 Canvas; like standard sample	New York	.74 per pair
* Items known to have been manufactured but probably not received until after the war, if then.				

The Army of the Potomac pattern gaiters were clearly not among the ones complained of by Col. David T. Jenkins, 146th New York Volunteers, Commanding the "Zouave Brigade, AP [Army of the Potomac]," 3d Brigade, 2d Division, V Corps. His letter dated 26 March 1864 reveals other leggings were in use in that army.

The leather leggings are too long, and do not fit the calf of the leg and what is most objectionable is that they lap the wrong way where they lace up, the back part of the leggings lapping over the front part, so that in marching they catch sticks, grass, mud etc. The gaiters also do not fit the shoe. I sent by Col. Geo. Ryan a sample pair of leggings and gaiters, which have been made with a view to obviating these difficulties, and he tells me he left them at your office some two days ago. While these alterations would not cause any departure from the uniform previously authorized, they would add much to the comfort and convenience of the men. I would therefore respectfully request that the samples of leather leggings and linen gaiters, which I sent to your Office be forwarded to Col. Crosman as a guide in correcting some defects which will require no additional expense in manufacturing the articles mentioned.¹⁹

With the war clearly coming to an end there is no explanation for the 1865 contract with Isaac Haber & Co. At that point there would have been little need to provide replacement gaiters for soldiers in the field. It is assumed the language "like standard sample" refers to the pattern described in this article, even if the material was changed from linen to cotton canvas. Interestingly, even though delivered late in the war, not a single surviving pair from this contract is known.

Only a few gaiters were considered surplus at the end of the war. In the "Sale of Public Property" conducted in May 1866 at the New York Depot, only two hundred "Gaiters" were included (FIG 29). Whether they were of the pattern used by the Army of the Potomac is unknown, but they were clearly differentiated from the three-thousand "Leggings" being sold at the same time.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to particularly thank Jerry Coates, as well as Jan Gordon, the late Jim Hutchins, the late John Henry Kurtz, Paul Loane, Mike McAfee,

Dean Nelson of the Nelsonian Institute, David Neville, Brad Pruden, Don Troiani, and Sam and Wes Small of The Horse Soldier; for their assistance with this article.

Notes

1. Don Troiani and Fred Gaede, "Civil War Leggings," *MC&H*, 48, no. 3 (Fall 1996): 140-141. This pair is in the Troiani collection, and is the same pair of gaiters further discussed in *Don Troiani's Soldiers In America, 1754-1865* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998), 194. Information on earlier gaiters in the U.S. Army can be found in James S. Hutchins, "Notes on Gaithers, 1818," *MC&H*, 51, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 79. The Army's gaiters at that time reached almost to the knee. Military Store Keeper (MSK) H. A. Fay's report that same year of "Articles for sale—or not suitable to be issued" included "1298 pr. Linnen and Cotton Gaithers—coarse and nasty." MSK H. A. Fay to Commissary General of Purchases Callender Irvine, February 1818, Box 1239, Entry 225, Consolidated Correspondence Files (CCF), Record Group 92, Office of the Quarter Master General (OQMG), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC.
2. This reference is to the ten thousand sets of uniforms and equipments furnished by M. Alexis Godillot as arranged in fall 1861 by George Schuyler. Ultimately some were issued to General McClellan's body-guard units, including the 83d Pennsylvania Volunteers. See Don Troiani, "French Uniforms, Cloth & Equipage in the Union Army," *North South Trader's Civil War*, Part 1, 26, no. 2 (January/February 2001), 38-50, and Part 2, 26, no 3 (March/April 2001), 24-32. See also William Gavin, "83rd Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry," *MC&H*, 14, no. 3 (Fall 1962): 95-96.
3. Quartermaster General Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Deputy Quartermaster General Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, 5 December 1861, v. 18, 677, Entry 999, Letters Sent (Clothing & Equipage), Record Group 92, Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, DC; hereafter referred to as E 999, LS (C&E), RG 92, OQMG, NARA.
4. By a letter dated 18 December 1861 to Crosman, Howes, Hyatt, and Company submitted a long list of leggings available from their firm. A week later Dennis Lenain of New York City wrote Crosman desiring to send samples of what he had supplied to Berdan's Sharp Shooters and "the French government." Since the Quartermaster Department had just purchased ten thousand sets of gaiters directly from "the French Government contractor," M. Godillot, it is not understood to what Lenain was

referring by that inclusion.

5. Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, 8 January 1862, E 2182, Letters Received, Philadelphia Depot, RG 92, OQMG, NARA. Many of the letters in Entries 999 and 2182 mirror each other, with the actual letters in E 2182 containing such tidbits as this sketch. However, written by clerks, the ledger copies of letters sent in E 999 are more easily read.
6. Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, 15 January 1862, v. 19, 47, E 999, LS (C&E), RG 92, OQMG, NARA. The Board of Survey had convened in Washington on 2 January 1862 "to examine certain samples of Leggings, 'Ponchos,' and Water proof blankets" in anticipation of needing to supply the large numbers of volunteers responding to President Lincoln's calls to arms. Their report was made on 14th January.
7. Brig. Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, 31 March 1862, E 999, LS (C&E), RG 92, OQMG, NARA.
8. III Corps, General Orders, No. 3, Boscoville, Virginia, 19 February 1863, Entry 191, RG 393 (Part II), U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920, NARA.
9. E-mail dated 2 August 2010 from Brad Pruden to the authors. See also Philip Katcher, *American Civil War Armies* (Oxford, UK: Osprey Men at Arms #177, 1986), 19.
10. [Inspector David] Etter to Col. George H. Crosman, 2 May 1863, E 2182, Letters Received, Philadelphia Depot, RG 92, OQMG, NARA. Etter was an inspector of knapsacks at the Philadelphia Depot from February 1862 until 11 June 1863. He was also assigned rubber goods the month he left the service. Earl J. Coates, "Quartermaster Inspectors, 1861-5," unpublished manuscript, 1994.
11. Normally completed contracts were recorded in the Second Auditor Files after payment was made. This 1863 contract is not on file; however, correspondence indicated the date of the contract was 21 May 1863. It is possible payment was made after April 1866 and the contract filed in its proper chronological position at that point. However, the Treasury Department records for 1866 were not checked. See William H. Johnson to General George H. Crosman, 9 April 1866, Entry 236, Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury, Record Group 217, National Archives II, Beltsville, MD.
12. Likely Johnson submitted samples of three slightly different materials, with two approved. Often limited amounts of materials in the marketplace precluded filling an order all of the same material and close substitutes were approved in multiple samples so there would be no problems in inspecting the final products delivered.
13. William H. Johnson to Gen. George H. Crosman, 9 April 1866, E 2182, Letters Received, Philadelphia Depot, RG 92, OQMG, NARA.
14. According to information and images provided by Dean Nelson via e-mail on 21 June 2010.
15. Interestingly, one soldier in this image, in the field and on campaign, is wearing no socks or booties at all.
16. That unit designation is written on a copy of the image in the National Archives. Further, the line of box cars in the background suggest this

image was taken near the supply depot of City Point, Virginia, in 1864 as the rail line appears in other documented images of the depot.

17. [Col. George H. Crosman], *Quarter Master's Manual* (Washington: GPO, 1865). The manuscript Crosman was preparing (at Meigs' direction) never got beyond a galley proof printing prepared by the GPO.
18. Contracts for Quartermaster Items, 1861-1865, Second Auditor Files, Entry 236, Treasury Department Records, Record Group 217, National Archives II, Beltsville, MD. The important thing about these records is they include contracts were not annulled after being recorded. The records reflect *payments* for items, so it is known the deliveries noted were actually made.

Other comments on gaiters and leggings within these contract records include:

Isaac Haber also made seven thousand pairs of gaiters for the Duryea Zouaves under a contract dated 17 May 1864, as well as other uniform parts for that unit the same year individually and as part of Morrison, Haber & Co. The latter firm made one thousand pairs of "linen leggings" in 1862 for the Enfants Pedue, "according to samples received from Colonel Confort."

Healy & Co. of Philadelphia received a contract on 23 December 1861 for one thousand five hundred pairs of zouave leggings at fifty cents per pair. Col. George Crosman's note on the contract states, "These leggings were delivered to Col. Baxter's regiment sometime before the execution of this contract. G.H.C."

T. Miles & Son of Philadelphia were contracted on 17 November 1863 for one thousand pairs of "leather leggings," to be delivered to the Philadelphia Depot and paid for at \$3.25 per pair. For each 100 pairs 15 were to be size 1; 40 size 2; 35 size 3 and 10 size 4.

G. Motsch & Schaffer of New York City delivered eight hundred pairs of leather leggings for the United States Sharp Shooters under a contract dated 8 March 1862 to the New York Depot for \$2.00 per pair. They were "for Colonel Berdan's Regiment of U.S.S." (As noted, on 26 December 1861 Dennis Lenain of New York City indicated by letter to Crosman he also had supplied gaiters to Berdan's Sharp Shooters.)

In addition, Charles P. Bayard of Philadelphia was given a contract on 18 January 1864 to alter four thousand pairs of "French leather leggings" as well as "all of the English leather leggings now at the [Schuylkill] arsenal, the United States furnishing the buckles and straps; to conform strictly to the sealed sample." How much per pair he was to be paid was not recorded. Since the finished gaiters were to have buckles and straps these were different than the pattern under discussion in this article. Indeed, perhaps they were altered improperly and some may have ended up in the hands of Col. David T. Jenkins' 146th New York Volunteers. Perhaps the French leggings had been part of the ten thousand uniforms imported by Colonel Schuyler in 1861 and later issued to the units of General McClellan's body guard.

19. Col. David T. Jenkins, "Camp at Warrenton Junction," to Capt. Alex I. Perry, A.A.Q.M. U.S.A., 26 March 1864, E 2182, Letters Received, Philadelphia Depot, RG 92, OQMG, NARA.

"A Scarlet Coat Uniforms, Flags and Equipment, of the British in the War of 1812"

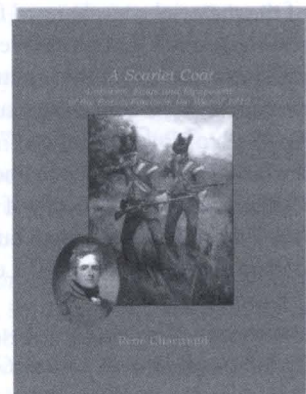
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Why Did *H. L. Hunley* Sink?

Thomas A. Crawford

AFTER many years of research, it is easy to believe everything that can be known about the famous *H. L. Hunley* has been discovered. However, upon a visit to see the boat as she sits slowly desalinating in her tank of fresh water at the old Charleston Navy Yard, I realized this remarkable vessel still harbors secrets. The puzzle is incomplete and not even all its pieces are available to the public. In fact, the staff made it clear not all artifacts were displayed or even studied. The following brief article focuses on one such artifact and the possibility it suggests.

My visit raised many questions. The weeks following my visit were spent going over all the “facts” surrounding the loss of *Hunley*. I reread an article, *Mystery of the Hunley*, wherein author Glenn McConnell wrote “she [*Hunley*] was anchored out there waiting the tide to change or had turned to come in, and the water got rough and she took on some water, she was using more oxygen than she was bringing in through the snorkels and they blacked out.” Maria Jacobsen, senior archaeologist of the *Hunley* project, stated, “Whatever happened appears to have happened quite quickly. They collapsed more or less where they sat. Either they became unconscious from lack of oxygen or the submarine flooded so rapidly that no one moved ... the two bilge pumps used to let in and eject water were in the closed position—not set to expel the water.”¹

As attested to in reports of the recovery of *Hunley* after her two accidental sinkings, the crew members were found to

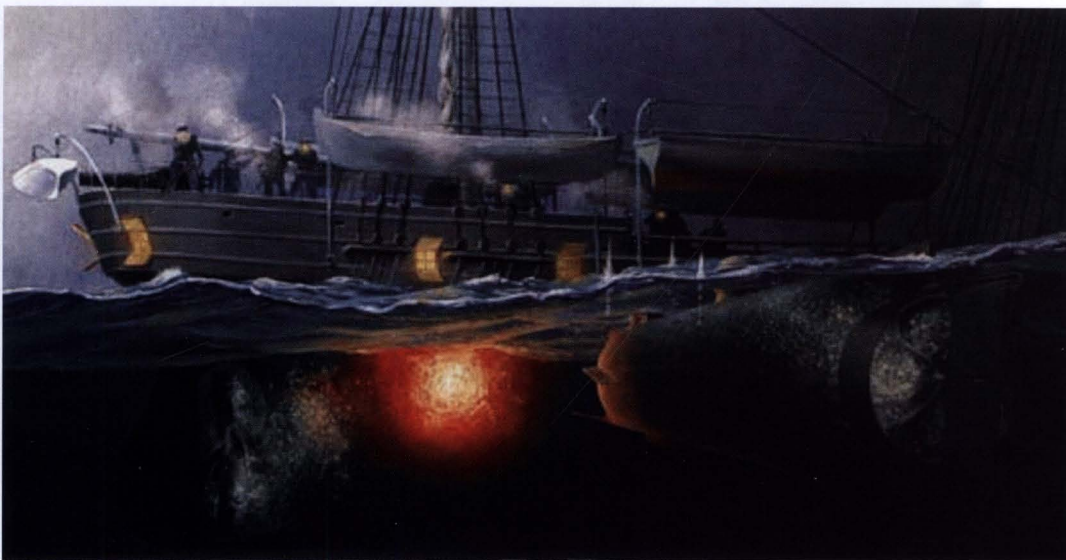


FIG-1. *Hunley's* torpedo detonating against the hull of USS *Housatonic*. Courtesy Mariner's Museum, Newport News, VA.

be in a position of trying to force the hatch open—the pumps were in line to expel water and the keel weights showed signs of being turned for release.² The recovery positions of the *Hunley's* last crew did not mirror these first two sinkings.³

The overall state of *Hunley* as she was found seems to rule out loss due to explosion or ramming by the oncoming Federal rescue warships. The extreme difficulty of striking—much less crippling—*Hunley* with small arms fire, regardless of test results, is evident to anyone with marksmanship experience. The chances of hitting a target less than six inches across while moving at night from an elevated position aboard a moving ship defies the odds. Additionally, *Hunley* was seen forty-five minutes after the explosion of the torpedo by Federal sailors stranded in the rigging of the sunken USS *Housatonic*. The lookouts on Battery Marshall reported the sighting of the “blue light”—a prearranged signal flashed from *Hunley*, as well. Both occurrences indicate the submarine survived the attack and was in stable enough condition to make signal and attempt a return to base. What then caused the loss of the boat and death of its crew?

The excellent work by M. P. Kochan and J. C. Wideman, *Torpedoes*,⁴ gives a great rendering and description of the spar torpedo used by *Hunley*, a Singer-type designed specifically for that boat. The method of detonation was recorded as triple-percussion fuses located in the forward section of the torpedo. These functioned with the pull of an attached lanyard. This was spooled outside *Hunley* and laid out after ramming the

THOMAS A. CRAWFORD, member of the Company since 2009, was born at Parris Island and raised in Texas. Graduate of Framingham State College, BA in history, and Framingham State University with MEd in history. Life long student of world military history with focus on the ordnance field. Semi-retired, researching U.S. ships of the line and their histories. A Marine Corps combat veteran. Active in Civil War period public education. Authored three articles on civil war subjects. Member of American Legion Post #1 and life member of DAV, SCV, and the Company.



FIG 2. Bow view of Hunley in her present state. Courtesy the author.

barbed point into the target vessel. However, archaeologists working on *Hunley* discovered a spool of insulated copper wire and components of a battery.⁵ Could the boat's torpedo have had an alternate firing system? A system set up or designed to have been electrically triggered as an alternate means? I inquired of a volunteer serving at the Hunley site about these two items and he confirmed they had been recovered in the forward section.⁶ At this point in time the C.S. Torpedo Service around Charleston had a number of electrically fired torpedoes in service. It would have been very easy to fit an additional firing system as a redundant trigger for the spar torpedo. No mention is made in the written record of such a system—but the evidence of the battery is compelling.

The presence of a battery aboard *Hunley* led me to another idea—one that struck me as I watched an old black and white World War II movie. The film's heroes were on the bottom of an enemy bay with no power, leaking, etc., and trying to cross over their electrical power from broken battery cells to join all those still serviceable—you get the picture. Beyond drowning or being crushed by further depth charges, their greatest fear was dying of poisonous gas from the battery cells. That was a real concern until the advent of nuclear boats. I placed several calls to old time submariners, one in particular with over twenty years' service—a long ago boomer sailor, and asked if sea water and wet cell batteries were still considered or taught as hazardous in submarine school? This simple landsman's question met with a laugh and a, "Hell, yes!" and even made reference to the same movie I had seen.

Turning to the Web for further details, I found it was straightforward and solid science the combination of salt water with any of the usual diluted acids used in wet cell batteries produces chlorine gas. The amount is dependent on ambient temperature, other conductive metals present, etc. Chlorine is a powerful irritant that can inflict damage to the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. We know it was the first war gas employed by the Germans in World War I. At high concentrations and prolonged exposure can cause death by asphyxiation.

Chlorine requires a concentration of one thousand parts per million to be fatal. It kills by mixing with moisture in the lungs and forming hydrochloric (muriatic) acid, which then destroys the tissues of the lung. According to the Chlorine Institute, the following is a list of chlorine exposure thresholds reported for human exposure:

0.2-0.4 ppm	Odor threshold;
40-60 ppm	Toxic pneumonitis and pulmonary edema;
430 ppm	Lethal over 30 minutes;
1000 ppm	Fatal in a few minutes
(NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazard, (Chlorine)). ⁷	

Only a very small amount of chemical is needed to reach a lethal level of chloride gas. As a gauge, a 2,000 square foot home with eight-foot ceilings has 16,000 cubic feet of volume. A 12-ounce bottle of alkaline drain opener dissolved in water in such a structure would create a concentration of chlorine gas of 137ppm. An average-sized wet cell battery of the Civil War

period contained three to four times this quantity of chemical (36–48 ounces) Using the general measurements for *Hunley* as given in Campbell's book (which is erroneously titled, *The CSS H. L. Hunley: Confederate Submarine*, as she was never a commissioned Confederate States Navy ship of war) states her outer dimensions of 40 feet long by 5 feet deep by 4 feet wide yields an internal volume of about 800 cubic feet.⁸ The concentration of chlorine gas generated by the mixture of water with battery acid would be as high as 2,200 ppm—more than double the fatal threshold.

As per Campbell's book, we believe *Hunley* took on water in the choppy waves after her attack. Did the opening of the hatch to make the famous "blue light" signal allow seawater to splash upon the battery in the forward compartment by Dixon's feet, forming a poisonous gas so concentrated escape was impossible and death swift?⁸ The accepted theories—a lack of oxygen or the too-rapid depletion of the air supply—are at odds with the written evidence of *Hunley*'s earlier dives, which lasted up to two and a half hours. Even if that time were halved, the idea of exhaustion of useable air does not make for a solid case.

The facts in this argument are plain. The presence of a wet cell battery aboard the boat is known; the chemical reaction between seawater and battery acid is known; and the lethality of the gas formed by that reaction is known. At the terribly high concentration that would have been formed in the limited environment of the boat, death would have come so quickly there would have been no time to attempt escape—no time to drop ballast, blow the tanks, or try to open the hatches. In fact, the crew would have died at their stations, just as they were discovered. The irritating odor of chlorine gas might well have been ignored against the background of the myriad other odors within the confines of the boat—the level of lethality would have followed swiftly in any event.

The proof of this scenario lies in the analysis of the soft brain tissue found within the crew members' skulls, which should indicate a state of trauma or relaxation at the

time of death.⁷ Evidence of chlorine gas might also show up in tests of the submarines interior. In the absence of such data, the theory *Hunley*'s crew died from poison gas squares with the known evidence better than other suggestions.

Notes:

1. Bill Bleyer, "Mystery of the H. L. Hunley Sinking is Closer to Being Solved," *Civil War News* (July 2005): www.civilwarnews.com/archive/articles. Accessed 29 November 2012.
2. Bruce Smith, "Scientists Have New Clue to Mystery of Sunken Sub," *Science on NBS News*, Associated Press, 18 October 2008.
3. Maria Jacobsen, Senior Archaeologist, H. L. Hunley, "Mystery of the H. L. Hunley Sinking is Closer to Being Solved," *Civil War News* (July 2005).
4. Michael P. Kochan, and John C. Wideman, *Torpedoes, Another Look at the Infernal Machines of the Civil War* (Chicago, IL: Westholm Publishing, 2012), 5, 15, 27, 28, 30, 59.
5. Wikipedia, *H. L. Hunley (submarine)* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H.-L.-Hunley-\(submarine\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H.-L.-Hunley-(submarine)) site. Accessed 29 November 2012.
6. My request for a list of all artifacts found within *Hunley* has yet to be answered. Only those on display and on the Web site are available at this time.
7. NIOSH *Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazard*, (Chlorine), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npg/npgd0115.html>, accessed 29 November 2012.
8. R. Thomas Campbell, *The CSS H. L. Hunley: Confederate Submarine* (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 2000), 59–62, 160–161.

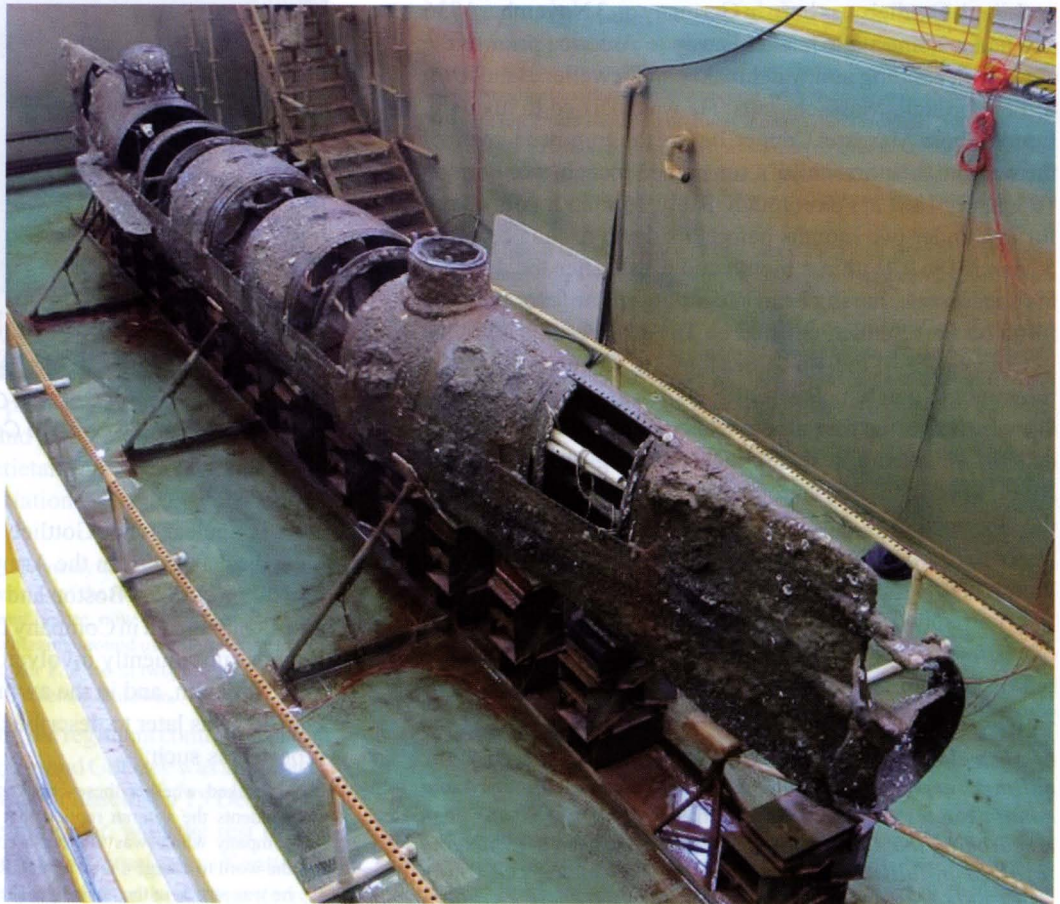


FIG 3. Overhead view of Hunley. Courtesy the author.

Capt. Joseph Gottlieb, 35th Massachusetts Infantry

Terry Foenander

ON the afternoon of Monday, 25 November 1912, a special reporter for the Adelaide, South Australian newspaper, *The Register*, was introduced to a small, spare man in his office at the Mines Department in Adelaide, who was announced as "Major Joseph Gottlieb, of the Federal Army of America." Over the course of the next couple of hours, the reporter and Gottlieb, who was reported as being under five feet, six inches and who was stated to have been burnt like a berry from exposure to the sun, but was described as having an impressive personality were engaged in conversation about Gottlieb's life, and especially about his activities during the American Civil War. The reporter added, although Gottlieb had turned seventy-six during that very month of November 1912, he was still quite active and could "see many a younger man out in a hard day's toil."¹

Joseph Gottlieb was born in Germany on 3 November 1836 and had at some stage made his way to America prior to the Civil War, residing as a watchmaker and jeweller at the town of Foxborough, Massachusetts. He was married to his wife, London-born Margaret Conner, before the commencement of the war and their first child, a son named Joseph, was born on 10 January 1861 at Foxborough. Sadly, Joseph, Jr., only lived for just under two months before his death of lung fever on 5 March 1861. Within a month and a half after the death of his son, Joseph, having been caught up in war fever after the firing on Fort Sumter, enlisted on 16 April 1861 as a private in Company F of the 4th Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, a three-month unit which was also known as the Warren Light Guards. It was the first unit to leave the state after Lincoln's call for volunteers, with the men traveling by train to Fall River, Massachusetts, en route for Fort Monroe, Virginia, on the afternoon of 17 April 1861. Arriving at the fort, they were under the command of Gen. Benjamin Butler for little over a month before being sent to Newport News on 27 May where they garrisoned Camp Butler for the rest of their brief period of service, returning to Massachusetts and being mustered out of the service at Long Island (in Boston Harbor) on 22

TERRY FOENANDER was born in Singapore, but a resident of Australia for more than thirty-six years. He served in the military service of both nations, including more than two and a half decades of service in the Australian Army. He has been researching the American Civil War since the mid-1960s and involved in full-time research on the services of the Union and Confederate Navies for two decades. He has also been involved in full-time research on the American Civil War veterans buried in Australia and New Zealand, with a total of about 150 having been located and verified and with about 80 more yet to be verified.



FIG 1. 2d Lt. Joseph Gottlieb. Courtesy Missouri History Museum Library and Research Center.

July 1861.²

It is unclear what Gottlieb was involved in after he had been discharged from the Army, but he enlisted, once again, on 10 June 1862 at Boston and was mustered in on 16 August 1862 as a sergeant in Company D, 35th Massachusetts Infantry. He was subsequently involved in the battles at South Mountain, Antietam, and in the awful slaughter at Fredericksburg. Gottlieb was later to describe these actions to the newspaper reporter, as such:

Asked whether these engagements had provided any memorable incidents the veteran replied that at Antietam he was commanding a company which was without a commissioned officer, and as he gave the word to charge a man named Read was standing close at hand when he was struck in the chest by a shell. The shot passed through him, and disembowelled him, but he remained for several seconds leaning forward on his rifle before he fell. "At the South Mountain fight," he continued, "when we were charging the rise the men were very tired, but we had to maintain our front, and as it was growing dark we halted. The men then



FIG 2. 2d Lt. Joseph Gottlieb. Courtesy Massachusetts Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion and the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA.

dropped in their tracks from exhaustion. I remember that I slept soundly through the night, and when I woke in the morning at the sound of reveille I found I had a dead man for a pillow.”

The regimental history of the 35th Massachusetts Infantry and roster does confirm that a private named Luther F. Read, of Westford, aged 24 in 1862 and also a member of Company D, was killed in action at Antietam on 17 September 1862 and is buried at the Antietam National Cemetery, Maryland. It further states:

Before us, towards Sharpsburg, the enemy were scattering back to their artillery upon the hills on the hither side of the town. The hostile battery, which we had been watching an hour before, now, close at hand, opened upon us at once, and sent the iron whizzing around us, shells taking effect in companies D and H, cutting Luther F. Read in two, killing David W. Cushing, and severely wounding Lieutenant Baldwin.

After the carnage of Antietam, the regiment continued in fall and winter campaigning in Virginia and Gottlieb was appointed second lieutenant in the 35th Massachusetts on 15 December 1862. In late March 1863, the regiment, with the rest of the brigade, was sent west to assist in the campaigns in Kentucky and Tennessee and, by April, Gottlieb had been transferred to Company A. It was involved in several actions and in the final investment of Vicksburg, culminating in the surrender of the city on 4 July 1863. It also fought in the campaign against

Jackson, Mississippi, later in the year, and into early 1864, followed by actions in east Tennessee, and at Knoxville. Gottlieb relates his memories of this campaign thus:

The 9th Army Corps to which I was attached then returned up Kentucky way to Knoxville in Tennessee, where we sustained a siege. We had practically no provisions, and suffered badly. Officers and men had to exist on one corncob a day with no tea or coffee to help it down. I remember Gen. Burnside refusing a cup of coffee made from roasted wheat because his men could not fare similarly. Either before or after this siege we were engaged at Vicksburg, but the matter has been left so long behind that I cannot recall which came first.

It was in September 1863 that Gottlieb was promoted to first lieutenant. Sometime prior to this, while still a second lieutenant, he had had his photographs taken (FIGs 1, 2).³

By early April 1864, the regiment had returned to Virginia to participate in the final push to take Richmond and force the surrender of Lee’s army. Gottlieb continued with his reminiscences:

Then I became attached to the General Staff as Ordnance Officer of the Second Division of the 9th Army Corps, commanded by Gen. Park, so that by this time I was practically on the permanent general staff. From Vicksburg we again entered Virginia, and participated in the Battle of the Wilderness. I was then on Gen. Potter’s staff, and he was an uncle of the famous actress Mrs. Brown Potter. In this battle we were engaged for four days at close quarters, and fought throughout without cessation. Yes, close quarters then meant anything from hand to hand struggles to a range of 150 yards. There were frequent bayonet charges, and I saw so many of them that I came to the conclusion they were not half so horrible as many people imagine. Each charge lasted a few minutes, but the medical evidence in connection with the war will show that there were few casualties comparatively from bayonet wounds. However, they always had a moral effect, and it was a case of the weaker force retreating a few minutes after the first contact. There were not more than 1 percent of bayonet wounds throughout the war in comparison to casualties from shot and shell.

I might tell you of one or two incidents which were of importance in connection with the war, but which have never been recorded in any history published by America. One occurred at the termination of the Battle of the Wilderness. I was a captain at the time, with Gen. Burnside’s division. The men were dog tired with their protracted fighting, but Grant was determined to carry out a carefully arranged plan to crush Lee and bring the war to a close. His objective was to push on Burnside’s division by a forced march and get in between Lee and his base at Richmond. Gen. Burnside sent forward his advance guard at night, and the march commenced. When we were well on the road, however, we heard terrific yells and screams in front, and presently the advance guard, composed of tried veterans, came doubling back on their tracks in appalling disorder. Burnside and his officers prayed to and cursed at them with the hope of restoring the formation, but it was useless, and morning dawned before the ranks were reformed. Then we discovered that a couple of mules which had been coupled together had managed to get tangled up with a sapling, and it was their unearthly yells which had terrified the advance guard. But for this incident the road would have probably been opened up to Richmond and the war would have been ended many months earlier. The affair was reported to Gen. Potter, but I don’t remember it ever appearing in print in America. I don’t blame the men, for they were all overtaxed and unstrung.

Another matter which is not recorded was the treatment of deserters from the army when we were investing Petersburg. At the time the Potomac army had its base at Coal Harbour [Cold Harbor], and supplies were being brought from there to the front by teamsters. We noticed that many men were mysteriously disappearing from the ranks, and we could not account for the gradual reduction in numbers, or the disappearance of wagons laden with supplies approaching us from the base. We knew that they could not leave Virginia. Everybody was puzzled. At last—I forget

had command of it since we left Minneapolis as General Brooks has been very sick since that time. General Crittenden has been in command of the 2nd Div. but has been since relieved. The 38th Regt has not taken active part in any battle yet, as they were detailed to guard a train and part of time as a pioneer corps, cutting roads etc.

You need not be sorry for not being with us and I doubt that your contributions would be able to stand the hard ship of this campaign. 5 of our staff had their horses shot in the last 10 days since - was shot yesterday and also 3 of our staff officers got slightly wounded.

From your application I have not heard anything but I found out that a U.S. officer is detailed as sutelary officer of your division. I must close. Kind regards to Mrs. Stickney and your sister from your true friend
 Jas. Gottlieb

PHOTOCOPYED FROM ORIGINAL IN WILLIAM L. CLEMENTS LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR, MI. U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1907

Head-Quarters 2nd Div., 9th Army Corps.

Near Chattanooga Tenn. June 9th 1864.

Friend Stickney:

Thinking that you have forgotten that a man of my name is in existence. I will try to refresh your memory with a few lines. I have not heard from you since I left Minneapolis. Though you have promised to write often. You have without doubt seen in paper the accounts of our last Chattanooga campaign and of the Victories we gained. We have fought since the 5th of last month almost every day and in my opinion without advantage over either side. I will try to give you a brief and true account of our last months campaign and let you judge by your self. On the 5th of May we crossed the Chattahoochee and on the 6th and 7th we fought the battle of the Wilderness.

FIGs, 3, 4. Letter, Gottlieb to Stickney. Courtesy William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

In that battle the enemy turned our right while we were trying to turn his in order to get possession of road leading to Richmond. with out fully accomplishing our object. during the night of the 7th we left the battle field and made a flank march and to Chambersville. to get possession of the road leading from there to Richmond. but when we arrived at Spotsylvania count Beaure can not the enemy in full front we fought there 5 or 6 days without being able to push the enemy one inch from his position. after the battle of Spotsylvania we marched again around the enemys right flank. we advanced as far as the North Anna river where we met the enemy again and in such position that it would have been madness to fight a decisive battle. we remained in that position for 3 days feeling his strength at every point and

looking about from 8 to 300 miles in the attempt to find out his exact position. since then we pushed gradually towards east side of Richmond and we are now within 11 miles of Richmond. For the last 6 days we have been fighting every day with out result. The enemy is between us and the Chickasaw river in very strong positions. and it is my opinion that if Lee does not choose to withdraw his army we can not drive him out of it. though we are within 10 miles of the rebel Capital we are no nearer of capturing it. than we were. while near the Rapidan. and if you are acquainted with the map of this country you will see could have come down here without fighting all these battles. My Division has lost over 1800 men killed and wounded during last months campaign. Genl. Potter has

Washington D.C. July 26th 1865

Major Genl L. Thomas
U. S. A.

General I have
the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of my appointment
as brevet Major of U.S. Vol.
which I accept.
I am 28 years of age, was
born in Austria, Germany,
and am a permanent
resident of Boston Mass.

I am General
very Respectfully
Your obedt servt
Jos. Gottlieb
Capt 29th Mass. Reg
& Brevt Maj. U.S.V.

FIG 5. Letter acknowledging acceptance of his promotion to brevet major. www.fold3.com.

how it came about—it was discovered that there was a camp of several thousand of our men, composed of deserters, formed in the woods miles away from the route of supplies. A force of men were sent out, and they discovered a well-organized camp. In our own division I remember seeing seven gallows erected and our deserters were hanged instead of shot, as they had murdered the teamsters to secure the supplies. I can still see those men marching to the gallows behind their coffins, and trying to keep in step. They died game, although they were cowardly deserters.

In a personal letter written to a former fellow officer of the regiment, John B. Stickney (who had resigned some months before), and dated “near Cold Harbor, Virginia, June 9, 1864,” Gottlieb gave details of the recent actions fought after the opening of Grant’s campaign and mentioned the high rate of casualties, even mentioning that, although he not been wounded, his horse had been shot from under him just the day before (FIGs 3, 4).⁴

He continued to remain on the headquarters staff of the 2d Division of the IX Army Corps, but was personally involved in the final actions culminating in the fall of Petersburg and was recommended on 29 May 1865 for promotion to brevet major “for meritorious services, and especially for gallant conduct in the assault of April 2, 1865.” On 9 June 1865, he was transferred to the 29th Massachusetts Volunteers and received, and acknowledged, his brevet as major on 26 July 1865 which appointment was backdated to 2 April 1865 (FIG

5). Gottlieb was mustered out with the 29th Massachusetts on 9 August 1865 and returned to his home in Boston. A second child, a daughter named Amelia, was born to the couple on 4 April 1867. Joseph Gottlieb applied for and was naturalized as an American citizen on 14 September 1867 at the United States District Court in Boston. By the year 1870, his relationship with his wife and daughter had deteriorated to the extent he left America and arrived in Australia in that same year. He subsequently involved himself mainly in mining and the mining industry. He was known to be a mine manager at the Teetulpal Goldfields of South Australia in 1888, naming one of his mines Petersburg, in memory of the Virginia city of that name. In later years he was also manager of the Homeward Bound and Klondyke Mines at Mannahill, South Australia, and finally worked in the Mines Department at Adelaide, South Australia.

Although Gottlieb first made application for the United States government pension in June 1897, his application, under the old age pension regulations, was not approved until 1908 after he had reached the age of seventy-two.

Sadly, in his contacts with United States consular officials at Adelaide, he stated he had not had any contact with his divorced wife or his daughter Amelia since 1870, when he left America, and had “no interest in his daughter or divorced wife.”

Gottlieb died at the Home for Incurables, at Adelaide, on 9 August 1923, the cause of death listed as old age. His remains were interred at the West Terrace Cemetery in that city.⁵

Notes

1. The lengthy article, under the title of “A Maker of History—American Civil War—A Staff Officer With GEN. Burnside” was published in the *Adelaide Register*, an Adelaide, South Australian newspaper, on Wednesday, 27 November 1912.
2. Gottlieb’s birthdate and other details of his family are shown in naturalization and other documents available at the Latter Day Saints Web site at www.familysearch.org. These details are in the following links at that site: *United States, New England Naturalization Index, 1791–1906* and *Massachusetts Births and Deaths, 1841–1915, registered in the town of Foxborough, Massachusetts, for 1861*.
3. Service details for Gottlieb, as well as other personnel of the units he served in, are shown in volumes 1 and 3 of *The Adjutant General, comp., Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors and Marines in the Civil War* (Norwood, MA: Norwood Press, 1931), and also in the regimental history titled *History of the Thirty-Fifth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, With A Roster; by A Committee of the Regimental Association* (Boston: Mills, Knight & Company, 1884). The photograph of Gottlieb is held in the collections of the Massachusetts Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, and the United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, and is used with their kind permission.
4. Letter dated at the Headquarters 2d Division, IX Army Corps, “Near Cold Harbor, Va., June 9th, 1864,” written by Joseph Gottlieb, to “Friend Stickney,” original held at the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; details used with their kind permission.
5. Details of Gottlieb’s brevet promotion are shown in *War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1880–1901), 46, 1: 1025. His acceptance letter of his promotion is in the collection titled *Letters Received by the Commission Branch of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1863–1870*, www.fold3.com. See note 2 for the details of his naturalization, birth, and death.

data on his children. Gottlieb's marriage failure and the falling out with his wife and daughter are recorded in a document titled *Report of the Death of an American Citizen—American Consular Service*, a copy of which was filled out, after his death, by the American Consular Service,

at Adelaide, South Australia, on August 24, 1923. Other details of his mining occupation, and burial details, are included in the South Australian newspaper, the *Adelaide Register* of Wednesday, 1 September 1909, 4, and the issue of 10 August 1923.

G 414 CB 1865
ENCL.

OATH OF OFFICE

One to accompany the accept-
officer appointed or commis-
the oath itself to be adminis-
tered into the service

ance of every commissioned
sioned by the President, and
istered to every officer in-
of the United States.

I, Joseph Gottlieb, having been appointed
a Major By Brevet in the **MILITARY**
SERVICE of the United States, do solemnly swear that I have
never voluntarily **BORNE ARMS** against the United States since I
have been a citizen thereof; that I have voluntarily given no **AID**,
COUNTENANCE, COUNSEL, or ENCOURAGEMENT to persons engaged in **ARMED HOSTILITY**
thereto; that I have neither sought, nor accepted, nor attempted
to exercise the functions of **ANY OFFICE WHATEVER**, under any
authority, or pretended authority, in **HOSTILITY** to the United States;
that I have not yielded a voluntary **SUPPORT** to any **PRETENDED**
GOVERNMENT, AUTHORITY, POWER, or CONSTITUTION within the United States,
HOSTILE or INIMICAL thereto. And I do further swear that, to
the best of my knowledge and ability, I will **SUPPORT and DEFEND**
the **CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES** against all enemies, **FOREIGN and**
DOMESTIC; that I will bear true **FAITH and ALLEGIANCE** to the same;
that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or
purpose of evasion; and that I will **WELL and FAITHFULLY** discharge the
DUTIES of the **OFFICE** on which I am about to enter: **So help me God.**

Jos. Gottlieb
Capt 29th Mass Vols
Butt. Regt. U.S.V.
Tenallytown N.C.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, at
this 26th day of July, 1865.

David Deulley
1st Lieut & Asst-
28th Mass Vols, 3rd Capt U.S.V.

[A. G. O. No. 55.]

FIG 6. Oath of Office, 26 July 1865. www.fold3.com.

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Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, USMC: Operation Meade River, 20 November–9 December 1968. All Gave Some; Some Gave All¹

Ronald G. Fieseler and David M. Sullivan

PART I

THIS account is dedicated to all the Marines and Corpsmen of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, who fought and defeated an enemy force during Operation Meade River—but especially the thirteen Marines who lost their lives on 7 December 1968 and the thirty-five or more who were wounded during the operation. The survivors of Operation Meade River, both those wounded and those who remained unscathed in the battle were left with memories of those nineteen days that can never be erased. Time does not heal all wounds

In May 2013, coauthor Sullivan was invited to the annual meeting of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, as a guest of Company members Tom and James Crawford. Their father, GySgt Richard Crawford, USMC, a career Marine, lost his life in Vietnam on 7 December 1968. An outsider and former Army, I was nevertheless welcomed by these Marines. Over the course of the three-day reunion, I learned many of these Marines who engaged the North Vietnamese enemy during Operation Meade River were disappointed their sacrifices and battle honors earned during those nineteen days in 1968 had been lost to history. It was decided to rectify this oversight. Over the course of the next few weeks and months, several Meade River veterans, including Ron Fieseler, provided their recollections of that operation. Compilations of reminiscences such as presented in this oral history are best vetted by one who was there. To that end, Ron Fieseler joined the project as coauthor. Opinions expressed in this paper are those of the Marines who served in Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, and not those of the Company of Military Historians.

RONALD G. FIESELER: *See pages 235–236 of this article.* .
DAVID M. SULLIVAN is currently collaborating with Ron Fieseler on a biography of Texas Ranger and U.S. Mounted Rifle officer Samuel H. Walker; a biography of nineteenth century U.S. Marine officer Archibald H. Gillespie with CMH member Will Gorenfeld; an illustrated biographical dictionary of the officers of the Confederate States Navy; and the same for the officers and Medal of Honor recipients of the Civil War U.S. Marine Corps.

Operation Meade River Overview and Summary of Historical USMC Documentation

The standard history of the Marine Corps in Vietnam is the multi-volume Operational Histories Series produced by the History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. The volume dealing with the period in which Operation Meade River took place is titled *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968*. In fact, it is the only published definitive history of the Marines in Vietnam that mentions Alpha Company, 1/7. Operation Meade River covers eleven of the book's 773 pages. In those eleven pages, Alpha Company, 1/7, is mentioned but seven times and then only briefly. While numerous individual Marine officers and enlisted Marines are named in these pages, you will find only one from Alpha Company—Capt. James F. Foster, company commander. This, despite five Silver Stars awarded to Alpha Company enlisted Marines and Corpsmen—three posthumously—for heroism during the operation.

Operation Meade River was but one of several operations during a three-month, “Accelerated Pacification Campaign,” designed to reestablish control over areas dominated by Communist forces. The 1st Marine Division had overall command of the cordon and search operation, the largest ever undertaken to that time—thirty-six square kilometers of an area known as “Dodge City” for obvious reasons. The area was “heavily infested with Communists. . . . Its proximity to Da Nang, Hoi An, and the Bien Ban District headquarters gave it tactical significance as a possible enemy staging area for attacks on those key locations.”²

Elements of nine Marine infantry battalions took part in the operation, the largest encirclement of the Vietnam War: elements of 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions, 1st Marines (1/1, 2/1, 3/1); elements of 2d and 3d Battalions, 5th Marines (2/5, 3/5); Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/7 (Echo, Fox, Golf, and Hotel Companies); 2d and 3d Battalions, 26th Marines (2/26, 3/26); BLT 2/26; and Companies A and C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines (1/7). Numerous batteries in support of the operation were: 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Battalions, 11th Marines (1/11, 2/11, 3/11, 4/11); 3d Platoon, 8th Howitzers, and the 1st 155 Gun Battery. Also in support were the 51st ARVN Regiment and the 1st and 2d Companies, 1st Battalion, 2d Thanh Long Brigade, 1st Division, Republic of Korea (ROK) Marine Corps.

Specific orders for Alpha, 1/7, were : CHOP (heli-lift) to

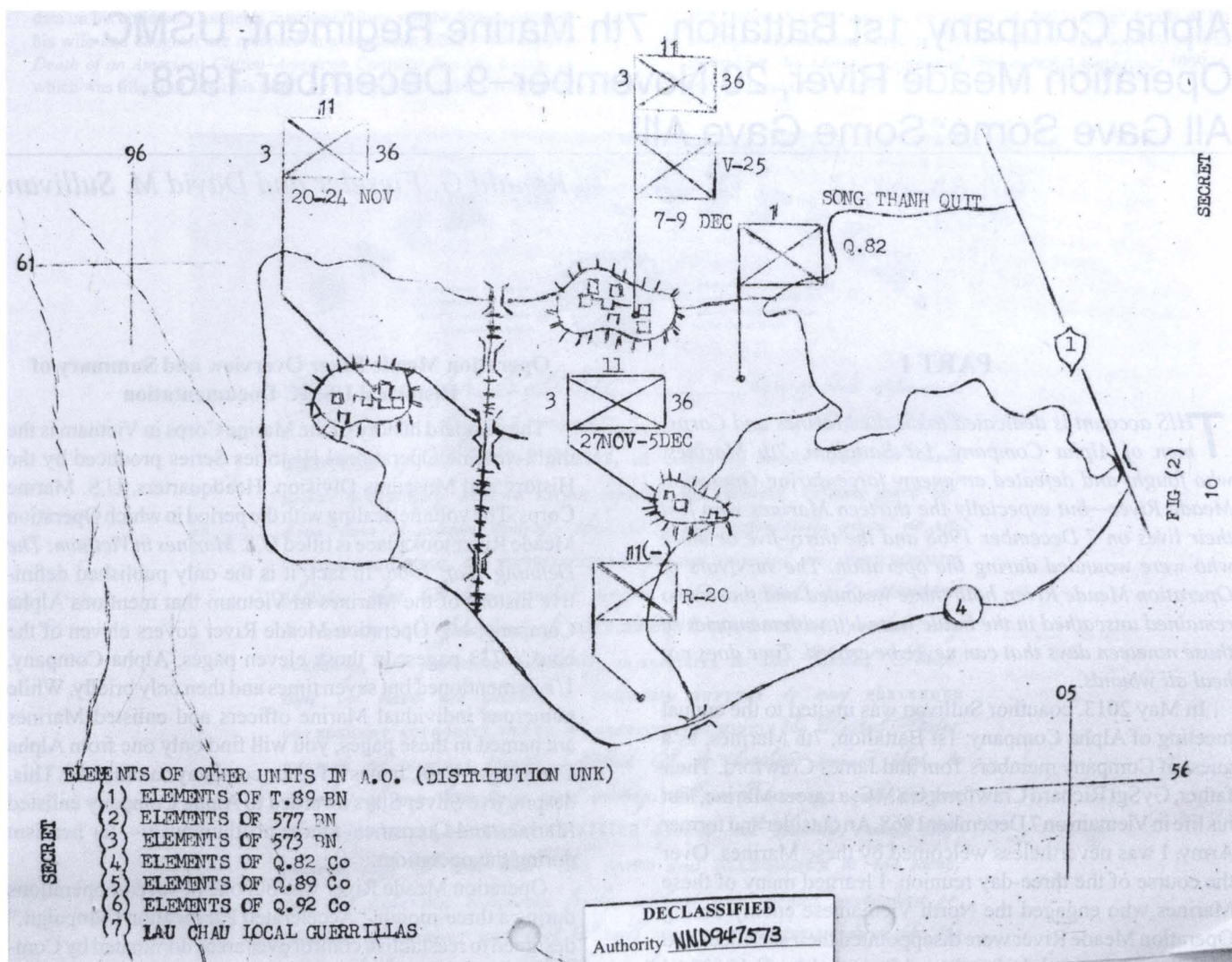


FIG 1. United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 20 January 1968, After Action Reports, Box 32, HH 1988, Record Group 472, Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), National Archives, Washington, DC. [RGF note: FIG. 1 locates the northern bunker complex immediately adjacent to the Sông Lo Tha River, which was not the case. The military unit symbol indicating the location of the 3d Battalion, 36th NVA Infantry Regiment (3 11 36) and dated 27 Nov-5 Dec is pretty much where the northern bunker complex was actually located—about 1–1.5 clicks south of the river and a kilometer or less east of the railroad berm.]

1/1, D-1, at 0900; be prepared, on order, to terminate CHOP to 1/1, move to positions at LZ and conduct Bald Eagle operations anywhere within the AO; and be prepared, on order, to CHOP to battalion designated to conduct search and destroy operation in the eastern sector of Dodge City.

Enemy forces in the cordoned area were identified and their positions given on the map at FIG 1.

As stated in the confidential, "Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS:MACJ3-32, (K-1), of 20 January 1968, the mission of Operation Meade River was to "conduct a cordon and search operation to find, capture, and destroy NVA and VC elements; cordon and classify all civilians; and destroy all enemy fortifications within the operational area."

Phase I:

The simultaneous emplacement of cordoning elements by foot, truck, and helicopter. The cordon was to be maintained at a minimum strength of three-man string points every fifteen meters around the operational area (Overlay A—FIG 2).³

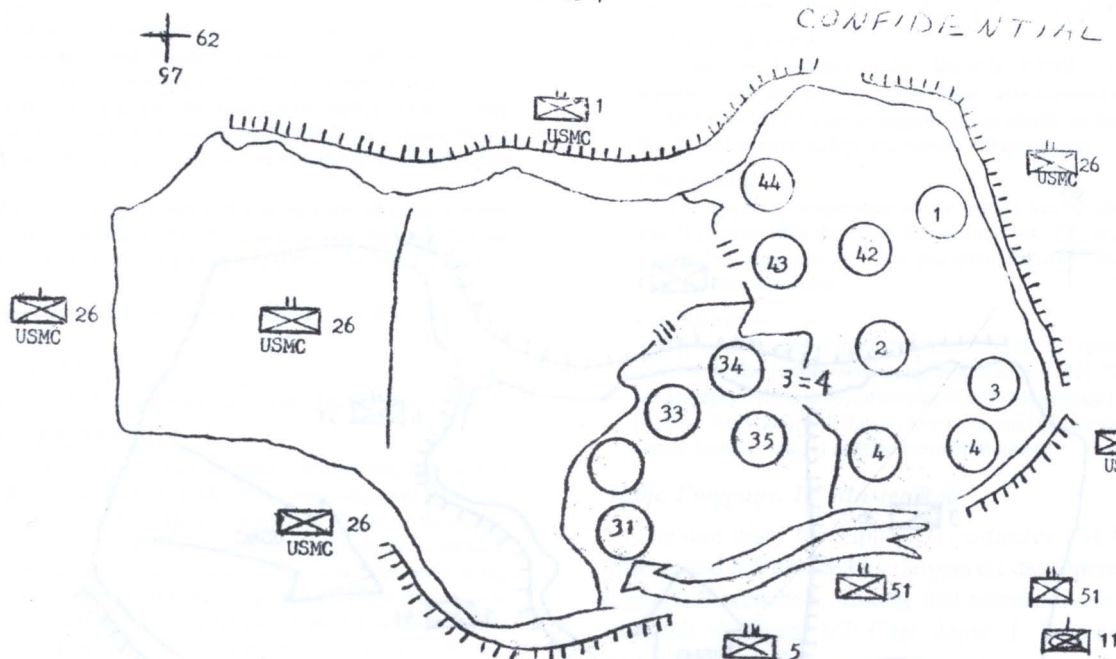
Phase II:

Upon positioning of the cordon, the 3d and 4th Battalions, 51st Infantry Regiment [ARVN] was [sic] to move into the SE portion of the cordoned area and make a combat sweep to contact and overcome enemy forces; inform all civilians in this area to move to Highway 1 and report to the National Police collecting points from movement to screening centers (except one member per household); then

Phase I

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ANNEX A



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FIG 2. Overlay A. United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 20 January 1968, After Action Reports, Box 32, HH 1988, Record Group 472, Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV). National Archives, Washington, DC.

continue to search the area. (Overlay B—FIG 3).⁴

At 1000, 1 December 1968, Phase II was completed and Phase III began. The two ARVN battalions moved to the eastern portion of their areas and became a blocking force for the Marine Corps battalions, which had been the blocking force to the west. These battalions swept the area without significant contact.

Phase III:

3d and 4th Battalions, 51st Infantry Regiment [ARVN] were to move to the river on the western boundary of their respective area and form a blocking force. USMC units on the eastern portion of the cordon were to conduct a combat sweep of the area between Highway 1 and this block. Simultaneously, USMC units on the western edge of the cordon were to begin a sweep moving east toward the railroad embankment (Overlay B). Upon reaching the embankment these elements were to form a block. At this time USMC units on the south side of the block were to begin pushing, north to close the cordon and destroy any

remaining enemy forces. The operation was to terminate upon completion of this portion of the operation.⁵

The initial stage of the operation was written up "for the troops" in *Sea Tiger*, the newsletter of the III Marine Amphibious Force by GySgt Tom Bartlett, USMC:

Noose Grows Taut For Enemy

DANANG—Allied forces have formed a fifteen-mile solid ring that encompasses enemy bunkers, concrete emplacements, friendly hamlets, enemy villages, the muck of rice paddles, hidden booby traps and the sudden sting of death.

The multi-battalion operation is known as "Meade River," considered by many as the largest heli-assault in Marine Corps history.

The area has long been a sore spot for allied forces. Operations Allen Brook and Mameluke Thrust were both conducted in the Meade River area, north of troublesome Go Noi Island.

Purpose of the operation? Certainly to defeat the North Vietnamese soldiers and Viet Cong guerrillas, but primarily to rid the area of the Viet Cong infrastructure. There is estimated to be as many as two hundred VC there, and the number of hard core VC and NVA is not definite—but they're there—waiting.

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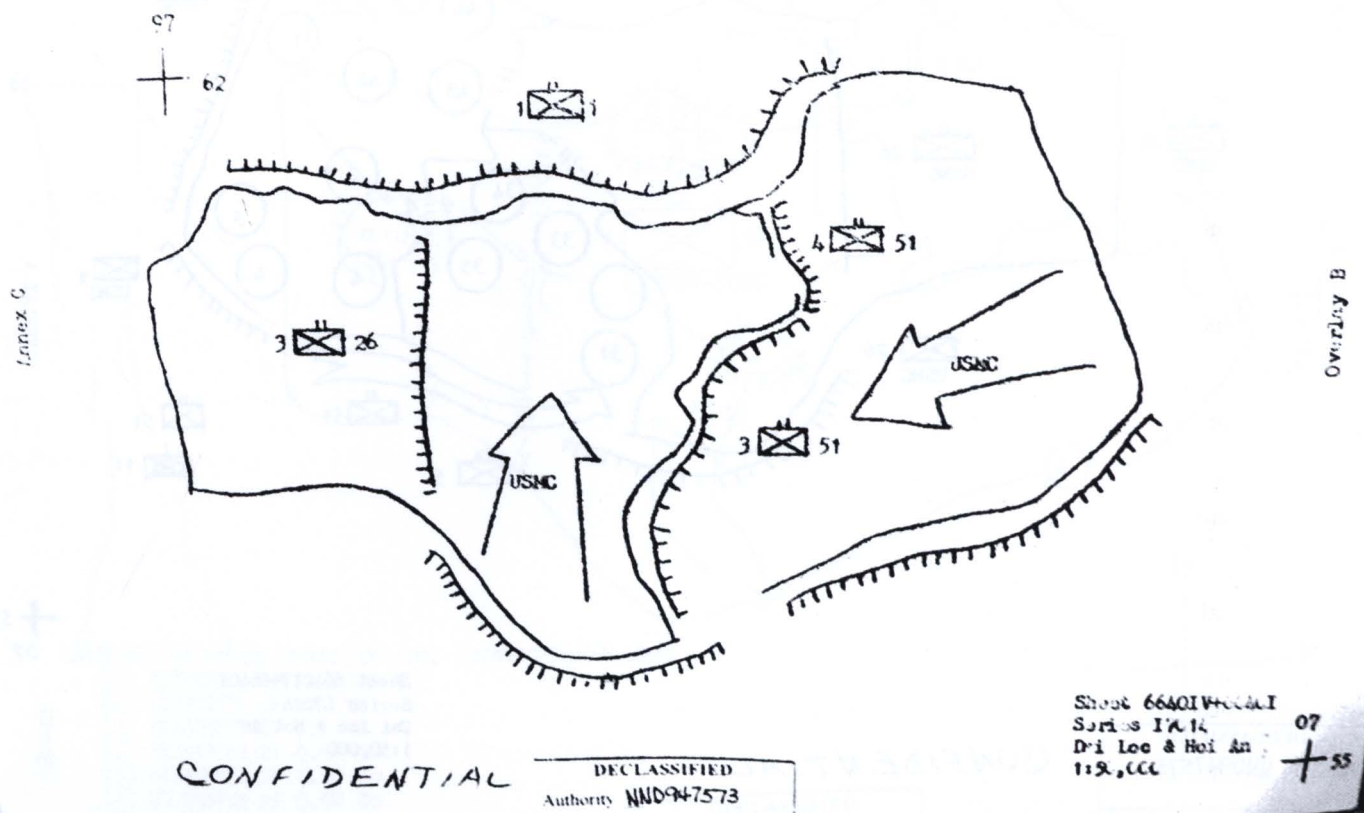


FIG 3. Overlay B. United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 20 January 1968, After Action Reports, Box 32, HH 1988, Record Group 472, Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), National Archives, Washington, DC.

The area is roughly eight miles long, three miles wide. Much of it is flat, marshy rice paddies, many flanked by tree lines.

Zero hour approached. Unlike other large operations, there was no Marine artillery; no Marine jets. Preliminary bombardment might have signaled the start of the operation. Instead, a helicopter armada consisting of over seventy-five Marine Corps Sea Knight and Sea Stallion helicopters, supported by gunships, Bronco observation aircraft, and Marine jets took to the air. The choppers, laden with combat-ready Marines, plunged into nearly fifty landing zones.

The Leathernecks rushed into defensive positions and prepared for battle.

The helicopters sprang back to the air for the round trip, to return with additional troops.

In all, seven American Marine battalions, two companies of the Second Korean Marine Brigade and a battalion of the 51st Regiment, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, were participating in the operation.

Route 1 forms the southern border and southwestern border of the operation, with Highway 1, the eastern border. Sông (River) La Tho is the northern boundary, with a paper boundary forming the western line of march.

As the five thousand Marines formed a huge cordon around the area, a battalion of Vietnamese soldiers went into "friendlier" hamlets at the eastern edge of the encirclement.

Loud speakers announced the operation. A half-million pamphlets

fluttered down, dropped by low-flying aircraft.

The villagers were told what to do. They would have three days in which to move to a central collection point. They would bring enough food for one day. One member of each family would remain in their house to prevent looting. Live stock would remain behind. (Grazing and watering sites are abundant.)

The Government of Vietnam would provide food after the first day; transportation would be provided: after reporting to the central collection point, province and district officials would instruct the people what to do next.

Every Vietnamese presented his identification papers. He was checked, screened and questioned. He was photographed, issued a new identification card, and rejoined his family in the camp, where tents awaited.

Cooking ranges were provided, as well as the food. Movies were shown and cultural drama teams performed. There were games for the children. It had a carnival-like atmosphere.

Then the cordon began to tighten. Each Marine could easily see the man next to him. In open spaces, they could spread out a little further; in tree lines or thick grass, the men were spaced closer together. In rice paddies, a Marine stood neck deep in water and mud—replaced at intervals, but there was never a gap in the encirclement.

Four days—the enemy hiding in holes was prepared to spend time without fresh air, food or water. Perhaps he had some provisions

in his bunker or his position. But it was first time the allied forces had waited four days.

The left flank would move to the railroad tracks and dig-in, waiting for the enemy to attempt a breakthrough. The right flank would also move in, then dig in. Three boundaries would hold—one would sweep.

And with each passing hour, the noose grew tighter. Enemy troops inside the cordon attempted to break out. They failed. Enemy troops outside the cordon attempted to break in, to assist their trapped comrades. They, too, failed.

Vietnamese, Korean, and American troops have placed a heavy noose around the neck of the enemy. Marching side-by-side, they are choking the enemy who is forced to release his stranglehold on the Vietnamese villagers.

Side-by-side, the allied force moves, and with each step, they move closer to a victory.

The noose grows taut.⁶

Shulimson's *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968* went into greater detail:

Beginning on the morning of 20 November 1968, seventy-two aircraft from the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing made 1,028 sorties lifting four battalions totaling 8,900 Marines, including BLT 2/26 from USS *Tripoli*, to the staging area. Trucks carried one battalion and two battalions marched overland. Among the latter was Alpha Company, 1/7. 1/1 was in position along the Sông La Tho River on the northern edge of the cordon. Two towers were heli-lifted to that position from which artillery fire and air support was directed. Clockwise around the cordon from 1/1 were BLT 2/26; 2/5; 3/5; 3/26; and 1/7. By 0825, Dodge City was cordoned.⁷

At noon the first sweeping force, BLT 2/26, attacked from the western side of the cordon and by 1600 had secured the southern end of its objective with little or no opposition. Thirty minutes later, it ran into a strong defensive position called the Horseshoe." This bunker complex was manned by North Vietnamese regulars, elements of the 3d Battalion, 36th Regiment, NVA. Furious resistance forced the Marines to withdraw."

The next day, BLT 2/26, reinforced by companies from 1/1 and 3/26, prepared to resume the attack. However, the NVA struck first, forcing the Marines to go on the defensive. The following day saw the Marines attacking again, but with only minor success. On 24 November, another frontal assault on the bunker complex. It, too, failed. On 25 November, a massive artillery bombardment fell upon the enemy position. When the shelling ceased, BLT 2/26 moved forward, encountering no enemy resistance. By noon, the entire Horseshoe had been overrun. Over the next several days, the sweeping battalions tightened the cordon, pushing the enemy toward the blocking force.

On 1 December, 3/5 ran into another strong bunker complex at a bend in the river called "the Hook." It would take four days of heavy artillery fire and air strikes before the Hook was taken. The remaining enemy position, called the Northern Bunker Complex was the next objective.⁸

On 3 December, Alpha 1/7, along with elements of 3/26, was heli-lifted from blocking positions behind the Suoi Co Ca River. The next few days were spent reconnoitering the area through which the assault would be made. From 3 December through 6 December, the assaulting line of battalions moved slowly northward toward the blocking forces along the Sông La Tho River. The pressure on the enemy was building and Operation Meade River was about to get very violent.

Status of early December 1968—Operation Meade River

1. INTELLIGENCE

From 1–9 December in the 3/26 "MEADE RIVER" AQ the enemy situation was 150–350 NVA/MFVC and 70 local VC. The strength figure was predicated on 1 Battalion and local units operating in the AO. Enemy forces operating in the AO consisted of: elements of the 38th Regiment and local forces of the Quang Da Spec Sector. Elements of the 38th Regiment operating in the AO were the R–20 Battalion, (vicinity) BT034609 and support elements of the T–89 Sapper Battalion, the Q–82

Company, VC local force, and the X–16 Company, (vic) BT000606 had also been reported in the AO.

2. ENEMY MISSION

From 1–9 December in the "MEADE RIVER" AO, the enemy mission was to attack U.S. and allied units in and around the area known as "DODGE CITY," also, to support rocket attacks on Danang [sic] and Hoi An and support village and hamlet infrastructures.

3. WEATHER

The maximum temperature for this period was 82° degrees, the low was 71° degrees and the mean temperature was 77° degrees. Average relative humidity was 78% and precipitation total 1 inch. The winds were variable at 6 knots.

4. TERRAIN

From 1–9 December in the "MEADE RIVER" AO, terrain encountered was mainly flat, fertile lowlands by cultivated rice field. These rice fields are generally double-cropped causing them to be inundated the majority of the year. Soils consist of light to heavy clay and there was one dominant terrain feature—an old railroad berm on Route #1.⁹

Alpha Company, 1/7 Muster Roll

The unit diary for Alpha, 1/7, indicates 174 Marines—4 officers and 170 enlisted for duty on the day Operation Meade River was launched. Among that number were two recent additions to Alpha, 1/7: Capt. James F. Foster and GySgt. Richard Crawford.

Capt. James F. Foster, USMC

Captain Foster was assigned to Alpha Company as commanding officer on 15 September 1968; joined in late September.



FIG 4. Capt. James F. Foster, 5 December 1968. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

ber; and completed his tour on 14 February 1969. One of his first orders to the company concerned the wearing of moustaches. It immediately incurred the wrath of Alpha Company.

Ron Fieseler recalled, "We got a new Captain this week named Captain Foster. One of the first things he did was order everyone to shave their moustaches. We were all pissed."¹⁰

Apparently, Foster was not held in high regard by his Marines. Comments attributed to him in Shulimson's book did not enhance his credibility with those who served under him.

GySgt Richard Crawford, USMC



FIG 5. GySgt. Richard Crawford, early December 1968. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

Richard NMI Crawford (1932–1968), enlisted in the Marine Corps in May 1950. First duty station was aboard USS *New Jersey*. Spent several months assigned as a driver for ADM "Bull" Halsey, USN (Ret.). Served in Korea, 1950–1952, and was wounded in action. Received his first Purple Heart and the Navy Commendation Medal with "V." Returned to *New Jersey*; aboard 1952–1954. [RGF note: It seems somehow appropriate the *New Jersey* provided fire support for Gunny Crawford and his Alpha Company Marines during Operation Meade River just a few days before the Gunny was KIA.] Marine Guard Company NAS Pensacola; Drill Instructor Duty MCRD Parris Island; Marine Barracks, Reykjavik, Iceland; 2d Marine Division, 6th and 8th Marines; Cuban Missile Crisis, at Guantanamo Bay; range SNCOIC Weapons

Training ITR, Camp Geiger; recruiting duty, San Antonio, Texas, 1965–1968; FMF Pac, Camp Hansen, Okinawa, as Weapons Training SNCO. Deployed to Alpha Company, 1/7, 11 November 1968, arriving 12 November. KIA, 7 December 1968. Awarded his second Purple Heart and the Bronze Star "V," posthumously. Interred at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery, 24 December 1968.

Crawford's widow received letters of condolence from President Lyndon B. Johnson; Texas Governor John Connolly; the Commanding General, FMF Pacific; and the Commanding General, 1st Marine Division. Two letters from other SNCOs from the battalion were received, but nothing from Alpha Company's commanding officer Capt. James Foster. It was not until his three sons, all former Marines, attended Alpha, 1/7, reunions did the real story and magnitude of Alpha Company's ordeal and the role their father played before and during Operation Meade River become known to them.¹¹

Lt. Col. Michael "Mickey" Coe, USMC (Ret.) remembered:

Crawford joined Alpha, 1/7, on 12 November 1968. We spent the period before Thanksgiving "on the lines" waiting to "go." We trained the rookies; trained with C4 in case we ran into caves or bunkers we had to blow; cleaned weapons; swam in the large bomb craters to stay clean; etc. We needed a Company Gunny and were provided with a jovial, cigar chewing, father figure that EVERYONE loved. He instantly became my best friend. He was living in San Antonio at the time and I am a Texas Aggie, so we had an instant bond. I spent a lot of time with him getting him up to speed on tactics; immediate action drills; use of explosives; calling in air and artillery and mortars; etc. We trained on mapping; weapon use and cleaning; i.e., everything that I thought he needed to know, if for no other reason, he could train others.¹²

Crawford was highly respected by the Marines of Alpha Company who remembered him as an "awesome" gunny. His death was, and still is, lamented by all who served with him.

Command Chronologies for November and December 1968

1st Battalion, 7th Marines

The Command Chronology for the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, for the month of November 1968, Part II, Narrative Summary, states in section 3:

There were no major named operations conducted by the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, in the month of November. However, ... Companies A and C participated in Operation Meade River with advanced CP Group. Meade River still progress with Company A still d[e]tached to 1/1.¹³

The Command Chronology for the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, for the month of December 1968, Part II, Narrative Summary, states in section 2:

Company A was involved with Operation Meade River, 1–9 December and were [sic] attached to 2/5 for the first two days and 3/26 for the remaining seven days.¹⁴

According to the staff at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, no after-action report was submitted by the commanding officer of Alpha, 1/7.

2d Battalion, 5th Marines

The Command Chronology for 2/5 includes Alpha, 1/7, only as an organizational component—no dates.

Shulimson's narrative relates an episode concerning Marines from Alpha Company:

On the morning of the 25th, the Marines near the Horseshoe pulled back and began pounding the area with artillery. ... Over the next four days the Marine battalions tightened the cordon as they advanced. ... Captain James Foster, the commander of Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, later related that his company not only found several enemy caches, but also captured "13 North Vietnamese soldiers who all had automatic weapons and a large amount of South Vietnamese Piasters."¹⁵

This statement is contrary to the Marines who were interviewed and 3/26's Narrative Summary for 4 December. The capture of enemy prisoners did not take place during the period given. The number of prisoners is erroneous. Six enemy were captured on the morning of 4 December and another five were captured later that day. No automatic weapons were recovered.

3d Battalion, 26th Marines

The Command Chronology for 3/26 includes Alpha, 1/7, as an organizational component from 1 to 9 December. Part II, Narrative Summary, states in section 2:

On the fourth of December, Alpha Company, 1/7, which was OPCON to the bn, captured 11 VC/NVA prisoners. "At 1400H, Alpha, while searching out a bunker located in vic[inity] of AT9096584, received 04 rounds of small arms fire. One CS grenade was thrown into the bunker and 06 people came out. Results: 06 detainees: 03 pistols captured."

At 1620H, Alpha, while searching a bunker in vic[inity] AT995586, captured 05 VC/NVA. Results: 05 weapons and 01 ChiCom [grenade] captured.¹⁶

Shulimson's text states on 5 December what was later characterized as the "shortest tactical airlifts in history," the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing helicopters lifted Company H, 3/26, from the eastern bank of the Suoi Co Ca and dropped those Marines less than 1,000 meters away. At about the same time, helicopters also brought in Capt. James F. Foster's Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, which "landed in a 'hot' landing zone, dispatched the enemy, and took up positions west of Company H."¹⁷ Marines who took part in the movement report the position was not a hot LZ.

The Command Chronology for 3/26 continued:

07 December 1968;

At 0830H, a fire team size patrol from Alpha made contact with an enemy force of unknown size armed with a machinegun and an M79. A reaction force was sent out to reinforce the fire team and they [sic] got pinned down. Artillery was called in and maintained to suppress the enemy fire. Results: 8 USMC killed; 17 USMC WIA; 17 NVA/VC KIA.¹⁸

Shulimson's narrative depicts the 7 December assaults in more depth and somewhat differently:

On the 7th the 3d Battalion 26th Marines launched its assault into the Northern Bunker Complex, Companies I, K, and L, maintaining their line, swung to the left like a huge door, pivoting on Company H, 5th Marines and formed the battalion in a giant inverted "L." With the railroad berm on their left and a three-company blocking position on their right, Company A, 7th Marines, and [Capt. Ronald J.] Drez' Company H launched a frontal attack. Soon, the Marines ran headlong into stiff enemy resistance. Company H made contact in a cemetery where North

Vietnamese troops fighting from two pagodas laid down heavy fire. Much of the ground was under water, forming a quagmire through which the Marines were unable to maneuver. On the left flank, NVA units in a fortified hamlet opened fire on Company A and casualties began to mount. Soon, 10 Marines were dead and another 23 were wounded. Under the intense fire, the attacking companies recovered their wounded only with great difficulty. Both companies halted, dug in for the night, and called for preparation fires. After dark, volunteers moved forward to recover the dead. Captain Foster, the commander of Company A, recalled that he, six Marines and a Navy Corpsman participated in the recovery of the dead and the wounded of his company. According to Foster, the Navy corpsman continued treating casualties although wounded himself and was among the last to be evacuated.¹⁹

Both 3/26's Command Chronology and Shulimson's narrative for 7 December are incorrect in terms of the number of casualties suffered by Company A. Thirteen Marines were killed and 33 were wounded. Further, Captain Foster's comments are suspect. All Marines who were interviewed emphatically stated no one ventured forth during the night of 7 December to recover the dead. 3/26's entry for 8 December, below, states, "Alpha recovered all of their KIAs and MIAs." With regard to Shulimson's narrative and Foster's recollections, the latter were appended after the original draft had been sent to Foster. When reviewing this draft in December 1994, Foster wrote, "Would add to the 1st para, p. 30":

In the case of Company A, Captain Foster with 6 Marines and a corpsman (Torrey Dean), recovered their dead and wounded and commenced nighttime medevacs, concluding with the evacuation of Dean, who had assisted throughout the day by treating the wounded and recovering the dead, while himself wounded. Dean was later recommended for the Medal of Honor, however, received the Navy Cross.²⁰

In a subsequent draft, Foster's comments were added, but were marked with yellow highlight, revised, and substituted with the phrase that subsequently appeared in the published text as follows: "Captain Foster, the commander of A, recalled that he, six Marines, and a Navy Corpsman participated in the recovery of the dead and wounded of his company. According to Foster, the Navy corpsman continued treating casualties although wounded himself and was among the last to be evacuated."²¹ Dean, whose name was omitted from the final version, was in fact, awarded the Silver Star, but Captain Foster's comments as to the corpsman's efforts to treat the wounded and assist with the recovery of the bodies of the dead after he had been wounded are inaccurate. Corpsman Torrey Dean clearly states he was not involved in the recovery of the dead and wounded during the night of 7 December. Dean participated in the morning attack by the 3d Platoon and treated several wounded Marines while under heavy enemy fire. When that attack was repulsed, Dean made it back to the command center. He went out with the Marines in the second attack on 7 December, was wounded, and subsequently medevaced.

Continuing 3/26's Command Chronology:

08 December 1968:

At 1400H, Alpha, while sweeping north in the vic[inity] of AT998598, discovered twelve reinforced bunkers. Seven bunkers contained 19 enemy dead; a continuation of the sweep revealed 16 more enemy dead due to small arms. Also found were 30 spider traps and fighting holes. A missing radio and [an] M-16 were found. During the sweep, Alpha recovered all

of their [*sic*] KIAs and MIAs.²²

On the afternoon of 8 December, the Northern Bunker complex was breached. Five companies from 3/26 led the assault. Other companies joined the attack. Shulimson states, "Captain Foster's Company A overran an enemy fortified position containing 12 bunkers and 30 covered fighting holes, reporting 47 North Vietnamese dead. Several hours later, Company A attacked and killed nearly 20 North Vietnamese in a firefight which ended with 6 Marines dead and 12 wounded."²³

He also reports, "Company A was the first to shoot its way through the North Vietnamese and reach the river. Captain Foster, the Company A commander, later wrote that his Marines chased 'the enemy at a sprint into the Sông La Tho ... [and a] 'turkey shoot ensued.'"²⁴ [RGF note: Based on all the accounts provided below by men who were there, the only truth in these two paragraphs is (1) Alpha did overrun the fortified bunker position that caused us so much trouble on 7 December; (2) there were a large number of enemy dead; and (3) Alpha was probably the first company to reach the river. Other than an occasional sniper round, Alpha saw little if any enemy activity and we had zero casualties on this day. The only "turkey shoot" was when we did a little "recon by fire." Units from 3/26 located east of Alpha apparently engaged in actual firefights with multiple casualties, but Alpha essentially had a "walk in the park" all the way to the river.]

The compiler of the after action reports wrote:

By the morning of the seventh, the enemy was cornered into an area about the size of a grid square. They had been gradually pulling back to this area to make their last stand. Every time an attempt to move into this area was made it was quickly repelled by the enemy. Many veterans of other wars stated that this was the fiercest fighting they had ever seen. The firing was so intense that it was difficult to recover some of our wounded. On the night of the seventh, volunteer parties went out to recover the bodies. Armored personnel carriers were brought in on the morning of the eighth. That morning they made a drive into the enemy positions killing 130 enemy. This seemed to break the enemy's resistance. That afternoon and night a concentrated bombardment of the area was conducted. This was done to soften the area up for the final drive on the ninth. The last push on the ninth was marked by heavy combat. Each bunker and hole had to be checked for enemy. Bunkers were found with enemy bodies stacked in them. An unknown number of enemy were buried beneath the bomb craters and blown up bunkers. Marines crawled down into the tunnels and found both live and dead enemy. It didn't take long to make the final sweep, because we had the momentum and the enemy was on the run. By mid-afternoon the battalion was ready to go home after a job well done.²⁵ [RGF note: The description of the action on 8 and 9 December is off by one day. The action attributed to 8 December took place on 7 December, and the action for 9 December is more in line with what happened on 8 December. This is clearly shown by the individual accounts included below.]

Operation Meade River Casualties:

Friendly losses:

ARVN: 1 KIA; 38 WIA

USMC: 108 KIA; 513 WIA; 1 MIA

Enemy losses:

Estimated at 1,023 KIA; 123 captured; and 6 surrendered

Enemy forces, after interrogating prisoners of war,

were estimated to number 1,368 and were fighting from 360 fortified bunkers, numerous spider holes, and connecting trenches.

Fire Support Data

Artillery fired 1,286 missions with 27,513 rounds expended. USS *New Jersey* fired 153 of its 16-inch rounds. [RGF note: Air strikes, both fixed wing and rotary are not tallied, but were surely in the high hundreds, with many thousands of pounds of bombs, napalm, rockets, flares, and gun munitions expended.]

Alpha 1/7 Casualties Reported for Late December in Error

In *A Brief History of the 7th Marines*, by James S. Santelli, Operation Meade River is mentioned on pages 64–65. On page 65, Santelli records Alpha, 1/7, being involved in combat action and taking casualties in "late December."²⁶ [RGF note: Alpha Company was so far under strength after Operation Meade River they did little more than run routine road sweeps and help with Hill 55 perimeter bunker watch duties. This error appears to be a simple mix-up regarding when and where the combat action occurred, but for the men of Alpha 1/7, proud of their participation in Operation Meade River, the error in this USMC publication is annoying and many of them felt it needed to be corrected.]

The battle at the Northern Bunker Complex began at first light on 7 December, a date burned into the memories of those who were there and survived. In their own words, some of these Marines and Corpsmen provide an in-depth account about the events of that battle which has been undocumented and essentially ignored for over forty-five years.

Roster of Contributing Marines and Corpsmen

The following oral history is compiled from personal records, photographs, recordings, and e-mail communications of and from the following Marines and Corpsmen:

Lt. Col. Michael "Mickey" Coe, USMC (Ret.), first lieutenant in Alpha Company:

I arrived in Vietnam with Lieutenant Bill Toohey on 28 January, 1968, the beginning of TET (Lunar New Year). We were both assigned to A Company, 1/7. I served as a Platoon Commander until I made first lieutenant on 1 April and moved to replace some lost lieutenants in D Company where I remained until severely wounded a second time and was sent to Tripler Army Hospital on 28 May 1968. I returned to the battalion on 8 July and was assigned as the assistant operations officer until 13 September when I was assigned to Alpha Company as executive officer. Capt. James F. Foster arrived in the battalion in late September and was assigned as the new commanding officer of A Company. It was good that I was his XO, since he was infantry, but had evidently been serving as a supply officer. I was able to provide the all important "combat experience." I served as XO from 13 September–6 December when I was assigned as the CO of Charlie Company, 1/7. Although I was technically part of the company during the beginning of Meade River, I was not involved in the actual combat that occurred the day after I left.²⁷



FIG 6. 1st Lt. Mickey Coe, USMC. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

1st Lt. Ben Sorrell (WIA, 7 December 1968),



FIG 7. 1st Lt. Ben Sorrell, 1968. Courtesy Ben Sorrell.

commander, 3d Platoon:

In November, 1966, during my fourth year at the University of Texas in Austin, I dropped out (my "protest" against the war protesters!) and enlisted in the Marine Corps. After graduating from Boot Camp at MCRD San Diego, I was asked if I wanted to try to qualify for Officer Candidate School (OCS). I completed Infantry Training Regiment at Camp Pendleton, and was a troop leader there until getting orders to Quantico in November, 1967. Upon graduation from OCS and the Basic School, with 0302 MOS, on 4 July 1968 I was on my way to 1st MarDiv in Da Nang.

I arrived at Hill 10 about the middle of July to take over the 3d Platoon from acting platoon commander, Sgt. Ray Adams. We operated from Hill 10 with the exception of the month of October when we had bridge security at Cobb Bridge over the Song Tuy Loan, and a month as security force for Army convoys between Da Nang and Phu Bai. I remained platoon commander until early February 1969 when I was transferred to VMO II at Marble Mountain airbase to become an aerial observer, call sign "Cowpoke 30," flying in the OV10-A Bronco. Over the next six months, I had several opportunities to work with Alpha Company units that were in enemy contact in the Arizona Territory, directing air and artillery fire and providing close air support.

In July, 1969, I rotated to Camp Lejeune, NC, assigned to H&S Co. 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, as platoon commander for an 81mm mortar platoon. From November 1969 to April 1970, we were part of the Battalion Landing Force with the Navy's 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. I left the



FIG 8. Trying on the dress blues thirty years or so later. Courtesy Ben Sorrell.

Marine Corps in August 1970 to continue my education at UT Austin.

2d Lt. John Wayne Heusner (WIA, 5 December 1968),
commander, 2d Platoon:

Upon graduation from Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma, I called my draft board in my home town of Liberal, Kansas, to find the likelihood of being drafted. They told me they had a quota of 8 draftees and only 3 candidates were available. Since being drafted was inevitable, I went to the recruiting station and checked out all the services. I chose the Marines because if I had to go to war I wanted to go with the best. After completing Officer Candidate School my orders sent me straight to Alpha Company, 1/7, then stationed on Hill 10. I was assigned as commander of 2d Platoon.

I recall the day I took command of my platoon. I looked at the men and was stunned at how young they looked. I quickly learned they were grown men and seasoned Marines. I recall one of my first patrols where PFC [Russ] Hevern discovered a booby trap and stopped the platoon to uncover it and show us new guys what to look for.

I remember odd things about my time in Vietnam.

- There was the infamous ambush patrol where we were fragged



FIG 9. 2d Lt. John W. Heusner on the Hill 10 LZ. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

with a breadfruit from an overhanging tree.

- One night we were ambushed by a wild boar.
- Another night, on patrol halfway between Hill 10 and the enemy tree line, I learned why everyone wore green underwear. I was caught relieving my diarrhea when an illumination round exploded overhead, leaving me with my Marine-issue boxer shorts showing up like a large white bulls eye between my legs. The next day I got some green underwear.

- I also remember joining my men in their hooch one night for a shrimp feast. Someone had gotten a giant can of dehydrated shrimp from the mess hall and we chowed down.

- I remember being ordered to go on a patrol during the monsoon and realizing the insanity and futility of patrolling in driving rain and chest deep water, just to keep on the assigned coordinates and make the assigned checkpoints. The Cong were probably laughing their heads off.

- I remember the day some local kids came up to ask me if they could be the ones to provide the sodas on an upcoming operation—of which I knew nothing about. I was called to the command bunker the next day to be told of a “secret” mission we were going on—and it was located exactly where the kids had asked to provide sodas.

I tripped a booby trap on 3 December 1968, injuring me and my radioman. Both of us were medevaced and missed the rest of Operation Meade River. My wounds were minor and I shortly returned to Alpha Company where I resumed my duties for a brief period.

[RGF note: It is worth mentioning during the time Lieutenant Heusner served as platoon commander, 2d Platoon suffered only a few WIAs but not a single man KIA, a highly unusual record given the time and place. In combat, the skill and experience of those involved in the fighting certainly have some impact on casualties, but such things are mostly due to “luck of the draw.” More than one warrior has wondered, “Why did the sniper choose to kill the guy next to me and not me?” Or, “How come the booby trap shredded the vegetation all around us but wounded no one?” Such questions will never be answered and “Lady Luck” will always be present on the battlefield. Had it not been for the fortuitous positioning of 2d Platoon on Alpha’s left flank next to the railroad berm, or, had the enemy bunker complex been positioned differently, it is likely 2d Platoon would have suffered the fate of 1st and 3d Platoons and also had men killed on 7 December.]

Shortly after returning to Alpha, I was reassigned to duties as the Battalion S-5 in January 1969. I rotated home in the summer of 1969 and was stationed at Camp Pendleton as the S-4 for the 5th MEB until released from active duty in 1970.

[RGF note: Huesner quickly gained the respect of the Marines in his platoon since he was competent, fair, good-natured, and had the sense to ask for advice from his combat-experienced Marines when circumstances dictated.

He had the “good fortune” to be the recipient of not one, but two, nicknames. “John Wayne” was an easy and obvious choice, considering his given first and middle names and the popularity of the movie star of the same name. However, the other nickname was a bit more devious and, well, more “Vietnam-like.” Without much discussion at all, the Marines looked at Lieutenant Heusner, a big, florid faced, good-humored, young-looking guy, and promptly started calling him “Baby Huey”



FIG 10. Baby Huey. Courtesy Wikipedia.

after the cartoon character. Of course, no one dared to use either of those two names to his face.

I thought we had successfully kept the secret from him, but when I finally tracked him down near San Diego, California, about thirty years or so later, he revealed to me he knew about the Baby Huey nickname all along. In fact, he was quite proud of the fact his Marines thought enough of him to give him a genuine, Vietnam-style nickname.]

Sgt. Ray Adams (WIA, 7 December 1968):

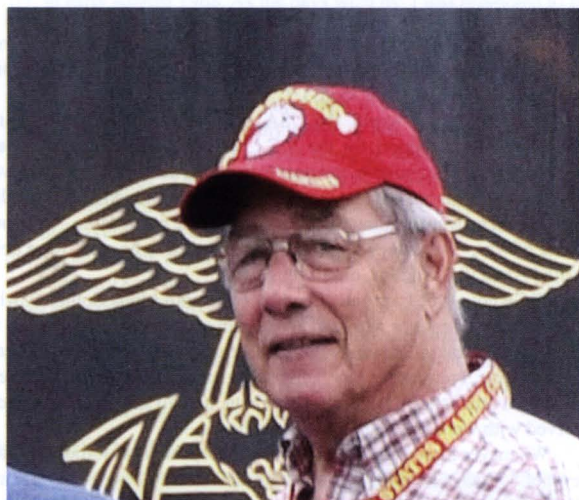


FIG 11. Sgt. Ray Adams at the USMC Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, May 2013. Courtesy Tom Crawford.

I arrived in Vietnam in July 1968 and left in January 1969. My MOS is 0311 and I was an E-5 and an acting platoon sergeant under Lieutenant Sorrell. I spent a lot of time getting to know my guys by going on patrols with them and getting to know my squad leaders.

LCpl. Edward Alloncius:



FIG 12. LCpl. Edward Alloncius having a beer after a patrol. Courtesy Ed Alloncius.

I arrived on Hill 22 around 12 December 1967. First month was filled with routine day patrols and night ambushes. Then came Tet and SHTF. I was squad radioman, 1st Reactionary Squad out to support squads already in contact with the enemy. Came upon a number of Marine KIAs in an open

field. It took the better part of that day to recover their bodies thanks to the fact all our rifles jammed. I'm confident we could have gotten payback if not for this failure. Went into the Que Son Mountains for Operation Ballard Valley; came back to Hill 55; staged there for Operation Allen Brook in the "Arizona Territory." Moved to Hill 10 around mid July. I was wounded on a night patrol off the SE corner of Hill 10 on 15 July (my nineteenth birthday). Went to an Air Force hospital in Cam Ranh Bay for a few weeks, then back to Alpha Co. where I continued running patrols and ambushes off Hill 10. Operation Meade River was my send off before going home at the very end of December. Went to 2d MarDiv with Lima, 3/6 and a Med cruise in 1969. Came back and went to S-2 Camp Geiger ITR. Transferred to Marine Barracks, Lakehurst N.A.S. and ended my Marine Corps adventure.

Cpl. Frank C. Archibald (WIA, 7 December 1968):



FIG 13. Cpl. Frank C. "Archie" Archibald in the rice paddies of Dodge City. Courtesy Frank Archibald.

I arrived in Viet Nam in May 1968 as a private and was promoted to corporal after six months. I worked with the best machine gunners in the Corps. What a great group of guys. I ran with every squad in the company, whenever a gun was needed. I've learned not to put my head in any "holes" as I nearly had my head blown off on Operation Meade River. I came to Alpha Company during Operation Allen Brook in early May 1968, and left Vietnam in May 1969. Everyone in the 'Nam knew me as Archie.²⁸ [RGF note: I remember Archie as one of the "gungy-ist" grunts in Alpha Company, whose idea of a good time was a hot LZ, a dark tunnel, or a blazing firefight! Guns up, Archie!!!]

HN Torrey Dean (Doc Dean), Hospitalman, USN:

I enlisted in the Navy in May 1965. I served aboard the USS *Union* as a corpsman striker for two years, with an eight-month tour in Vietnam. I completed hospital corpsman school at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, California, in October 1967. After that, I went on to Field Medical School in Camp Pendleton, California. When my training was completed, I was assigned to the recovery room at the Naval Hospital in Camp Pendleton.



FIG 14. HN Torrey R. Dean, USN. Courtesy Torrey Dean.

With only nine months remaining of my Navy tour, I was deployed to Vietnam where I was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, near Da Nang. After spending approximately six months in the field, I was wounded on 7 December 1968 during Operation Meade River and was subsequently transferred to Balboa Hospital to recover and await my discharge. I received the Silver Star, Purple Heart, Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star for my service on that day.

HM3 James Lichman (Doc Lich), Hospital Corpsman,

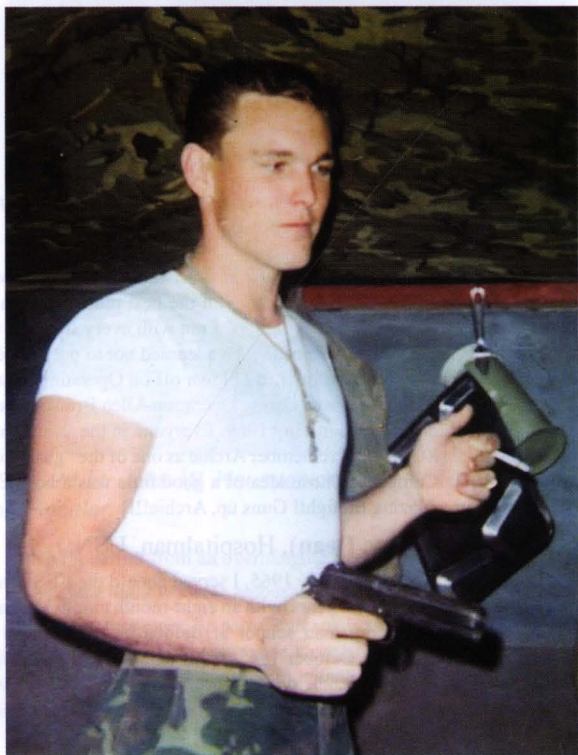


FIG 15. Doc Lich posing with his .45 in the Corpsmen Hooch. Courtesy Jimmy Lichman.

USN:

I was with Alpha, 1/7, from July 1968 to January 1969 on Hill 10 and Hill 55. Then I was with the Battalion Aid Station on Hill 37 from January to May 1969. From there, May-July 1969, I served at 1st Hospital Division in DaNang ("1st Med").²⁹

Back in the real world, the USA, there was the unrest; rumblings of baby killers; support for the V.C.; college students protesting and sending medical supplies to the people trying to kill us. Movie stars were vocally condemning anyone who served. The politicians, the so-called peacemakers, were arguing over the shape of the peace table. All I could think of was, "Don't they know that boys, forced to be men, were being killed—and if they knew, didn't they care?"

[RGF note: Doc Lich was already serving with Alpha Company when I reported in. He was a native of Wisconsin and, in my mind, looked the part—a tall, lanky, Scandinavian kind of guy. He was always cheerful and positive. I remember him being along on dozens of patrols, sweeps, and night ambushes. Doc Lich, Doc Dean, and all the other corpsmen I served with were heroes to all of us Jarheads.

Whenever I get a chance to introduce corpsmen at reunions or other events, I always like to say something like this: "These corpsmen may have enlisted in the Navy, but in Vietnam, they dressed like Marines, cussed like Marines, sweated like Marines, looked like Marines, drank like Marines, and smelled like Marines. When they were not busy tending to wounded Marines, they even fought like Marines." I know without a doubt that I speak for all Marines when I tell each of our corpsmen, Semper Fi, Doc, Semper Fi!]



FIG 16. Cpl. Ronald G. Fieseler on Hill 10, Quang Nam Province, with smoke from a B-52 "ArcLight" bombing mission on the distant mountain, summer 1969. Photo by LCpl. Harry L. Goad.

Cpl. Ronald G. Fieseler:

In early 1968, I enlisted for a two-year hitch in the Marine Corps, knowing the short enlistment meant grunt work in Vietnam, but willing to roll the dice one time to get my military obligation behind me. During boot camp at MCRD, San Diego, I made PFC and was both Platoon and Series Honorman. I was offered Officer Candidate School, but turned it down since it meant a much longer enlistment. My assigned MOS out of boot camp was 0331, Infantry Machine Gunner. The next few weeks passed all too quickly and progressed through Infantry Training Regiment; Machine Gun School; twenty days home leave; final training at Staging Battalion; and shipment to Vietnam.

Seven months after I stepped onto the never-to-be-forgotten "Yellow

Footprints,” I found myself in Vietnam and assigned to Alpha Company, 1/7, in early August 1968. As the days went by, I was promoted to lance corporal and made squad leader of 2d Squad Guns just prior to Operation Meade River. I spent my entire thirteen-month tour with Alpha Company. In early summer 1969, the first sergeant found out I was the only man in the company who actually knew how to use a typewriter and I soon became a clerk in the company office. I was promoted to corporal a couple of months before I rotated home in August 1969. Fresh from the battlefields of “The ‘Nam,” those of us with only a few months left to serve were considered too “salty” for stateside duty and likely to be troublemakers. We were therefore offered an early release from active duty. I don’t think anyone turned it down.

I served 18 months and 2 days of active duty. I continually marvel at what was crammed into my short Marine Corps experience. I have always believed if it had not been for the likelihood of returning to Vietnam and the political and tactical absurdity it had become, I would have reenlisted and become a career Marine. Even so, I am eternally proud of being a Marine and having served in Vietnam.

Pfc. Frank Del Rio Hernandez:



FIG 17. Francisco Del Rio Hernandez. Courtesy Frank Del Rio.

I arrived in ‘Nam, 6 January 1968 and served with a recon unit prior to joining Alpha, 1/7, in May 68. Due to all my moving around, I was still a private, but soon received promotions to PFC, then to L/Cpl., meritoriously, after joining Corporal Epps’ 1st Squad, 1st Platoon. During this time I participated in numerous operations—Meade River being the worst but not the last. During Meade River, I took over 1st Squad and what was left of 1st Platoon after Cpl. Jim McDevitt was wounded and medevaced out. After Meade River, I remained 1st squad leader/acting platoon sergeant, taking out platoon-size patrols off Hill 55. While trying to insert a recon patrol back into Dodge City in February 1969, Alpha, 1/7, got into a major fire fight at the 90 south of Hill 55 at the start of what would be known as Operation Linn River. I stayed out in the bush until two days before rotating out of country. In fact, I walked back to Hill 55 from Operation Linn River alone, having said my goodbyes. Left ‘Nam in February 1969. My promotion to corporal finally caught up with me a month later. [RGF note: We knew him as Frank Hernandez while

in Alpha Company.]

Pfc. Daniel Phenicie (WIA, 7 December 1968):



FIG 18. Pfc. Dan Phenicie in the field, 1968. Courtesy Dan Phenicie.

Daniel E. Phenicie of Huntington, Indiana, enlisted in the Marine Corps on 4 March 1968 at Indianapolis. He attended boot camp at MCRD, San Diego. Upon completion of scout/sniper training at Camp Horno in August 1968 and with a dual MOS of 0311/8541, he was sent to Vietnam where he arrived in early September 1968 and was assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. He served with 3d Platoon and was wounded in Operation Meade River on the morning of 7 December 1968. Under heavy AK-47 fire, Dan was hit and saw his wrists explode right in his face while evacuating a mortally wounded Fred Ratliff. With tourniquets on both arms to stop arterial bleeding, he was miraculously able to make his way unassisted to a safe tree line by rolling, crawling, and wriggling through grass, rough terrain, and stagnant water-filled bomb craters where he then was medevaced to the Hospital Ship *Repose* for initial treatment. The severity of his wounds was such he was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps and placed on permanently retired status on 14 October 1969.³⁰

Sgt. Elmer “Chief” Sangster:

MOS: 0311, rifleman. A Native American, Navajo, from Arizona, I reported to Alpha, 1/7, mid-February 1968 and was assigned to the 3d “Herd” Platoon. Alpha Company was on Hill 22 and I immediately began running day and night patrols. On 22 March 1968, while on night patrol, two other Marines and I were wounded. I quickly realized this was a “squad leaders war,” since they were the ones constantly in the “bush” looking for and making contact with the enemy. Due to always being in the field, they were extremely fatigued and slept whenever they had



FIG 19. Elmer "Chief" Sangster. Courtesy Elmer Sangster.

a chance. Being a grunt, rank was easy if you were not WIA or KIA. I arrived as a PFC, left RVN as a corporal, and ultimately gained the rank of sergeant.

Approximately August 1968, I became one of the squad leaders for 3d Platoon. The major operations in which I participated were Allen Brook and Meade River. On Operation Meade River, I was squad leader for 1st Squad, 3d Platoon. The other squad leaders were Mike Tyree (3d) and David Phelps (2d). I rotated back to "The World" in March 1969. My only regrets are of the Marines who did not return.³¹

Cpl. Michael "Mike" Tyree (WIA, 7 December 1968):



FIG 20. Michael Tyree Boot Camp photo. Courtesy Mike Tyree.

MOS 0311, rifleman. Arrived in Vietnam in December 1967 as a private first class. Promoted to corporal, I stood in as Lieutenant Sorrell's platoon



FIG 21. L-r: Charles Fuqua, Robert Willey, James Laird, with Mike Tyree holding his short-timer stick. All four were wounded in action on 7 December 1968. Laird was later KIA on 25 February 1969. Courtesy Mike Tyree.

sergeant for the last three months of my tour. I left Nam in January 1969. A "short-timer" in December 1968 with only thirty days to go before I would rotate back to what was called the "real world," marking off the days on the calendar with a big "X," counting down my time in 'Nam. My time was so short my squad bought me a short-timer's walking stick from a local villager. A veteran of six major operations and patrols every day and on ambushes every night—surviving it all without a scratch, I was beginning to think I just might make it out of this war alive.³²

Pfc. Robert "Bob" Willey (WIA, 7 December 1968):



FIG 22. Pfc. Bob Willey. Courtesy Mike Tyree.

MOS 0311, rifleman. I arrived in Vietnam in May 1968 and left in December 1968. I was in Mike Tyree's squad during Operation Meade River and nearly died of wounds received in the battle of 7 December 1968.

These men and their brothers-in-arms fought in a war that was not popular. One survivor, Hospital Corpsman Jim Lichman, noted a bonding:

There was a closeness that I have not felt since—the brotherhood of the basic need to survive—it didn't matter what color, race, creed, background, intellect, or how much money you had. Your blood was red, and if you wanted to keep it, you depended on me, and I on you, to get through the night and then the day.³³

For those who have "seen the elephant," no other explanation is needed.

Note to Readers:

An astute reader will observe the following individual accounts of Operation Meade River, while having broad similarities with USMC records mentioned elsewhere in this report, often actually contradict previously recorded

reports of Alpha Company actions. It is often said "the truth is in the telling," and as these men recount those days in late 1968, few readers will find it in themselves to doubt the truthfulness and sincerity of their words. They are indeed "The Few, The Proud, The Marines"—and this is their story.

Please be aware the interviews and communications are reproduced as given. They contain profanity and politically incorrect epithets. Any opinions expressed are those of the contributors. The passage of time, selective memory, personalized view of the battle, and the intensity and complexity of the battlefield may color these recollections. These Marines were, in some cases, eager to tell their stories. Some were reluctant to resurrect long-suppressed memories, but a spirit of camaraderie and the opportunity to be a part of emending the record overcame their hesitancy. Others declined, preferring to let the ghosts of Meade River rest. Again, those who have seen the elephant need no explanation.

Operation Meade River: The Grunt's Perspective

Cpl. Ronald G. Fieseler With Contributions From Fellow Marines and Corpsmen

Ron Fieseler enlisted in the United States Marine Corps for two years in 1968. While in Boot Camp, he served as Platoon Guide, was a Dress Blues Recipient, was selected as both Platoon and Series Honorman, and was promoted to PFC. Additionally, he was the first Marine recruit in 1968 (out of over 15,000 graduates) to be awarded the American Spirit Honor Medal (provided by the Citizens Committee for the Army, Navy, and Air Force, Inc.). He served as a machine gunner in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 and was promoted to corporal before being discharged. Since leaving the Marine Corps, Fieseler has been employed by the Natural Areas Survey (Austin, Texas), a multi-year, multi-disciplinary, state-wide effort to inventory natural and scenic areas in Texas; in oil/gas well service work in Wyoming and Texas; operated businesses in the printing and construction industry; and in managerial positions for local governmental entities in groundwater management and is currently the general manager of the Blanco-Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District in Blanco County, Texas. He graduated with a BA from the University of Texas, Austin, and is licensed by the State of Texas as a professional geoscientist (geology). Since 1964, Fieseler has explored, mapped, and studied hundreds of caves in Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Mexico and is a Life Member and Fellow of the National Speleological Society and served a term on the board of directors. He also was awarded an Outstanding Service Award by the Texas Speleological Survey for his years of work with Texas caves. He earned his private pilot license in 1979. During the 1980s, he spent eight years building a two-place, open-cockpit biplane and made the initial test flight in 1990. He is a sixth generation Texan whose great, great, great grandfather, Samuel G.

Evetts, Jr., came to Texas prior to 1836—when Texas was still a part of Mexico—was wounded while assaulting the plaza in San Antonio during the Siege of Bexar in December 1835 and fought once again during the Battle of San Jacinto on 21 April 1836. His great, great grandfather, Heinrich Fieseler an immigrant from Germany, served in Company H, 2d Texas Infantry, during the Civil War. He fought in several battles along the Mississippi, including the Battle of Vicksburg, and was captured twice.

One of the most frequently used phrases in Vietnam was, “Don’t mean nuthin’.” It was our way of ignoring or making light of whatever event was happening at the time. A grunt would habitually mutter, “Don’t mean nuthin’” for something as trivial as drawing the dreaded ham and lima beans meal from a case of C-rations or for something as dramatic as having to drag your dead buddy into the back of a medevac chopper. However, with the passage of time and the advantage of hindsight, it has become apparent to many of us that those times and events did indeed mean something—it just took many years for us to become aware of their true importance and impact on our lives.

A major portion of my personal comments are based upon my frequent letters to family members back home. I quite unintentionally created almost a day by day account of my time in Vietnam. From the very first, I wanted my family to know exactly what was going on in my daily life as a Marine, so I wrote as completely and honestly as I could, leaving very little out. Thank goodness I did, because if it weren’t for my mother saving my letters and the several hundred photos I

took and sent home, there are times I would have trouble believing some of my own stories. When my memories, or those of my buddies, begin to seem like blurred scenes from multiple war movies, my letters and photos help to refocus those long ago days.

The account presented here was a very small slice of the Vietnam War, just a brief flicker on the movie screen of life, but for the individuals who served there, it was the only reality we knew at the time. Even so, emotionally and intuitively we felt that our current reality, i.e., Vietnam, was, in some inexplicable way, not truly real. This attitude was probably why we, without exception, referred to anywhere outside of Vietnam as, *The World*. Even though we did not include Vietnam as part of “The World,” the time we spent in Vietnam helped shape us into the men we are today—good, bad, or somewhere in between, and the experience and memories will be part of us until the day we join our brothers on the other side.

As we tell our stories, we will fail to mention the names of many of the well over 150 Marines and corpsmen who were there with Alpha, 1/7. Rest assured that this is purely unintentional and we have not forgotten you. Even if the names and faces have faded with time, your *Esprit de Corps* is still with us and we are proud of having served with you. This is our attempt to provide as true and accurate an account as we can of our part of Operation Meade River. We do this for ourselves, our fellow Marines and corpsmen, our fellow Americans, and especially for the Alpha, 1/7, Marines who did not survive.

Semper Fi!



FIG 23. “Gas, Food, Lodging, and Ammo”—a bit of Marine Corps humor on a sign at an intersection between Hill 10 and Hill 55. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.



FIG 24. Aerial photo of Hill 10, Quang Nam Province, RVN. The Alpha Company area was on the extreme left (west) end of Hill 10. Courtesy Jack Wells.

Prelude to Operation Meade River

Knowing where to begin is difficult due to the complex and ever changing continuum of events and movement of personnel in an ongoing combat situation. However, Alpha Company's participation in Operation Allen Brook in May 1968 had far-reaching implications and almost certainly helped set the stage for Operation Meade River. During Operation Allen Brook, Alpha Company was in heavy combat on multiple occasions and took many casualties, both KIAs and WIAs.

Following Operation Allen Brook, Alpha Company was relocated from Hill 22 to Hill 10, the Headquarters for 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. After the intense combat of Operation Allen Brook, the Hill 10 area offered Alpha Company the relative luxury of simple daily road sweeps, day patrols, perimeter guard duty, night ambushes, and small-scale platoon and company-sized sweeps. Enemy contacts were isolated and short lived. More casualties resulted from booby traps than

fire-fights. As a result, Alpha Company was able to regroup, resupply, and provide extensive field experience and limited combat experience for the replacements.

Some of the medevaced WIAs eventually returned to Alpha Company, but the company remained short-handed for several weeks until replacements began to trickle in over the next two to three months. Many of the Marines who took part in Operation Meade River arrived as replacements for casualties taken during Operation Allen Brook.

Along with several other replacements, I arrived in Vietnam and was assigned to Alpha, 1/7, in early August 1968, and began my life as a grunt with 2d Squad Guns (M-60 machine gunners) and 2d Platoon. Rice paddies, elephant grass, leeches, sandbags, barbed wire, monsoon rains, scalding hot days and shivering nights took the place of hamburger stands, Sunday drives, football games, dances, girlfriends, family holidays, and other delights of life back in "The World."



FIG 25. Alpha Company on Hill 10. Capt. James Foster on left facing 2d Lt. John W. Heusner (2d Platoon). 1st Lt. Ben Sorrell (3d Platoon) in the light colored tee shirt just beyond Heusner. Captain Olin was being presented with a captured AK-47 just prior to his leaving Alpha Company. Note the lack of uniformity in uniforms—commonplace during Vietnam due to supply shortages and constant rotation of personnel. Photo taken a few weeks prior to Operation Meade River. Courtesy Jack Wells.

As noted, firefights were scattered but booby traps were extremely common around Hill 10 and very few of us got through Vietnam unscathed. During my first day in the bush, I saw three Marines medevaced as a result of booby trap injuries. A few minutes later, I tripped another booby trap, but the tripwire was rusty and broke off at the top of the blasting cap and there was no explosion—beginners luck I suppose. Later on however, during a couple of night patrols, I did get the end of my nose bloodied by some mortar shrapnel and got a shrapnel graze across my left shin, but they were literally band-aid wounds. Other grunts had similar experiences—some more serious than others. However, as near as I can recall, 2d Squad Guns and 2d Platoon took no KIAs during the first few months I was there and there were only a few from the rest of the company.

All of this time in the bush resulted in



FIG 26. Replacements assigned to Alpha Company in August 1968 included Johnnie Lee Edwards (Columbus, OH); Ron Fieseler (Euleess, TX); Jack Lieblick (Chicago, IL); and Harry Goad (Oklahoma City, OK). Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

our gaining valuable combat experience under the guidance of the veterans of Allen Brook. No longer replacements, we had become combat veterans and were “getting our shit together.” When it came time to saddle up for Operation Meade River, the Marines and corpsmen of Alpha Company were as ready as could be expected.

If anything caused the grunts some concern about our battle-readiness, it was the fact there had been some replacement of officers and senior NCOs. There is always a bit of uncertainty about how such things might affect the company operations, effectiveness, and morale. We had gotten a new executive officer, 1st Lt. Mickey Coe, in September. Next, in late September or early October, Capt. James F. Foster replaced Capt. John Olin. Finally, in early November, GySgt. James McCoy, who had replaced GySgt. Jim Pillar, was himself replaced by GySgt. Richard Crawford. Just like any new guys, these men would have to prove themselves to the Alpha Company grunts.

Proving themselves did not take long. Lieutenant Coe was already battle-tested and previously wounded while with Delta 1/7. He was a bit of a hard-ass and a stickler for detail but, overall, he had little trouble earning the respect of the Alpha grunts. He had “been there—done that.”

Gunny Crawford was experienced, fair, organized, and knowledgeable. Much like Lieutenant Coe, the Gunny knew when to crack the whip and keep us grunts in line. However,



FIG 27. Pvt. Paul Gant's territorial marking for Alpha, 1/7. Courtesy Mike Tyree.

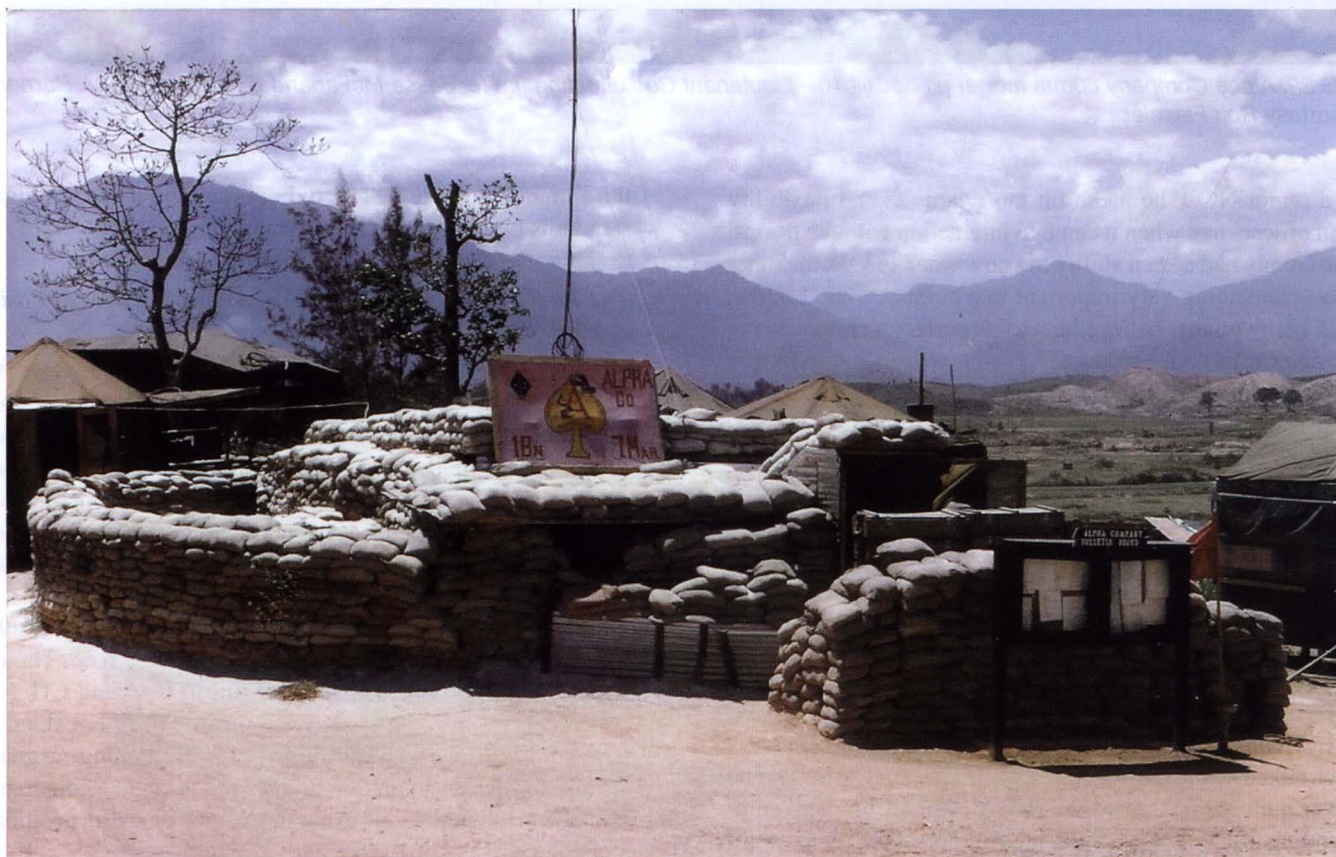


FIG 28. Alpha Company, 1/7, COC Bunker (Command and Operations Center) on Hill 10, August 1968, with Private Gant's sign on top. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.



FIG 29. Alpha Company 60mm mortar pit on Hill 10—Lieutenant Coe directing fire for Jesse McFarland (?) and Arnold M. Barnes. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

as a senior NCO, he had a bit more latitude and flexibility than officers had when it came to interaction with the troops. The Gunny had a keen ability to know when to look the other way—something very important in a combat zone. I, along with many others, believe he was as perfect a Gunny as the Marine Corps could produce.

Captain Foster, on the other hand, tried to run the company as if it were a stateside billet. He demonstrated a disregard and lack of concern toward the need to allow grunts serving in constant combat circumstances some flexibility in their dress code, personal grooming, and off-duty time. The classic example of this stateside mentality occurred when Captain Foster ordered everyone to shave off our moustaches. We were all instantly pissed. Our moustaches may not have been much to brag about since we were all pretty young, but they were a symbol of our time “In Country,” and we were proud of them. However, orders were orders, so we shaved them off, even Gunny Crawford, who had had his for years. No one I ever talked with was impressed with Captain Foster and he never quite seemed to fit the role of Alpha Company commanding officer. I don’t think the feelings of the men toward him improved during the entire time he was with Alpha and, if anything, his actions during Meade River may have reinforced

the common attitude that he did not measure up to the high standards of combat-hardened Alpha grunts.

Thus was the stage set for Operation Meade River.

The First Few Days as a Northern Blocking Force at Position #1

I first heard about an upcoming operation on Tuesday, 19 November 1968, while I was writing a letter home. We got word to get ready to go on a big operation and be prepared to stay in the field for at least a couple of weeks. We had only a few short hours to secure our personal property and our hooches. We checked weapons, ammo, grenades, and field gear. We drew C-rations, filled canteens, and packed our field packs.

After a couple hours of sleep, we were wakened at 0200, climbed into trucks, and taken from Hill 10 to Hill 55. Thousands of other Marines were on board CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters being flown in relative comfort to positions along a huge cordon. Alpha, 1/7, had the privilege of humping our gear off Hill 55, across a pontoon bridge, and through a couple of kilometers of jungle trails to our designated blocking position along the north bank of the Sông La Tho River.



FIG 30. Alpha Company machine gunners in front of an ammo-box hooch built by 2d Squad Guns on Hill 10, a few weeks before Operation Meade River. l-r: Cpl. Hisel (Henry) Gobble, Cpl. Richard M. (Rick) Kowalker, Pfc. Harry L. Goad (sitting), Pfc. Ronald G. Fieseler, and Pvt. Barry L. Goodson. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.



FIG 31. USMC CH-46 Sea Knights picking up grunts on the Hill 10 LZ. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

OPERATION MEADE RIVER

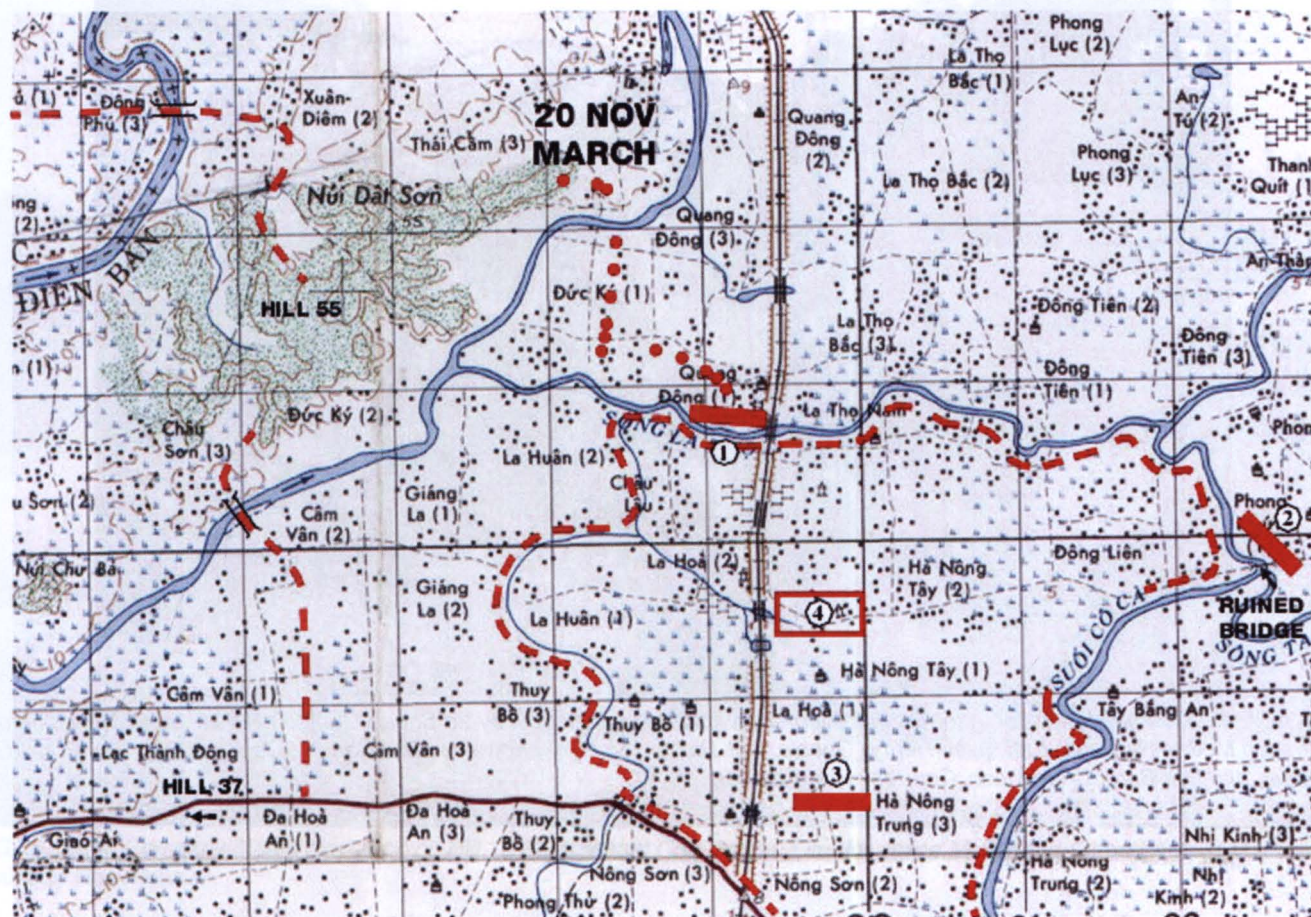


FIG 32. Map showing the approximate line of march and positions held by Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines during Operation Meade River, 20 November-9 December 1968.

Map and commentary by Ron Fieseler

- The map shows the truck route from Hill 10 to Hill 55 (but not Hill 10 itself).
- It shows approximate foot march from Hill 55 to "Alpha Position #1," west of railroad berm and north bank of Sông La Tho on 20 November. We always faced toward the river. We were here from 20 to 28 November.
- Thanksgiving Day, 28 November (and the Thanksgiving Dinner debacle), Alpha Company was heli-lifted to "Alpha Position #2" on the east side of the cordon. There was an old demolished bridge at this site.
- On 3 December, Alpha was once again heli-lifted and sent to replace another company on the south side of the cordon approximately at "Alpha Position #3."
- During the next 3 to 4 days, we moved northward, always keeping the railroad berm on our left flank until we reached "Alpha Position #4" during the afternoon of 6 December. This is where the battle of 7 December took place.

- On 8 December, we moved north all the way to the south bank of the Sông La Tho.
- On 9 December, we crossed the Sông La Tho on a pontoon bridge and were then heli-lifted back to Hill 55.

Within a short time, we had spread out, made contact with other Marine units on both flanks, and settled in to be part of what we were now told was "Operation Meade River." We all wondered where and what was "Meade River" and if there was any significance in the name. To this day, I have yet to speak with anyone who knows, and it remains a mystery.

Lieutenant Sorrell also described that day:

Our platoon kicked off our stage of the operation by humping from Hill 55 on Nov 20 to a blocking position on the north side of the Sông La Tho River. As I recall, the bulk of the participants came in a massive airlift on 20 November, but there probably were other units that also humped in to other positions around the cordon.³⁴

Cpl. Frank "Archie" Archibald adds:

So we walked out of our base camp at night through the back gates. We walked for a long time, got to a river and set up along that river as a blocking force. It was just about daylight when we set up. The weather was bad—it started to rain on us. Everyone's gear got wet and we just

sat in place all night and all day ... we were waiting for something to happen, but nothing really happened that day. We heard choppers coming overhead. There were about seventy choppers coming over. It was the 26th Marines coming in over our heads for the assault. Gunships were working over the area. It was very impressive.³⁵

The days from 21 to 27 November were relatively quiet and most of us took life along the river as sort of a camping trip. We excavated deep, roomy and comfortable fighting holes with make-shift poncho hooches next to them.

I had been recently promoted to lance corporal and made squad leader of 2d Squad Guns, so I was sharing a fighting hole with Weapons Platoon Cpl. Richard Kowalker. I should mention promotions in rank often came quickly in Vietnam. The daily routine was standing alternating hole-watch, sleeping, eating, playing cards, reading, writing letters, and listening to music on the AFVN radio network. I had a Texas flag flying on a bamboo stick by our hooch and many predicted it would probably draw gook sniper fire. It never got so much as a single round up to that point—but something else brought one to us.

Kowalker had always heard stories of how lighting matches or a Zippo at night would attract gook sniper fire. He decided

to test the story. For several nights in a row, he would light a match, hold it up above our hole, and yell, "Sniper Check!" He chortled with great satisfaction each night when nothing happened and he considered the story pretty much bullshit. At least he did until the one night he tried it and a gook fired an AK-47 round at our position ending Kowalker's sniper check experiment and making a believer out of both of us.

On two separate occasions, while standing hole watch at night, I saw gook movement across the river and about 40–50 meters away. I shot both times and watched my target fall down each time. The second one I shot struggled back up and tried to go back the way he came from, but my next burst knocked him down for good. Too bad we could not cross the river to verify the kills.

Lieutenant Sorrell commented on those first few days:

We stayed in the same general area until Thanksgiving Day. Our artillery, air, and mortars had missions "softening up" the territory within the cordon throughout the days and nights, and there were occasional mortar attacks from the NVA trapped somewhere south of the river. I remember "Puff the Magic Dragon" [an AC-47, equipped with the MXU-470/A minigun system] laying down fire several nights, seemingly just across the river from our position.³⁶



FIG 33. 1st Platoon grunts Dennis Ryan, Jim McDevitt, Doc Jim Guest (?), and Ed Alloncius during the early days of Meade River. Courtesy Ed Alloncius.

"Archie" remembered checking out our local area:

I went down to the riverbank and found an underwater bridge made of rocks. It was only a couple of inches below the water. We were called back before we got a chance to exploit it.³⁷

Thanksgiving Day Dinner—or Lack Thereof

We were still in the same blocking position on Thursday, 28 November, and it was Thanksgiving Day. For once the rumors had proven true and we had a hot turkey dinner choppered in for us to eat. However, just as they were ready to serve it, Alpha Company was told to saddle up. Some more choppers came in to move us, and the Marines on those choppers who replaced us got our hot chow! Boy, were we pissed off! I had turkey for Thanksgiving all right, but I got "boned turkey" out of a C-ration can! I found out later from LCpl. Dennis Cralley, he, Gunny Crawford, Lieutenant Coe, and some others managed to steal a mermite hotbox of chow from the chow line and took it on the chopper with them. At least some of Alpha Company got hot chow. Memories and tales of firefights may fade, but the Thanksgiving dinner debacle is something that is always talked about to this day and everyone remembers it differently because a few got food, but the majority did not.

Corpsman Torrey Dean (Doc Dean) stated:

I remember our Thanksgiving meal, brought to us by chopper. It was real food!³⁸

Corpsman Jim Lichman (Doc Lich) did not do as well as his buddy Doc Dean:

On Thanksgiving Day, choppers brought us a turkey dinner, with all the trimmings. When it was set up and ready to eat, we were loaded on choppers (without the turkey dinner) and moved to another position. It took the rest of the day—and no turkey for my squad.³⁹

Lieutenant Sorrell also missed out on the hot chow:

On Thanksgiving Day, Division helicopters showed up with turkey and dressing and all the "fixin's," with network TV reporters there to record how well we were being treated. But by the time our company got to the chow line, we got the word to move out, so we ended up eating rations again that day.⁴⁰

"Archie" tells a more successful story—a classic tale of Marine adaptability:

Thanksgiving Day on that operation was just wonderful. We had been set up along the river for a couple of days and we heard they were going to send in Thanksgiving dinner to us. Well, the weather was bad, and we thought, "Yeah. Sure." But the colonel, true to his word, sent in Thanksgiving dinner. We were still in our holes while these guys were setting up tables behind us. All of a sudden we got a call. "Saddle up!" We were going to board helicopters and another unit was going to take over our positions. So we got our gear together and the guys getting ready to give us our food asked, "Where are your mess kits?" We said, "We don't have mess kits out here. What are you talking about? We don't have that stuff out here." "Any paper plates?" "No, we don't have any of that either." We were getting yelled at to board the choppers. Those guys had worked so hard getting the chow to us, somebody had to eat it. So I ran by, took off my helmet, took out the liner and said, "Put the food in here." The guy put a little bit of turkey into the helmet. I said, "Put a shitload of stuff for a bunch of us! Everything! Turkey, mashed potatoes, everything!" Everything they had was scooped into my helmet. We go running up to the helicopters. A lot of the guys didn't get anything at all. So I put out the helmet and said, "OK, Guys. Dig in!" Like animals, there were hands coming from everywhere, grabbing everything they could with their hands. Gravy was leaking out from between their fingers. Cranberry



FIG 34. *Corpsmen Dean and Lichman on Hill 10 before Meade River. Courtesy Jim Lichman.*

sauce. Whatever. It was the funniest thing you could ever see, but it was one of the greatest Thanksgivings we ever had. We were all laughing so hard. Here we are, going into what we thought was a hot LZ and we're laughing with food all over our uniforms, all over our faces and hands—even stuck in my machinegun. It was a mess, but we did get our Thanksgiving dinner. Every year, when I have Thanksgiving with my family, the memory is still fresh in my mind and I have to laugh. One of these days, I'm going to get an old helmet, clean it out, and eat Thanksgiving dinner out of it just to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, 1968.⁴¹

Alpha Company Tasked as an Eastern Blocking Force at Position #2

As noted in the recollections above, Alpha Company was moved via helicopter to another river, the Suôi Co Ca, on the east side of the Operation Meade River area near an old demolished bridge. There was also an old, destroyed amtrack (an armored, tracked, amphibious vehicle) on the riverbank. For Alpha Company, Meade River was still an easy operation so far, with little contact.

Cpl. Elmer Sangster, a Squad Leader in 3d Platoon recalls:

We had sporadic sniper fire and minimal contact as Marines began to close the cordon.⁴²

Lieutenant Sorrell added a bit more:

We were sent to the eastern end of the cordon, and positioned between two other units, one of which was ROK Marines. By morning, they were gone, leaving our flank unprotected, and a big gap in the cordon.⁴³

Gunny Crawford learned Rick Kowalker had been in 'Nam for several months but had never been on R&R. There were



FIG 35. 1st Platoon grunts during Operation Meade River, probably at Alpha's position 2. L-r: Jerry Warren, Frank Archibald, Dennis Ryan, James McDevitt, Sgt. Fred A. Ratliff. Archibald and McDevitt were wounded on 7 December 1968, Ratliff was killed in action on the same day. Courtesy Ed Alloncius.



FIG 36. Johnnie Lee Edwards sitting at the fighting position and hooch he and I shared at Position 2 between 28 November and 3 December 1968. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

a couple spots available for Alpha Marines and the Gunny told him to pick one. Corporal Kowalker (Corporal K) related at the May 2013 annual reunion, “By sending me on R&R, Gunny Crawford saved my life.”

Since Kowalker had subsequently left the field to go on R&R, I partnered up with my 2d Squad Guns buddy, Pfc. Johnnie Lee Edwards and we set up a nice, comfortable hooch and hole position near the destroyed amtrack and overlooking the river.

A few patrols were sent out to Alpha’s rear as a precaution (and to help cover the gap caused by the ROK troops leaving). On 29 November, Lieutenant Heusner sent Squad Leader Cpl. Brian “Mac” MacAndrews (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), two other guys, Edwards, and me on one of these patrols. We snooped around some old ruins and hooches finding nothing of importance. Then, as we approached a clump of bushes with an old brick building in it, we heard noises. Mac yelled out “Hey Marine!” just in case. There was no answer, just more noise. All of us opened fire. Edwards had the M-60 and I was serving as his a-gunner. We blasted off a hundred rounds or so into the side of the brick building. When everyone quit firing, we moved forward to check it out. To our surprise, we heard Marines yelling and cussing. We had pinned down a squad of Marines who were taking a break in the shade and, for some reason or another, had not heard us yell. We were just damn lucky the brick wall was really solid and no one got hurt.

The lack of contact nearly got Edwards and me in trouble. Edwards and I had gotten complacent and not dug our fighting hole deep enough. On 30 November, we were enjoying the relatively easy lifestyle of a blocking force. We lounged around, took a few pictures, wrote letters, read whatever letters or books we had, and took our turns at hole watch. After nightfall however, several of our positions began to take heavy fire from our rear. Edwards was closest to our fighting hole, so he jumped in first and grabbed me by my collar and dragged me to the hole. With our down-sized hole, the two of us just couldn’t fit in all the way. Our heads and torsos were exposed and sort of leaning out of the hole at waist level. We watched bright green tracers crack loudly by and only about 2 to 3 inches above our heads. We were low enough to be safe, but we discussed how easy it would be to die if

we just stood up a little higher. It was the sort of battlefield conversation that could only happen between experienced combat veterans. When the firing stopped, I got an E-tool and quickly enlarged the hole! The next morning, I found a bullet hole in my Texas flag.

Lieutenant Heusner also recalled sniper fire along the river:

I remember our foxhole at the side of the river and the poncho over it to try to keep the rain out. One night I had my boots off and we took some sniper fire. When the shooting started we hesitated jumping into the foxhole without our boots on because it was muddy but wet socks were better than taking an AK round so in we went.⁴⁴

Alpha Company moves to Position 3 as an Assaulting Unit

Alpha Company’s cushy life as a blocking force ended on 3 December when we were once again heli-lifted to another position in the cordon. This time we were replacing another Marine company that had been assigned other duties. We found ourselves positioned between the abandoned “villes” of Hà Nông Trung (1) and La Hoà (1). This was an area of old abandoned houses and rice paddies. We had become part of the assaulting force. I guess battalion figured we had gotten lots of rest while we were a blocking force. Alpha Company was the only company of 1/7 still actively involved in Operation Meade River and had been attached to the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines. Alpha Company was on the left side of the cordon assault line. The railroad berm was the western edge of the cordon and it was on our left flank. As Alpha Company faced north, we had 2d Platoon on the left flank next to the railroad berm, 1st Platoon in the middle, the Alpha command group “CP Group” behind 1st Platoon, and 3d Platoon on the right flank. The assaulting companies began to move north, squeezing the remaining VC and NVA in a vise-like movement toward the blocking forces.

During the morning of 3 December, not long after moving north from the LZ, Lieutenant Heusner tripped a booby trap. He and his radioman, Pfc. Lloyd Lepak (aka “Short Round”), were wounded and medevaced out.

Lieutenant Heusner describes his wounding in two e-mails:

I tripped the booby trap that took out me and my radioman. When the booby trap went off, I remember flying through the air and not being able to stand up but there wasn’t much pain. I took shrapnel behind the left knee and through the right ankle and some small pieces in my back. My flak jacket likely saved my life. I remember calling in my own medevac because the radioman was having difficulty understanding the pilot. Once the chopper got there, the radio transmission went something like this—me “Popping smoke”—pilot “I see yellow and green smoke”—me “Come in on yellow smoke.” It was a CH-34 not the usual CH-46. I was medevaced to Da Nang along with my radioman. I recall seeing others from our unit coming in. I spent thirty days there. Years later, I reconnected with my radioman to find out he had more serious wounds and was medevaced to (I think) Japan. He had some permanent disability if I remember correctly. He eventually became a pastor. I saw Ann Margaret in the Bob Hope Show. The day I came back to the unit was the day Alpha Company was in contact south of Hill 55, had taken some casualties, and needed reinforcements. So I rounded up everyone I could find on the hill and we headed out. That was the day Russell Hevern was



FIG 37. Close-up of Fieseler’s Texas flag with the bullet hole near the corner grommet. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

killed. [RGF note: This occurred on 7 January 1969. Hevern was a highly experienced, well respected, and well liked Squad Leader in Heusner's old 2d Platoon.]⁴⁵

Doc Lich was there:

The morning of December 6th a booby trap went off in front of me. Lieutenant Heusner, his radio man, and I hit the dirt. The Lieutenant was hit in the shoulder, the radio man was hit in the leg behind the knee, and I was hit in the flak vest—but wasn't injured. I was able to apply dressings, and call for a medevac—which arrived in a short time. With the help from a couple of Marines, we were able to get the two of them on the chopper. I then returned to the rest of the unit. Gunny Crawford was now commanding 2d Platoon.⁴⁶

Lieutenant Sorrell described the booby trap in a 3 December 1968 letter home:

Today, Lieutenant Heusner's radioman hit a booby trap and John got some of the shrapnel in his legs and knees. So he finally got his first Purple Heart. And just yesterday we were telling each other that we didn't think we were going to get any wounds! He just spoke a little too soon! I am the only Lieutenant left in the Company now—so if the Capt. Goes ...! Bad news!⁴⁷ [RGF note: Here, we see minor differences in three individual accounts about the same event. Doc Lich, in his recollections, thought the casualties occurred on 6 December, but Sorrell's date of 3 December is clearly a solid, documented date. Heusner's first person account clarifies his actual wounds and medevac details.]

We spent the day getting into position and coordinating with the other companies to our right. We were encouraged by all the firepower being unleashed on the terrain in front of us. An unbelievable amount of ordnance was being dropped into the middle of the cordon during the day and on into the night. "Spooky"—aka "Puff the Magic Dragon" was on station for much of the night and we heard its deadly hum many times during the night as it hosed down potential enemy positions. I also remember we found ourselves dodging the large parachute illumination canisters being dropped by Spooky. Those things were big and heavy and could really do some serious damage when they fell to earth. However, we eagerly salvaged their parachutes to use for makeshift shade for our fighting holes.

We moved a bit farther north on Wednesday, 4 December. This was accomplished at random times, apparently due to the assaulting companies trying to keep in line with each other through complex terrain. By early afternoon, we began to organize our positions for the night. Afterward, some of us were bored so we started prowling around the rubble of a bombed out building and found a hidden storage bunker containing all sorts of neat stuff. I kept some NVA mess gear: sunglasses; knife; an old French varmint trap with teeth; some dishes; and some Ho Chi Minh sandals. We also found about 1,000 pounds of rice; 25 pounds of salt; 3 ammo boxes of clothes; personal effects; ammo; a chicom grenade; a canteen; and some cooking pots. We destroyed most of this.

Because of our find, everyone started checking out their area. We were right in the middle of Dodge City in an area which was supposed to have been previously swept by the company we replaced and was presumed to be cleared. However, the always-eager Archie was like a blue-tick coonhound with all his hunting instincts kicked into high gear.



FIG 38. CH-34 medevac chopper picking up a WIA Marine in Dodge City. Lieutenant Heusner was medevaced on this model helicopter. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

Archie tells it best:

I took a couple of 1st Platoon guys outside our area to check the immediate front to us. I found footprints and everything else like that out there, so I started to search the area. I had a .45 caliber pistol and a hand grenade with me and the other guys had M-16s and hand grenades. I don't know where we found these metal reinforcing bars or rods, but they just happened to be there. We picked them up and started to poke the ground to find tunnels and things. We found a mound and the mound was right next to a hooch. We couldn't find an entrance to this mound, so we were poking it. As we were poking it, I went around to the back side area where it was covered with brush and thorns. Just as I got to that part, they called us all back in, yelling, "Hey! We're moving out!" I said, "Hey! Wait a second. I have to check this out. Something's just not right." So I went back to check the area and found a board in the dirt. I brushed the dirt away. The board was about one foot long by six inches wide. I told the other guys, "Hey! I found a bunker. I think something's in here."

I pulled the board away and the sun was behind me, beating down.



FIG 39. The storage bunker mentioned above was hidden by a false wall and floor. This was more of a supply cache rather than a personnel bunker. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

Inside the little tunnel, I saw a khaki trouser and a foot coming up toward me, and I said, "Oh, my God. What in the hell is this," and I started to move away from the hole just as the guy inside starting shooting at me with a 9mm pistol. As I dodged out of the way, another Marine, Larry Loper, was standing there. I knocked him down, ran over him, turned, got my grenade and went back to the hole to throw it inside. Just as I got close to the hole, the VC inside threw out a ChiCom grenade. I saw that, turned around, ran over Larry Loper again, and the grenade went off. Uninjured, we turned around to go back to the hole for a third time. Just before I threw my grenade in, a private named Dennis M. Ryan jumped up on the mound and threw a grenade inside. As his grenade went inside, I was just about to release mine. Not wanting to get in front of the hole with a live grenade inside, I threw my grenade somewhere else. After it exploded, a guy stuck his hand out of the hole, started waving and yelling, "Chieu Hoi! Chieu Hoi!" He was surrendering.

As we started to get the enemy out of there, I saw a couple of them were wounded, but a couple didn't have a scratch on them. Turned out there were three men and three women. We took the first guy out, the one who took the shots at me. He turned out to be a private in the North Vietnamese Army. I was told later on that one of the men was a high-ranking officer. I don't know how high or anything like that, but they were looking for him. One of the women was a captain in the local VC army who was a wanted local terrorist. The other two women were nurses. We got six people out of the hole.⁴⁸

This was a big score for 1st Platoon. One of the women and two of the men were wounded. The bunker had lots of goodies: 3 Russian pistols; 2 transistor radios; 3 watches; and a lot of papers, including one I saw that was signed by Ho Chi Minh himself—who had very pretty handwriting by the way. A few of us who were nearby came over to see the captives and hear the story. Several of us took photos while others were inventorying enemy supplies and equipment and treating the wounded gooks.

Doc Lich also remarked on the capture:

We did capture some NVA doctors and medical personnel.⁴⁹

1st Platoon was bragging like crazy to 2d Platoon about this capture. We probably deserved this ribbing. Lately, 2d Platoon had racked up the most kills and had found lots of rockets, so we had been strutting our stuff in front of the other platoons. However, about two or three hours later, 3d Squad, 2d Platoon captured an NVA officer and 4 NVA out of another hidden bunker. The guys in 2d Platoon razzed the 1st Platoon Marines about having to resort to fighting women! Eventually, all the captives were evacuated by helicopter.

Archie seemed to be everywhere this day and he joined 2d Platoon in our capture:

I just had a feeling there just had to be more out



FIG 40. 1st Platoon grunts with three NVA captured 4 December 1968. Standing l-r, Frank Del Rio, Dennis Ryan, Lee Savastano. Kneeling l-r, Jim McDevitt, Ed Alloncius, Tom Dunkle. Blindfolded l-r, "Huey, Dewey, and Louie!" Courtesy Ron Fieseler.



FIG 41. Ed Alloncius, Caleb Barber, "Luke," Tom Dunkle, and Jim McDevitt. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.



FIG 42. Operation Meade River 5 December 1968. Alpha Company command group. L-r, GySgt. Richard Crawford, Capt. James Foster, and 1st Lt. Mickey Coe (Alpha Co. XO). Coe would leave the next day to take command of Charlie Company, 1/7. Courtesy Ron Fieseler



FIG 43. LCpl. David Skowronski and Pfc. Dennis W. Cralley were with the Alpha Company command group when this photo was taken on 5 December 1968. Courtesy Ron Fieseler.

there. So I walked back with a squad from another platoon and found five uniformed North Vietnamese soldiers. So that made eleven we captured that day. We brought these five back and command was screaming at us to get them out of there. We were moving out.⁵⁰

Before the day was over another Alpha Company grunt killed two additional NVA in another bunker/tunnel.

Battalion Landing Team, 3d Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade Command Chronology 1-31 December 1968 confirmed, "On fourth of December Alpha Company 1/7, which was OPCON to the Bn, captured 11 VC/NVA prisoners."⁵¹

Needless to say, with thirteen enemy being killed or captured inside or adjacent to our own lines—sometimes right next to our fighting holes—we were very alert that night. Despite our worries, we only received random sniper fire a couple of times during the night with no harm done.

Thursday, 5 December was another more or less idle day for Alpha Company. I wrote another letter home (with a ballpoint pen taken from one of the gook bunkers yesterday!) and used the last of my writing paper, although I could always use the tops of c-ration boxes for post cards. We mostly sat out the day in our positions and continued to search the area. I wandered along our lines for an hour or so, visiting some of my buddies and taking a few pictures.

A bunch of gooks had been cornered in a bend in the river to the north of us and arty and air support were giving them hell. We were even getting fire support from the battleship USS *New Jersey*, which was firing 16-inch shells from about twenty miles away. They made a helluva roar when they went by. Those shells, each weighing approximately two thousand pounds, were landing only about three hundred yards away. We stayed deep in our fighting holes as we pictured those swabbies bouncing around on the ocean trying to aim that close to us! I have to give them credit however, they were extremely accurate and the destruction was truly awe-inspiring.

During the afternoon some of us took a bath in a huge bomb crater. The water was sort of orange colored so I'm not sure we got very clean, but it really felt good. Later on, the word came down that all our gear had been moved to Hill 55 a couple of days ago



FIG 44. SSgt. Eugene McAndrews on the left and 1st Lt. Jack Wells (forward observer for Alpha Company) with Alpha Company command group on 6–8 November 1968 during a two-day/two-night company operation in the Dodge City area southeast of Hill 55 in the general area where Operation Meade River would take place a few weeks later. Courtesy Jack Wells.

and that after the operation we will be stationed there for a while. We were pretty excited since Hill 55 was 7th Marines regimental headquarters with higher quality amenities, better chow, and even occasional entertainment. Such duty was often referred to as standing “Palace Guard” and we were eager to check it out. At any rate, goodbye to Hill 10.

Elmer Sangster reports a WIA in 3d Platoon during the day:

Approximately 5 December, we were taking a break around a pagoda, some of us were sitting down with our backs to wall and Conners [Charles W.] was sitting on the wall when he yelled out falling to the ground. He took a round to the buttock, which went down his leg toward his foot. He was heli-lifted out.⁵² [RGF note: This was Conners’ third Purple Heart and he was rotated home.]

At 0700 hours on 6 December, we got on line to sweep across approximately one thousand yards of open fields and rice paddies.

As previously mentioned by Doc Lich, after Heusner’s medevac, Gunny Crawford had taken over as CO of 2d Platoon. Another big change occurred the morning of 6 December when Lieutenant Coe left to take command of Charlie Company, 1/7. So, without an XO or Company Gunny, the Alpha CP group

was essentially down to just Captain Foster, Barry Goodson his radio man, and Dennis Cralley and David Skowronski, office clerks. First Lt. Ben Sorrell and 2d Lt. Charles Hucknall were the only other officers left in Alpha Company. First Sgt. William Heazlit was back on Hills 10 and 55 supervising the movement of Alpha Company belongings to Hill 55.

Alpha Company’s left flank and western side of the cordon was a railroad track with Marine units as a blocking force. Alpha’s 2d Platoon was positioned next to the railroad track, and to the east of 2d Platoon was the 1st Platoon in the center (with the CP group behind), and 3d Platoon on Alpha’s right flank. There were another two to three companies to our east. We were all concerned about being so exposed but we got across okay with no contact. A few of us had some difficulty with the crossing and at times, the water filled paddy was deceptively dangerous.

While making the crossing, I stepped in a hole and went in just over my head. Holding my breath and fighting to keep my cool, I kept tromping rice under foot, moving forward, and flailing around until I got my head above water. I finally got into thigh deep water. My camera was ruined and I was



WET AND WILD—Rugged Leathernecks of the 7th Marine Regiment push their way across one of Vietnam's many rivers during an operation near Da Nang. After crossing the river they joined other units of the 1st Marine Division and began closing in on enemy positions. (Photo by LCpl. Robert B. Sanville)

FIG 45. This photograph from page 9 the 27 December 1968 issue of *Sea Tiger* shows part of Alpha 1/7, 2d Platoon making its way through the rice paddy just east of the railroad berm. It was taken on 6 December 1968. Left to right: HC James Lichman, unknown Marine, GySgt. Richard Crawford, Pfc. Fritz Daniels, Pfc. Russell Hevern (KIA 7 January 1969), and LCpl. James Leach. Photograph by Pfc. Robert B. Sanville. Photo copy and identification courtesy Ron Fieseler

pissed. Those 90 to 100 pounds of gear can really keep you under water.

During the night we heard a bunch of shooting to our east. We found out later grunts from 3d Platoon spotted some gooks and shot at them but had no confirmed kills. The rest of the night was quiet. I remember hearing that Lieutenant Sorrell tried to get some arty or air support called in on that area but Captain Foster denied the request.

Lieutenant Sorrell provides confirmation:

On 6 December, we dug in for the night. My 3d Platoon was on the extreme right of Alpha Company with a platoon from some other Company on my right. One of my squads opened fire on what they thought were gooks out front of their position. I asked Capt. Foster for permission to call in some artillery during the night to disrupt any plans that may have been in the making by the VC/NVA, but Foster thought it would be too risky to have artillery from Hill 55 or Hill 37, which would be firing directly toward us, and a long round might end up on top of us.⁵³

If Foster had requested a fire mission on the enemy positions during the night of 6 December, many Alpha Company survivors believe lives would have been saved and less blood shed.

To be continued.

Notes

1. The phrase, "All Gave Some; Some Gave All," was reportedly first spoken by Howard Osterkamp, a Korean War veteran of Ohio and past commander of Post 3620, Military Order of the Purple Heart. Howard Winson, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 7 August 2004, http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/08/07/loc_loc4apurp.htm, accessed 7 December 2013.
2. Jack Shulimson, *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1997), 426.
3. Headquarters, U.S. Army Group, ICTZ, Advisory Team 1 to Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, 20 January 1968, After Action Reports, Box 32, HH 1988, Record Group 472, Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (J3), Evaluation and Analysis Division (MACJ3-05), 2, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Hereafter Meade River AAR. The initial list of forces involved in the operation mistakenly shows the 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment as the 2d Battalion, 7th Regiment. It was later corrected.
4. *Ibid.*, 3.
5. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
6. Transcript of an article that appeared in *Sea Tiger*, 6 December 1968. Courtesy Mickey Coe.
7. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 427.
8. *Ibid.*, 427–433.
9. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [3d Bn, 26th Marines, 12/1/1968–12/31/1968], Record Number 226497, Folder 061, US Marine Corps History Division Vietnam War Documents Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University Lubbock, Texas. <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/items.php?item=1201061047>. Accessed 1 February 2014.
10. Ron Fieseler, "Pertinent Excerpts from R. G. Fieseler: USMC History

- Relating to Operation Meade River." Note from 2 October 1968.
11. E-mail, Thomas Crawford to coauthor Sullivan, 1 February 2014.
 12. E-mail, Mickey Coe to coauthor Sullivan, 22 November 2013.
 13. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [1st Bn, 7th Marines, 11/1/1968–11/30/1968], Record Number 225022, Folder 052, US Marine Corps History Division Vietnam War Documents Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/items.php?item=1201052017>. Accessed 1 February 2014.
 14. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [1st Bn, 7th Marines 12/1/1968–12/31/1968], Record Number 225023, Folder 052, US Marine Corps History Division Vietnam War Documents Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/items.php?item=1201052018>. Accessed 1 February 2014.
 15. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 430.
 16. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [3d Bn, 26th Marines, 12/1/1968–12/31/1968]. Accessed 1 February 2014.
 17. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 433.
 18. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [3d Bn, 26th Marines, 12/1/1968–12/31/1968]. Accessed 1 February 2014.
 19. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 434.
 20. Notecards, Chapter 21, Meade River, entry 1085, Record Group 127, Records of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1981, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. (Hereafter NAB.) Vietnam Comment File, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, "#4, pages 29 and 30."
 21. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 436.
 22. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [3d Bn, 26th Marines, 12/1/1968–12/31/1968]. Accessed 1 February 2014.
 23. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 435.
 24. Shulimson, *The Defining Year*, 436.
 25. COMMAND CHRONOLOGY, [3d Bn, 26th Marines, 12/1/1968–12/31/1968]. Accessed 1 February 2014.
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 27. E-mail, Mickey Coe to coauthor Sullivan, 22 November 2013.
 28. Frank Archibald, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013.
 29. Doc Jimmy L. Lichman, edited from http://www.alpha-1-7-vn.com/class_index.cfm
 30. E-mail, Daniel E. Phenicie to coauthor Fieseler, 10 March 2014.
 31. Elmer Sangster, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013, and e-mail, 1 February 2014.
 32. E-mail, Michael Tyree to coauthor Sullivan, 25 May 2013.
 33. Ibid.
 34. E-mail, Ben J. Sorrell, 3d Platoon commander, to coauthor Sullivan, 19 October 2013.
 35. Frank C. Archibald recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 7 August 2013.
 36. E-mail, Ben J. Sorrell, 3d Platoon commander, to coauthor Sullivan, 19 October 2013.
 37. Frank C. Archibald recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan 18 May 2013.
 38. E-mail, Torrey Dean to coauthor Sullivan, 26 August 2013.
 39. E-mail, James Lichman to coauthor Sullivan, 6 August 2013.
 40. E-mail, Ben J. Sorrell, 3d Platoon commander, to coauthor Sullivan, 19 October 2013.
 41. Frank C. Archibald, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013.
 42. Elmer Sangster, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013.
 43. E-mail, Ben J. Sorrell, 3d Platoon commander, to coauthor Sullivan, 19 October 2013.
 44. E-mail, John W. Heusner to Ben J. Sorrell, 10 December 2013.
 45. E-mail, John W. Heusner to Ben J. Sorrell, 10 December 2013, and John W. Heusner to coauthor Fieseler, 20 March 2014 (edited).
 46. E-mail, James Lichman to coauthor Sullivan, 6 August 2013.
 47. Ben Sorrell letter to his family dated 3 December 1968.
 48. Frank C. Archibald, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013.
 49. E-mail, James Lichman to coauthor Sullivan, 6 August 2013.
 50. Frank C. Archibald, recorded interview with coauthor Sullivan, 18 May 2013.
 51. Battalion Landing Team, 3d Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, Command Chronology, 1–31 December 1968.
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“Five Pounds for a Piper”: Pipers in the 78th Foot, Fraser’s Highlanders, 1757–1763

Earl John Chapman

THE written historical record is unclear on the number of pipers carried by the Highland regiments which served in North America during the French and Indian Wars, 1756–1767. This is particularly so with Fraser’s Highlanders, the 78th Regiment of Foot. After years of study, the late piper-historian Dr. William Forbes mused “of all the Highland regiments during this period, the pipers of Fraser’s Highlanders are the most elusive.”¹ This is because, in general, pipers were not formally carried on a regiment’s establishment, although a few do appear as drummers.

Officially on the establishment or not, pipers have always been an integral part of Highland military units—it simply made good sense to Highland officers “that a soldier expected to face death, be encouraged by the music and the musician(s) with whom he was intimately acquainted ...”² As early as 1671, Sir James Turner, an officer in the 3d Foot Guards, wrote that “any Captain may keep a piper in his company, and maintain him too, for no pay is allowed him ...”³ The early pictorial record also provides supporting evidence that pipers accompanied Highland units in battle. Lastly, court trials after the 1745 rebellion noted that “in a Highland Regiment there was no moving without a Piper,” and that the player and his bagpipes were “an Instrument of War.”⁴

Pipers would play their stirring tunes as the regiment was on the march and while it manoeuvred to form its battle line. But like other important non-combatants, pipers were husbanded during action and kept away from the firing line—a piper on the firing line would focus unwanted attention from enemy sharpshooters. However, soldiers expected their pipers to return to the firing line if the regiment charged. So, there can be no question that the Highland regiments marched off to



FIG 1. Fred T. Chapman, “78th Highlanders, 1757–53,” *MUIA* pl. 397 (1974).

war in North America with their complement of pipers, but the question remains, how many?

Some historians believe, based on a strict interpretation of the historical record, that a very small number of pipers accompanied the Highland regiments to North America, and that Fraser’s Highlanders had the least number of pipers, one or perhaps two. To support their hypothesis, they claim that Simon Fraser, the regiment’s new colonel commandant, had limited financial resources and pipers did not come cheap. They also quote James Thompson, a grenadier sergeant in Fraser’s Highlanders, who left behind a fascinating personal account of his experiences during the North American campaign. In

EARL JOHN CHAPMAN, was born and educated in Montreal, Canada. He has written several books and numerous articles on the early years of Canada’s Black Watch. He is also the historian of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, a ceremonial regiment raised in 1964 by Montreal’s David M. Stewart Museum to perpetuate the history of the old 78th Regiment of Foot. His latest book, *A Bard of Wolfe’s Army: James Thompson, Gentleman Volunteer, 1733–1830*, was published in 2010.

his anecdote on the battle on the Plains of Abraham in 1759, Thompson wrote “we had but one piper,” alluding to the piper who went missing during a critical part of the battle (more about this incident later). However, this can be taken to mean that Thompson’s grenadier company had only one piper—it does not necessarily imply that the entire regiment had only one piper. Thompson himself provides some clarification in another anecdote where he discusses a house fire occurring during the regiment’s march through Ireland in 1757, where he is awakened “by one of our Regimental pipers sounding the alarm.”⁵

If each company had its own piper, a reasonable assumption based on earlier Scottish military formations, then the regiment would have

eventually carried fourteen pipers, a far more logical number for a regiment consisting of over 1,400 Highlanders. In his book *The Fraser Highlanders*, Col. Ralph J. Harper stated by December 1757 the regiment consisted of 1,542 all ranks with “thirty pipers and drummers.”⁶ The most obvious source of Harper’s “thirty pipers and drummers” is Col. David Stewart of Garth.⁷ Stewart of Garth was a former serving officer of the 42d Foot (Black Watch) and an early historian of the Highland regiments. Surprisingly, he wrote very little about pipers and piping—he simply took pipers for granted as a *sine qua non* for all Highland regiments. However, he did manage to write a little about the early pipers of the Black Watch, and by his reckoning, twenty or more served between the regiment’s embodiment and up to the time of the American Revolutionary War. As reasoned by piper-historian John Gibson, “We must



FIG 2. Early Highland piper. Courtesy: Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, RI. While ASKB dates this watercolor to ca. 1755, some of the uniform features (plumed bonnet, high standing collar, wings, etc.) suggest a later date, 1790–1795.

assume that their numbers were much the same as the numbers in Fraser’s and Montgomery’s Highlanders.”⁸

At this time, British infantry regiments were usually provided with two drummers per company, making a total of twenty-eight drummers for the fourteen companies of Fraser’s Highlanders, with additional drummers serving as orderly drummers. With Harper’s “thirty pipers and drummers” thus fully accounted for as drummers, this provides further evidence that pipers were not on a regiment’s official establishment. Furthermore, Harper also wrote that Fraser’s Highlanders “had fifteen pipers.”⁹ This figure can be derived by allowing one piper for the colonel (who also commanded a company), one for the adjutant, and

one for each of the captains commanding the other thirteen companies. As stated by Gibson, “Fifteen pipers is a guess but a fairly accurate one,”¹⁰ adding, “Piping in the Highland regiments during the Seven Years’ War is not clearly recorded, but ... there can be no question that the prominent regiments, Fraser’s and Montgomery’s Highlanders, were well endowed with pipers.”¹¹

To support Harper’s assessment, Gibson uses the formula suggested by Maj. MacKay Scobie of the Seaforths which states that the number of pipers in the regiment depended on the commanding officer’s wishes but usually each flank company had one or two pipers and each battalion company, one. Scobie’s formula has little relevance to the Highland regiments which served during the Seven Years’ War, but it was used by Gibson to support Harper’s hypothesis.¹² Gibson

also adds, assuming that Scobie was right, a company of men was then associated with “one, sometimes two [pipers].”¹³ In Fraser’s Highlanders, the normal complement of pipers, using Scobie’s formula, would have been fourteen or fifteen—one for each of the thirteen battalion companies and one or two for the grenadier company. But we know from Thompson’s anecdotes that his grenadier company only had one piper, thus yielding a figure of fourteen pipers, quite close to the number attributed to Colonel Harper.

Carried outside of the official establishment, pipers were likely paid directly by their company commanding officers, who then obtained reimbursement through the flexible book-keeping system then in use by the Army, the deductions from men’s pay by their officers, as well as the payment to a regiment based on establishment numbers rather than actual numbers of men, both of which allowed plenty of room to remunerate extranumeraries.

As previously mentioned, the piper of Thompson’s grenadier company went missing when Fraser’s Highlanders were preparing to charge during the battle on the Plains of Abraham. In his account of the battle, Sergeant Thompson tells us that the army’s left wing commander, Brig. Gen. James Murray, knowing well the value of a piper on such occasions, yelled out, “Where’s the Highland Piper?” and, “Five pounds for a piper!” But the piper did not lead the charge, or to use Thompson’s quaint expression “but devil-a-bit did the Piper come forward the sooner.”¹⁴ The fact that the piper subsequently went unpunished shows once again that pipers were not carried as drummers, private soldiers, or even as supernumeraries (officers or men in excess of a regiment’s authorized establishment, but carried on the rolls of the corps until absorbed). Had the absent piper been carried as a drummer, private, or supernumerary, he would have been charged under the Articles of War for refusal to obey an order, and likely put to death. According to Thompson, the missing piper was simply “disgraced by the whole of the Regiment, and the men would not speak to him, neither would they suffer his rations to be drawn with theirs ...”¹⁵ In other words, he was ostracized. As stated by Gibson, this leaves one to believe that pipers were there “at the dictate, and possibly

the expense”¹⁶ of their officers, rather than by the military establishment.

During the Battle of Sillery on 28 April 1760, Thompson relates that his regiment got into some disorganization “and had become more like a mob than regular soldiers.” As soon as the piper had realized this “he as soon recollected himself of the disgrace that still hung upon him, and he luckily bethought himself to give them a blast of his pipes ... this had the effect of stopping them short, and they soon allow’d themselves to be form’d into some sort of order.” According to Thompson “for this opportune blast of his Chaintors [sic], the Piper gain’d back the forgiveness of the Regiment, and was allow’d to take his meals with his old messmates, as if nothing at all had happen’d.”¹⁷

Besides the unofficial data on pipers stemming from Stewart of Garth and Sergeant Thompson, another important source of general information on pipers in Fraser’s Highlanders is Simon Fraser of Knockie’s *Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles*. First published in 1816, this book focuses on the “tastes in and depth of traditional musicality of both officers and men of the 78th Fraser Highlanders during the years 1757–63.”¹⁸ The author’s father, John

Fraser, was a former officer in Fraser’s Highlanders during the Seven Years’ War—renowned for his singing and knowledge of ancient Gaelic tunes—and several tunes in this collection were most likely played by the pipers of Fraser’s Highlanders. In this book, Fraser’s Highlanders emerge as “a very musical group of Gaels, rich in pipers, singers of Gaelic songs, dancers, and presumably fiddlers ...”¹⁹ The last group of facts about Fraser’s Highlanders, appearing in Simon Fraser’s collection, concerns the Regiment’s band. In a note to tune number 95, “*An t-aiseadh do dh’Eireann*” (“The Crossing to Eireann”), Fraser states that he found it “in an ancient manuscript in the possession of his father, of some of the band music of the 78th regiment, to which he belonged, raised by the late General Fraser of Lovat in the year 1757.”²⁰ He went on to describe the “band master” as someone named “M’Arthur,” perhaps suggesting that this was the name of the pipe-major. Interestingly, the author of this note would certainly not use the term *band*



FIG 3. Highland Piper, ca. 1758, Germany. Anne S. K. Brown Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, RI. Photograph courtesy of René Chartrand.

to denote one or two pipers, again suggesting that Fraser's Highlanders had its "normal" complement of pipers, perhaps as many as the fourteen or fifteen estimated by Harper.

In his previously cited essay, Forbes thought that the use of the word *band* in this note raises an interesting point since there were no official Highland pipe bands until the Crimean War in 1854. With regard to *bands*, in April 1776 the rank and file of the 42d Foot, or Black Watch, comprised 931 Highland Scots, 74 Lowland Scots, 5 English, 1 Welshman, and 2 Irishmen, and that the 5 Englishmen were all "in the band," which as noted by Gibson, dates the presence of such a thing at least to April 1776.²¹ There is also extant contemporary documentation showing that this same regiment, on its arrival at Fort Edward in September 1756, played with "...drums, trumpets and bagpipes going, sounding sweetly ...".²² In the same month, the 42d Foot's *musicians* entered Fort William Henry with "drums beating and music playing, the Highlanders in front."²³ As to the first incident, historian Ian McCulloch reflected that this observation "constitutes the first reference to a Highland band performing in North America."²⁴ However, in both cases the 42d Foot were part of a larger contingent entering a fort, so it is likely that their pipers and drummers were augmented by the musicians of other regiments. If so, then the September 1756 incident may constitute an early reference to a massed band performing in North America.

Interestingly, the Seaforth Highlanders, originally raised as the 72d Foot in 1778, had a brass band called a "Band of Musick," which had been formed "some years after the regiment was raised."²⁵ This led Gibson to remark "a Highland regiment had a brass band ... over seventy years before any pipe band was ever formed,"²⁶ adding "until one understands when the drum was sufficiently freed from its old function as a signaling device to be grafted onto a similarly displaced Highland bagpipe, the story will not be clearly understood."²⁷

Notes

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2. John G. Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping, 1745–1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queens, 1998), 82 (hereafter Gibson, *Bagpiping*).
3. Sir James Turner, *Pallas Armata, Military Essays of the Ancient Grecian, Roman, and Modern Arts of War: written in the Years 1670 and 1671* (London: 1683), quoted in Forbes, "Instrument of War," 164.
4. Forbes, "Instrument of War," 164.
5. Author's emphasis. Earl John Chapman and Ian M. McCulloch, *A Bard of Wolfe's Army: James Thompson, Gentleman Volunteer, 1733–1830* (Montreal: R. Brass Studio, 2010), 119 (hereafter Chapman/McCulloch, *A Bard*).
6. J. R. Harper, *The Fraser Highlanders* (Montreal: David Stewart Museum, 1995), 15 (hereafter Harper, *Fraser Highlanders*). Unfortunately, Harper rarely cited his sources, so some of his statements cannot be verified. However, we can be sure that he did not make them up.
7. Colonel David Stewart of Garth, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland: with Details of the Military Service of the Highland Regiments* (Edinburgh: 1822), 2: 64.

8. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 80.
9. Harper, *Fraser Highlanders*, 29.
10. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 82.
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12. I. H. MacKay Scobie, *Pipers and Pipe Music in a Highland Regiment – A record of Piping in the 1st Seaforth Highlanders, originally the Earl of Seaforth's or 78th (Highland) regiment, afterwards the 72nd or Duke of Albany's Own Highlanders* (Dingwall: Ross-shire Printing & Publishing, 1924).
13. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 92.
14. Chapman/McCulloch, *A Bard*, 185–6.
15. Chapman/McCulloch, *A Bard*, 186.
16. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 85.
17. Chapman/McCulloch, *A Bard*, 200.
18. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 85–6.
19. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 87.
20. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 87.
21. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 80.
22. Forbes, "Instrument of War," 165.
23. Forbes, "Instrument of War," 165.
24. Ian M. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, 1: 13.
25. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 92.
26. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 92.
27. Gibson, *Bagpiping*, 212.



FIG 4. Highland Piper, 1750s. Grose Military Antiquities, London, 1801. Photograph courtesy of René Chartrand.

Modification XXX¹

Gaëtan Marie

Submitted by John K. Robertson

IN the lighter moments of World War II, the Spitfire was used in an unorthodox role—bringing beer kegs to the men in Normandy.

During the war, the Heneger and Constable Brewery donated free beer to the troops. After D-day, supplying the invasion troops in Normandy with vital supplies was already a challenge. Obviously, there was no room in the logistics chain for such luxuries as beer or other types of refreshments. Some men, often called “sourcers,” were able to get wine or other niceties from the land or rather from the locals. RAF Spitfire pilots came up with an even better idea.

The Spitfire Mk IX was an evolved version of the Spitfire with pylons under the wings for bombs or tanks. It was discovered the bomb pylons could also be modified to carry beer kegs. According to pictures that can be found, various sizes of kegs were used. Whether the kegs could be jettisoned in case of emergency is unknown. If the Spitfire flew high enough, the cold air at altitude would even refresh the beer, making it ready for consumption upon arrival.

A variation of this was a long-range fuel tank modified to carry beer instead of fuel. The modification even received the official designation Mod. XXX. Propaganda services were quick to pick up on this, which probably explains the official designation.

As a result, Spitfires equipped with Mod. XXX or keg-carrying pylons were often sent back to Great Britain for



FIG 1. Mod. XXX carrying beer-filled kegs. Grey Ghost Aviation Magazine.

maintenance or liaison duties. They would then return to Normandy with full beer kegs fitted under the wings.

Typically, the British Revenue of Ministry and Excise stepped in, notifying the brewery they were in violation of the law by exporting beer without paying the relevant taxes. It seems Mod. XXX was terminated then, but various squadrons found different ways to refurbish their stocks. Most often this was done with the unofficial approval of higher echelons.

In his book *Dancing in the Skies*, Tony Jonsson,² the only Icelandic pilot in the RAF, recalled beer runs while he was flying with 65 Squadron. Every week a pilot was sent back to the UK to fill some cleaned up drop tanks with beer and return to the squadron. Jonsson hated the beer runs as every man on the squadron would be watching you upon arrival. Anyone who made a rough landing and dropped the tanks would be the most hated man on the squadron for an entire week.

Notes

1. Originally published by Grey Ghost Aviation Magazine, <http://www.ghostgrey.gaetanmarie.com/articles/2010/Modification%20XXX/Modification%20XXX%20-%20Beer-carrying%20Spitfires.htm>. Accessed 4 July 2014.
2. Tony Jonsson, *Dancing in the Skies* (London: Grub Street, 1994).



FIG 2. A staged shot of the Mod. XXX tank being filled with beer. Grey Ghost Aviation Magazine..

5th Canadian Division

Submitted by Peter McDermott

CANADIAN Army units across Atlantic Canada will hold a series of “patching” and flag raising ceremonies in the coming months to officially issue divisional patches.

“The recent restoration of the Canadian Army’s historical identity reinforces the ties between present-day soldiers and previous generations of warriors, while celebrating our proud Army heritage,” said Lt. Gen. Marquis Hainse, commander of the Canadian Army. “Canadian Army personnel will wear their division patches and fly their historical flags knowing that they carry on a strong legacy of service, standing strong, proud, and ready for the future.”

Historically, in particular during the First and Second World Wars, the Canadian Army was structured by division and soldiers were able to identify each other by their uniquely coloured divisional patches. With the patching ceremonies, the Canadian Army will return to its traditional divisional heritage.

The color of the 5th Canadian Division patch is maroon. The patch—a five-centimetre-by-7.5-centimetre colored wool melton badge—will be worn on the left shoulder of the service dress jacket. The patch does not contain the maple leaf as does the flag.

“Atlantic Canada has a long and proud history of answering our nation’s call. Some of the soldiers in our region that will soon sport the maroon patch on their left shoulder have relatives that would have worn the same color patch on their uniforms during the two World Wars,” said Brig.Gen. Nicolas Eldaoud, Commander, 5th Canadian Division. “What better way to honor those who have gone before us, to remind us every time we put on our uniform of where we have come from and the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for the freedoms we enjoy today.”

Formerly known as “Land Force Atlantic Area,” today’s 5th Canadian Division traces its roots to the 5th Canadian Division of the First World War and the 5th Canadian Armoured Division of the Second World War.

There are a number of units in Atlantic Canada which were part of the 5th Canadian Division while serving in England and Europe during the two World Wars.

In the First World War, these included: the 104th (New Brunswick) Battalion, perpetuated by the Royal New Brunswick Regiment; the 185th (Cape Breton Highlanders) Battalion, perpetuated by the Cape Breton Highlanders; and the 236th (MacLean Highlanders) Battalion [referred to as the New Brunswick Kilties], perpetuated by the Royal New Brunswick Regiment.

In the Second World War, Atlantic Canada units which were part of the 5th Canadian Division included: the 1st



FIG 1. The 5th Canadian Division Camp Flag hangs from the flag pole once again as the commander of the 36 Canadian Brigade Group, Col. George Thomson salutes the parade during the patching ceremony at the Halifax Armories. Soldiers of 36 Canadian Brigade Group mark the restoration of the traditional 5th Canadian Division patch during a parade held on 4 May 2014 at the Halifax, NS, Armories. Photo: Sgt Lance Wade.

Armoured Brigade Headquarters Squadron (the Prince Edward Island Light Horse), perpetuated by the Prince Edward Island Regiment (RCAC); the 5th Armoured Regiment (8th Princess Louise’s [New Brunswick] Hussars, perpetuated by the 8th Canadian Hussars (Princess Louise’s); the Cape Breton Highlanders; 1st Field Squadron, Royal Canadian Engineers (Halifax), perpetuated by 36 Engineer Regiment; and the 11th and 12th Independent Machine Gun Company (the Princess Louise Fusiliers), perpetuated by the Princess Louise Fusiliers.

Source: <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/atlantic-news-details-secondary-menu.page?doc=maroon-patch-links-atlantic-soldiers-to-proud-heritage/hup7wfpf>. Accessed 21 May 2014.

“On the Canada Line”: The 1st United States Infantry Regiment at the Battle of Lundy’s Lane, 25 July 1814

David C. Bennett

THE story of the 1st United States Infantry Regiment (1st USI) during the War of 1812 and specifically their role on the “Canada Line” is generally unknown. The senior infantry regiment was part of the prewar peacetime Army and thus the regiment was parceled out among remote garrisons along the western frontier. As the war began, their dispersed companies were among the first to take fire from the British and their Indian allies. In the first two years of the war, various companies of the 1st USI were engaged in a savage Indian war. In early 1814, orders sent three companies of the 1st USI that were stationed west of the Mississippi River, to the northern frontier where Gen. Jacob Brown was locking horns with the British along the Niagara River. This regiment differed from fellow U.S. regiments in Canada by dress, equipment, and their Indian fighting experience. The regiment was looked upon as an outsider—an interloper in the military family of Brown’s Left Division that was forged at Chippewa. The story of the 1st USI is of an honorable regiment that passed the test of fire during the bloodiest battle of the war, yet found themselves afterwards defending their war time experience to uphold the honor of the regiment.

When the United States declared war against Great Britain on 18 June 1812, the veteran 1st USI was serving on the far western frontier. The regiment’s mission was primarily that of a defensive role while protecting the government’s Indian trade houses—called “Factories.” The officers and enlisted men were scattered from Lake Michigan to the Missouri River, garrisoning Fort Detroit, Fort Dearborn, Fort Wayne, Fort Madison, Fort Mason, Fort Belle Fontaine, and Fort Osage. The regiment consisted of only six undermanned companies of about 350 men total with several officers detached from their companies performing a wide range of staff assignments such as paymasters and assistant inspector generals.¹

Col. Jacob Kingsbury, the regiment’s commander, received orders to depart Detroit and repair to Washington City in 1811 and there was offered the command of an army comprised of Regulars and militia marching to reinforce Detroit for the anticipated initial campaign against the British in Canada. Kingsbury, however, declined, as he suffered severely from

gout and was clearly unable to lead a campaign in the field. Instead, the government unwisely selected Gen. William Hull to take command of all troops marching for the Detroit frontier plus all the soldiers in the Detroit Military District stationed at Fort Mackinaw, Fort Detroit, Fort Dearborn, and Fort Wayne.²

The news of the declaration of war moved slowly across the states and the western territories, not reaching St. Louis until 12 July 1812. The St. Louis Military District commander, Lt. Col. Daniel Bissell, 1st USI, commanded the garrisons at Fort Belle Fontaine, Fort Mason, Fort Madison, Fort Osage, and Fort Massac. On 14 July 1812, Colonel Bissell sent the news of war with Great Britain to Capt. Eli B. Clemson, the commander of Fort Osage on the Missouri River, near modern day Kansas City, Missouri—the westernmost outpost of the United States. Immediately upon the arrival of the news, Clemson wrote a memorial to the secretary of war, stating, “I know well that it is not the business or duty of a Soldier to pry into the views of government,” and yet Clemson took this most unusual step to inform the secretary of his views, stating, “We beg leave to state that as a Military post affording any advantage to the frontier of the territory, it is entirely useless ... it is a Moth on the Publick purse.” It was clear Clemson had no intention to have his company to sit out the current war in such an isolated post.³

The fall of Michilimackinac to the British without a shot fired on 17 July 1812 resulted in an Indian onslaught against the troops at Detroit and eventually the entire western frontier. Commanding at Fort Detroit, Michigan Territory, was Capt. (Bvt. Maj.) John Whistler, 1st USI, with his own company of 50 men; a 40-man recruit detachment of the 1st USI; plus a company of 44 men of the 1st Artillery Regiment. Many of Whistler’s infantrymen served as artillerymen on several of the guns that lined the fort. A detachment of the 1st USI participated in Lt. Col. James Miller’s sharp action against the British and their Indian allies on 9 August 1812 at the Indian village of Maguago, in which Capt. Daniel Baker was wounded, subsequently receiving a brevet promotion for his actions during the fighting. Besides serving as infantry, another small detachment of the 1st USI manned a 5½-inch howitzer on Miller’s campaign. General Hull’s offensive operations, which began with great expectations, soon ended with his surrender of Fort Detroit on 16 August. Whistler’s Company and Ens. Robert A. McCabe’s recruit detachment of the 1st USI now found themselves prisoners along with the rest of

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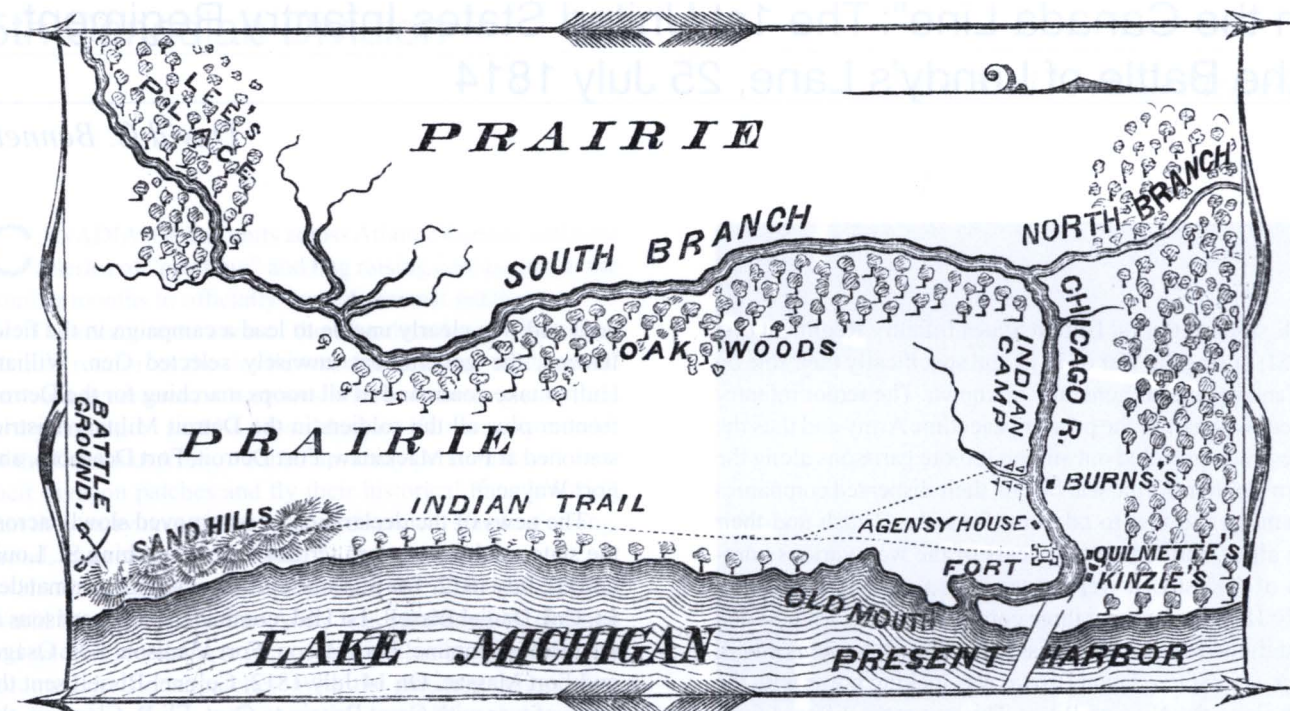


FIG 1. Fort Dearborn and the Chicago battlefield, from Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*, 1869. Courtesy the author.

Hull's army.⁴

Fort Dearborn, at Chicago, was garrisoned by a company commanded by Capt. Nathan Heald, 1st USI. Previously, on 29 July, General Hull ordered Heald to evacuate his garrison to Fort Wayne. The day before Hull surrendered at Fort Detroit, Heald marched his column of 54 regulars, 12 militia, 9 women, and 18 children toward Fort Wayne, Indiana. When within a few miles from the fort, Heald's column was attacked by over four hundred Indians. Heald was neither as indecisive as was Lt. Porter Hanks who surrendered Michilimackinac, nor did he lack resolve as did General Hull at Detroit. Forming a hollow square with the baggage wagons and militia, Heald decided to risk the lives of his men by leading an attack against the Indians in the dunes along the lake shore. Heald's charge closed the gap to bring his muskets into range. However, by the time his company had fired only two volleys, his company had already lost twenty-six Regulars killed in action, plus every militiaman killed as well. Among the burning wagons along the beach south of the fort, lay dead 2 women and 12 children. Only about 8 men of his 54-man company were not wounded or killed in action in what became known as the "Chicago Massacre." Among the dead was the first West Point graduate to be killed in battle, Ens. George Ronan, and the first U.S. Army doctor to be killed in battle, Surgeon's Mate Isaac Van Voorhees. Captain Heald was severely wounded and 1st Lt. Linai Taliaferro Helm was slightly wounded. Many of the wounded were murdered after surrendering or perished during captivity—the few survivors were parceled out among the various Indian nations present.⁵

On the day of the new moon, 5 September 1812, several

different Indian nations launched a planned and coordinated attack against Fort Wayne on the Wabash River, Indiana Territory and, simultaneously, at Fort Madison on the Mississippi River, Missouri Territory (modern day Iowa), some 395 miles distant.⁶ Both posts were garrisoned by companies of the 1st USI. Capt. James Rhea at Fort Wayne proved unworthy of his rank as he cowered in his room drinking wine during the siege, while 1st Lt. Phillip Ostrander, Ens. Daniel Curtis, and the company of about seventy men bravely defended the post with only one wounded. Rhea would soon resign and the Fort Wayne company would remain in garrison until the end of the war. Meanwhile, Fort Madison's company was near St. Louis when it was attacked. First Lt. Thomas Hamilton, Captain Whistler's son-in-law, took command as over two hundred Winnebago and Sac warriors lay siege and attempted to fire the post with "fire brands" and flaming arrows. The small garrison was well trained and prepared for the attack, and "ammunition was plentiful, we shot at random." Second Lt. Barony Vasquez took command of a brass 2¾-inch howitzer during the siege, firing five second shells at the attackers, which "soon made their yellow jackets fly." Suffering one killed and one wounded, Hamilton's men gallantly defended their post during the four-day siege.⁷

In May 1813, Gen. Benjamin Howard at St. Louis ordered the evacuation of the 1st USI company at Fort Osage to shorten his lines of defense and obtain much needed troops. Upon its arrival at Fort Belle Fontaine, Capt. John Cleaves Symmes, took command of the company replacing Clemson who had been promoted to major. During the late summer, one platoon under Sgt. John Dutcher of Symmes' Company and Capt. Simon Ow-

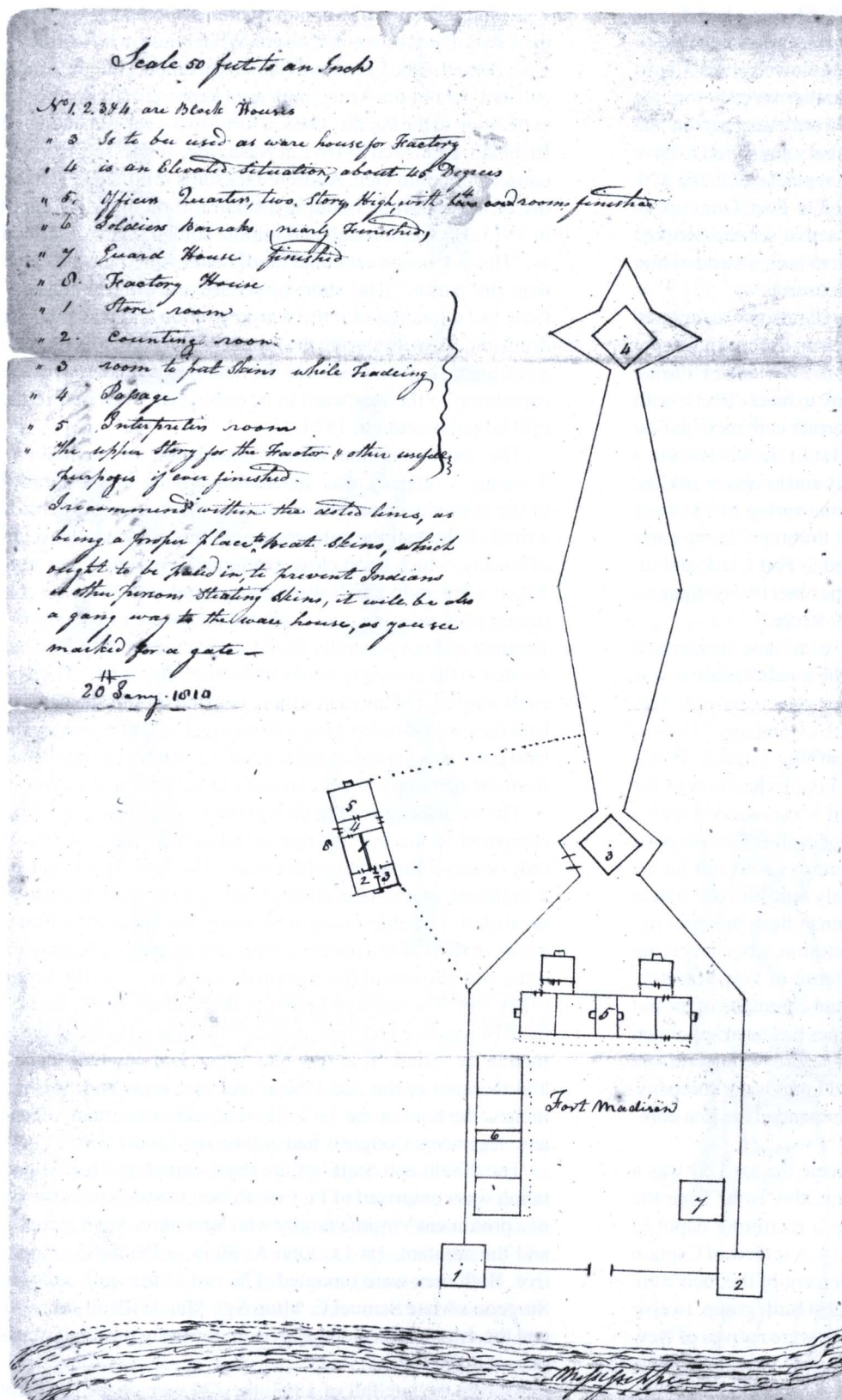


FIG 2. Fort Madison, 1808-1813, Missouri Territory, was evacuated after 3 November 1813; its garrison marched to Canada in 1814 with the old Fort Osage and Fort Clark garrisons. Plan is dated 20 January 1810, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs 1793-1989, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

ens' Company took part in General Howard's campaign against hostile Indians residing at the Peoria Lakes in central Illinois. After arriving at Peoria, the troops began construction of a stockade with blockhouses and soon were attacked by about 150 Pottawatomie. The short, yet fierce attack was fended off by gunboats; two six-pounders in blockhouses; and the infantry. This campaign, officially recognized as the Peoria Indian War of 1813, concluded with the completion of Fort Clark at the south end of Peoria Lakes with Captain Owens' Company placed in garrison.⁸

On 3 November 1813, after sustaining two more bloody attacks against his post during the summer of 1813 and finally running out of provisions, Lieutenant Hamilton evacuated Fort Madison, arriving at Fort Belle Fontaine on 25 November.⁹ Major Clemson bluntly informed Colonel Kingsbury their regiment was nothing but the recruiting depot for the 2d Infantry. Seeking an opportunity for action against the British, Clemson expected to be transferred to another regiment, preferably one on the Canadian frontier. Major Clemson asked Colonel Kingsbury "could not the few skeletons of Co's of the 1st Infy. be removed from the frontier where they have served for years, be united and go to the scene of action?" Kingsbury wrote to Bissell in summer 1812 and pledged to "use every execution in my power to get the Regiment together and take the tented field with them for I entirely agree with you in opinion that we have been a recruiting party for the Second regiment quite to long. ... we ought to be together on the Borders of Canada, where we can with the Regiment complete, I am confident, render an honorable account of ourselves."¹⁰

With good reason, Clemson began a letter writing campaign to Col. Thomas Cushing, Adjutant General of the Army "to solicit your aid in influence in effecting

my removal from this Post or Station.” Clemson had doubts Colonel Kingsbury would lead his regiment on campaign or even aggressively recruit it to fill its hollowed shell. Clemson expressed to Cushing he would “rather serve before the wall of Quebec than at a place cut off from every person and thing.” As late as October 1814, Kingsbury conspired to have the 1st USI removed from Canada and replaced with the 37th U.S. Infantry Regiment, then stationed at Fort Trumbull in Connecticut. Kingsbury, not wishing active service, worked behind the scenes to bring his regiment to him, instead of him joining the regiment in Canada or to recruit it.¹¹

After the Peoria Indian Campaign, Clemson was ordered to New Brunswick, New Jersey, to open up a recruiting depot for the 1st USI. While traveling east to New Jersey during December 1813, he took the opportunity to meet directly with Secretary of War John Armstrong, a former captain in the 1st USI. Clemson’s efforts succeeded as 1st Lt. Lewis Bissell, a subaltern in the old Fort Osage company and a nephew of Gen. Daniel Bissell would later recall, “In the spring of 1814 our regiment was ordered to the Northern Frontier.” In the early spring, Owens’ Company was replaced at Fort Clark and returned to Fort Belle Fontaine, joining the other two companies of the 1st USI, west of the Mississippi River.¹²

Three companies of the regiment were now in garrison together at Fort Belle Fontaine and the small battalion was organized. Lieutenant Vasquez, thirty-one-years-old, was placed in command of the “Late Owens’s Company.” He was fluent in Spanish, French, and still learning English. Previously, he had served on the Zebulon Pike Expedition to the southwest as a Spanish interpreter and was rewarded with a commission. He participated in the Tippecanoe Campaign of 1811, even sending home an Indian scalp as a souvenir for his brother. Vasquez explained he could only send him one Indian scalp due to “my horror of cutting human flesh prevents my taking more than one.” Thomas Hamilton, after receiving deserved praise for his prolonged defense of Fort Madison, was promoted to captain and took formal command of the old Fort Madison company. Captain Symmes had been appointed from the Northwest Territory in 1802. The thirty-four-year-old New Jersey native commanded the old Fort Osage company. Symmes, being the senior captain, commanded the first company in the three-company battalion.¹³

Though official records today indicate the 1st USI was a “New Jersey” regiment during the war, this is far from the truth. Major Clemson didn’t open up a recruiting depot in New Brunswick, New Jersey, until 1814. A review of Captain Symmes’ Company indicates thirty percent of the men were natives of Pennsylvania. The next largest birth group, twelve percent, was from Virginia. The recruits were natives of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Delaware, Maryland, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Connecticut, and Ireland. Their previous occupations included farmer, laborer, mason, hatter, blacksmith, saddler, baker, shoemaker, weaver, skin dresser, miller, and many others.¹⁴

Among the men of Captain Symmes’ Company were two men, Pvts. Patrick Gass and Joseph Whitehouse, who had previously served in the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Unique to most enlisted men in the Army, both men kept journals during the expedition to the Pacific. Gass, a forty-two-year-old one-eyed Irishman, reenlisted in 1812 at Nashville, Tennessee, to avoid conscription into Gen. Andrew Jackson’s militia. He lost the use of the eye while building a small fort on the Mississippi in 1813. He was a rough and tumble soldier, once described as, “His talk unconventional [and] better suited for the camp than the parlor.” The short-of-stature and “barrel-chested” Gass had a fondness for the whiskey ration and was tried for drunkenness twice during the month of December 1813. Also a celebrated author, Gass was the first to have a journal of the expedition to the westward to be published, even before the official publication in 1814.¹⁵

The most common former occupation of the men in Symmes’ Company was shoemaker, giving tangible proof of the consequence of the coming of the industrial age. It is a tired cliché that the soldiers during this era were the scum of society, which upon close examination is simply not true. Albeit a few individuals were corrupt and some became corrupted after enlisting, most enlisted men were of good moral standing and not generally found among the repetitive names notated in the company books under the column of, “Tried by court martial.” Many men simply enlisted for the 160 acres of land they would receive once discharged or for the money the land grant was valued at, which could instantly change a man from the penniless lower class to a landowner and farmer.¹⁶

The average age of the men of the 1st USI was thirty-one, compared to the average age of soldiers in the 21st USI at only twenty-four and one-half years. The 1st USI was indeed a regiment of the peacetime Army, where men frequently reenlisted. The oldest man in Symmes’ Company, Asa Pease, a forty-five-year-old former cooper and a native of Massachusetts, was also one of five men in the company over the height of six feet. The average height of the soldiers in the 1st USI in 1814 was five feet, nine inches.¹⁷ Compared to the enlisted men in the 21st USI at five feet, seven and one-half inches, and the men in the 22d USI at five feet eight and one-half inches, the men in the 1st USI were taller than many of the new regiments Congress had authorized for the war.¹⁸

The “Field and Staff” of the three-company 1st USI battalion was comprised of Lt. Col. Robert Carter Nicholas, son of a prominent Virginia family who later moved to Kentucky, and the adjutant, 1st Lt. John A. Shaw, a Pennsylvania native. Both men were mounted. The rest of the staff included Surgeon’s Mate Samuel C. Muir, Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, and the drum major, John Harrison, formerly the chief musician at Fort Osage.¹⁹

During the late fall of 1813, the 220 men of the regiment had drawn new arms from a stand of five hundred personally selected by Captain Symmes, and also new accouterments from the St. Louis Arsenal. United States steel-mounted .69 caliber flintlock muskets, along with buck and ball cartridges, new

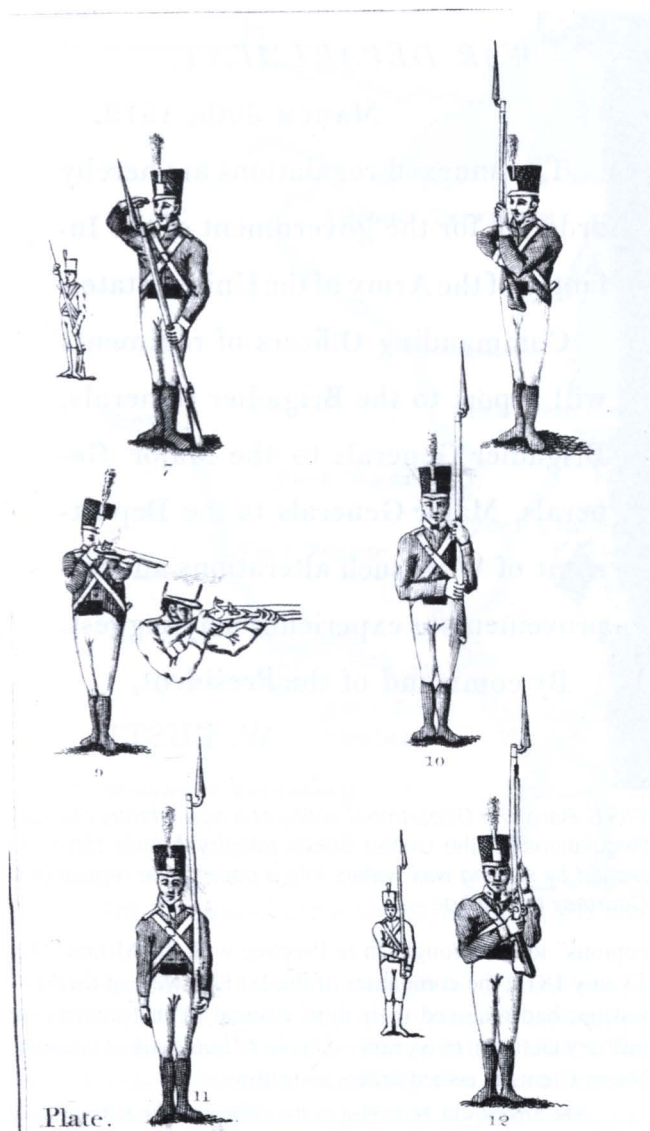


FIG 3. Infantry soldiers wearing the 1812 pattern coat, tall "gaiters" and the 1811 pattern cap. From William Duane, *A Handbook of Infantry* (Philadelphia: 1813). Courtesy the author.

cartridge boxes, and bayonet slings were issued in November.²⁰ Earlier in the year, the men received the new pattern coat of 1812 with a single row of buttons; blue body; red cuffs and collar; and white tape for the company tailors to sew on the breast. This replaced the pattern of 1810, which was double breasted with elaborate chevrons on each sleeve. Only six months later, in November 1813, the regiment received yet another new coat—the all-blue coat pattern of 1813. Unfortunately, Symmes' Company only received enough for forty-eight men although the company, with new recruits, had now swelled to over seventy men. Therefore, twenty-two men were still in the previous pattern coat and had to draw other clothing, such as trousers, shirts, and stockings, by lots. The captain now found his company uniformed in two completely different-styled coats.²¹ The companies of the 1st USI west of the Mississippi actually had worn three patterns of coats

in a single year, clearly illustrating their position at the end of a long supply line and the government's fluid situation in producing uniforms in a timely manner. Only the sergeants received gun worms, screwdrivers, and "brush and Prickers" for maintaining their muskets and only two-thirds of the men were issued slings for their muskets. The men's head cover was still the pattern of 1811 felt cylinder headgear.²²

On 23 March 1814, Secretary of War Armstrong wrote to a Missouri Territorial delegate the "1st Infantry Regt. has been recalled from the Westward for the purpose of recruiting it."²³ The "skeleton of the 1st Regiment" received its orders to proceed to Pittsburgh in order to be recruited to full strength, leaving Fort Belle Fontaine, Missouri Territory, on 23 April 1814. The flotilla of six keel boats with the three companies of the 1st USI sailed, poled, and cordelled down the Mississippi and up the Ohio River.²⁴ In seven days, they arrived "near Cumberland" on the Ohio and reached Cincinnati by the end of May 1814. The men were still unsure whether they were headed east to recruit or to northern New York. One newspaper account reported, "Colonel R. Nichols, with upwards of 200 regulars, from Fort Madison on the Mississippi, passed through Maysville, Ken. on the 4th instant, in boats destined for Sackett's Harbor." The flotilla landed at Pittsburgh by the end of June and the men enjoyed the national holiday, 4 July, which was "duly celebrated there."²⁵



FIG 4. Private, 1st U.S. Infantry Regiment, ca. 25 July 1814. Courtesy the artist, David P. Geister.

The men were issued the latest style of headgear on 4 July 1814, a seven-inch-tall leather cap, whose shape reminded them of a common gravestone or tombstone. The cap was loosely copied from the British and possibly produced by New York military goods manufacturer Robert Dingee, the most prominent supplier of military accouterments during the first half of the nineteenth century. The cap plate, plume, cockade, eagle, and "bands" or cords with tassels would not be issued to them until October. The men also received new style gaiters, which were made of black wool and reaching just below the kneecap, thus replacing their older style of "half" gaiters.²⁶

Before the war began, the military tactics used by the regiment was "the Baron," or *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of US troops of the United States*, by Baron De Steuben. In March 1812, it was replaced by *Regulations for the United States Infantry* "written by an officer in the Army in 1812 and ordered for the Government of the Army," which was an abridgement of the French 1791 infantry manual. Late in December 1813, Colonel Bissell was asked for his opinion on what manual was the best for the Army and the militia, to which he responded, "I should certainly should give Duane's Military Library and De Steuben's Exercise the preference, ... Duane's work might be made to suit that kind of Military forces which Republics are obliged to Resort to." Bissell believed the 1812 Regulations were "too confused" and "too

WAR DEPARTMENT,

MARCH 30th, 1812.

The annexed regulations are hereby ordered, for the government of the Infantry of the Army of the United States.

Commanding Officers of regiments will report to the Brigadier Generals, Brigadier Generals to the Major Generals, Major Generals to the Department of War, such alterations and improvements as experience may suggest.

By command of the President,

W. EUSTIS.

FIG 6. Rare War Department notice of a new Infantry manual, Regulations for the United States Infantry, March 1812, attached by sealing wax wafers into a copy of the regulations. Courtesy the author.

copious" to be "brought in to Practice with the Militia." By 13 July 1813, the companies of the 1st USI west of the Mississippi had received their third manual of instructions on military tactics in two years—*Duane's Handbook of Infantry*. Major Clemson issued orders as follows:

The Troops will be Drilled at the different Forts & Camps and Cantonments within the Limits of General Howards Command agreeable to the Regulations of the War Department, "Duane's Hand Book for Infantry" being adopted will be practiced two hours in the Morning commencing with or before Sunrise and alike period to end at sun Setting is desired most preferable and least Injurious to the Health of the Troops.

Since it had been almost five years when more than two companies of the 1st USI had been together to drill as a battalion. Orders were also given when the, "Battalion parades the field Officers will attend." Receiving three different coats in one year and now learning to drill to their third infantry manual in two years would be the least of their concerns.²⁷

The regiment soon received their orders to "join Gen. Brown on the Canada Line."²⁸ Lieutenant Bissell was detailed as battalion quartermaster and prepared for the march north to the lakes by collecting wagons and provisions. Sgt. George Davenport in Vasquez' Company recalled they "crossed the mountains on forced marches and arrived at Presque Isle," modern day Erie, Pennsylvania, on the south end of Lake Erie. On 21 July 1814, 220 men of the 1st USI embarked on the schooners *Ohio* and *Tigress* and landed at Fort Erie, Upper Canada.²⁹



FIG 5. H. Charles McBarron, Jr., "Musicians, 1st U.S. Infantry Regiment, Winter Uniform, 1812-1813," MUIA, pl. 23 (1950).



FIG 7. Garrisons of the 1st USI, ca. 1812–1815 and the route taken to Upper Canada, 1814. Courtesy the author.

The regiment soon crossed the Niagara River from Fort Erie over to Black Rock, New York, and then marched north to Fort Schlosser where they arrived at 1000 on 25 July 1814.³⁰ The regiment was under orders to join Maj. Gen. Jacob Brown's Left Division, presently in camp at the Chippewa River, Upper Canada. On the same day the regiment marched into Fort Schlosser, just across the river from his army. General Brown wrote "the reinforcements ordered from the West have not arrived." Brown was totally unaware the 1st USI was only a few miles away across the river and planning to join his army at that very moment.³¹

Brown began his 1814 campaign against the British with the taking of Fort Erie on 3 July as the 1st USI was being outfitted at Pittsburgh. His army had fought an engagement at Chippewa on 5 July and moved north up the peninsula to engage the British forts, but without the cooperation of the U.S. Navy and siege guns, he pulled his army back to his Chippewa camp by 24 July. The next day, Brown was informed of a British column moving south along the east bank of the Niagara River threatening the important U.S. military depot and hospital at Fort Schlosser. He ordered Gen. Winfield Scott to take his brigade north along the west bank to counter the threat. At about 1900, 25 July, Scott encountered the British main line on the high ground near Lundy's Lane and deployed his brigade. The Battle of Lundy's Lane was joined and Brown

would soon be racing out of camp with his other two brigades to support Scott.³²

Meanwhile, Colonel Nicholas and the 1st USI had already started to cross the Niagara River using large flat-bottomed scows. There were not enough boats to transport the entire battalion at one time, so only two of the three companies reached the Canadian shore around 1930, when they heard firing from Scott's Brigade amid the roar of the great Niagara Falls.³³ Symmes remembered, "Captain [Thomas] Hamilton had not yet got over the river, when the battle began; but deserves well for his gallant conduct at Schlosser, where hearing early in the afternoon that 1,500 British had crossed at Lewistown, and were on the way up, to destroy the Army baggage piled at that place." Hamilton organized various detachments along with his own company, forming a small command of about 150 men. Sending word to General Brown, they marched north to meet the enemy "who chose to return and re-cross without a contest." For his efforts, Hamilton received no credit but other officers were mentioned in his stead. Although he had organized the *ad hoc* units and marched north, an officer "superior in Rank" reached Hamilton's column and assumed command.³⁴

A scant 150 men of two companies of the 1st USI arrived now in Canada. The battalion had traveled more than 1,500 miles "after a long and fatiguing march from the banks of

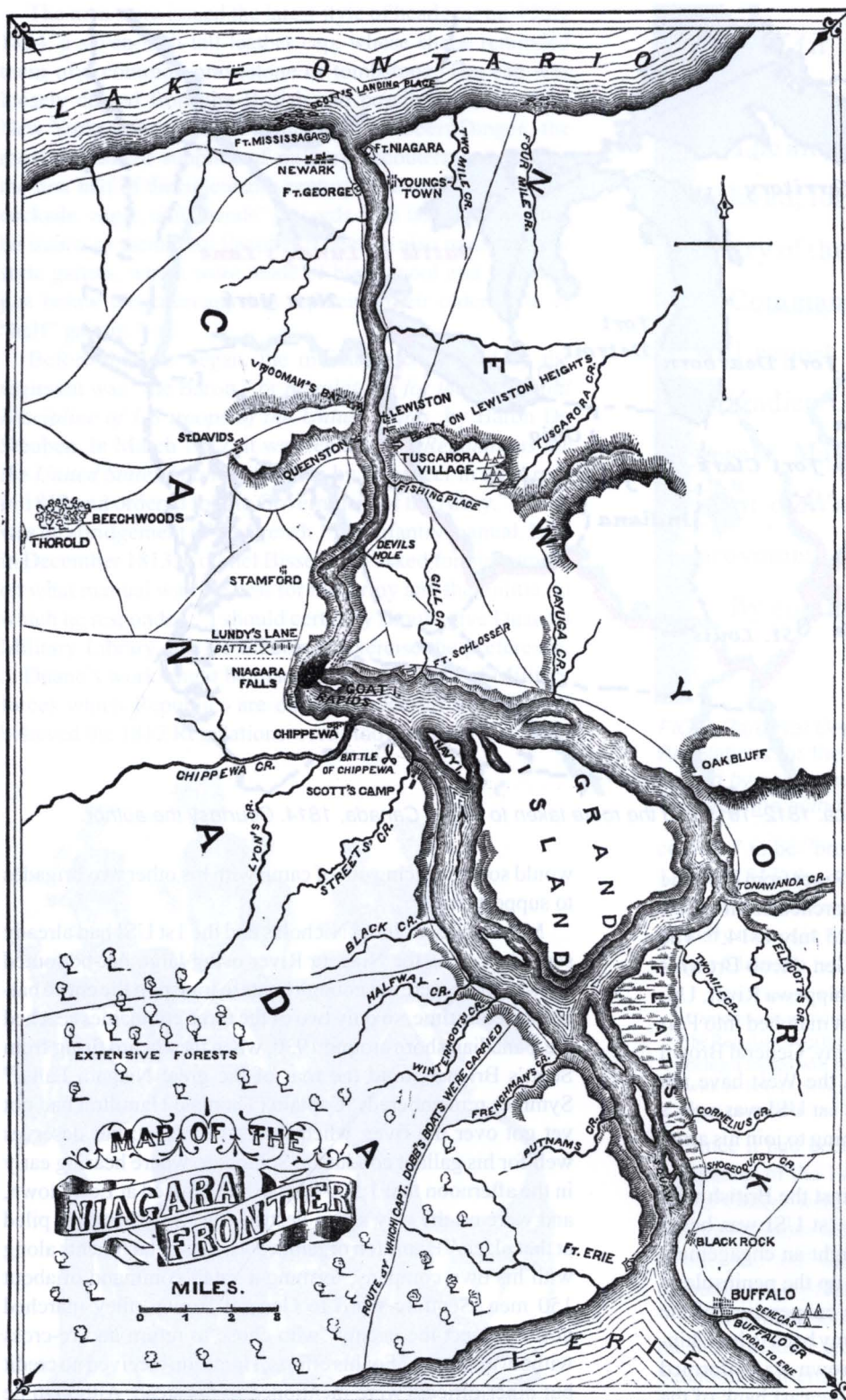


FIG 8. From Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*, 1869. Courtesy the author.

the Missouri River” and had just landed as the distant sounds of the bloodiest battle of the war could be heard over the timeless rumble of nearby Niagara Falls.³⁵ Nicholas quickly detailed one man from each company to remain at the river bank to guard the men’s knapsacks, which they dropped as soon as they heard the firing. Nicholas immediately formed his two companies into column and “marched with all possible expedition” to what was assumed to be the location of the battle.³⁶

They were three miles south of the contending armies and about one-half mile short of the American encampment. Nearly sunset, daylight was fading fast. As the men were already under arms, Nicholas gave the command to march at the double quick and the regiment surged forward, running “at full speed as long as our breath would serve.” Arriving at the American encampment, Nicholas searched for a staff officer or anyone who could direct them. Unsuccessful, Nicholas decided on his own to march without orders to the sound of the guns. They departed the American camp, taking the Portage or Queenston Road north and “marched without music, in consequence of the lateness of the evening.”³⁷

It was twilight when they reached the field. Nicholas first halted in the road and then moved his two companies off the road into the fields west of the Peer home. The regiment progressed through young buckwheat and then an orchard before halting the march near a house. Captain Symmes remembered “the cannon ball and grape shot here annoyed us and one man was wounded.” Nicholas looked for Gen. Eleazer Wheelock Ripley, from whom he expected to receive orders as the 1st USI was to be assigned to the 2d Brigade. Instead, Nicholas first found General Scott, and then met Maj. Eleazar D. Wood, U.S. Engineers. Both officers pointed into the darkness where the enemy was and Wood led them to the west of the orchard. The regiment marched forward about a quarter-mile and eventually met another member of General Brown’s staff, Maj. William McRee of the Engineers.³⁸

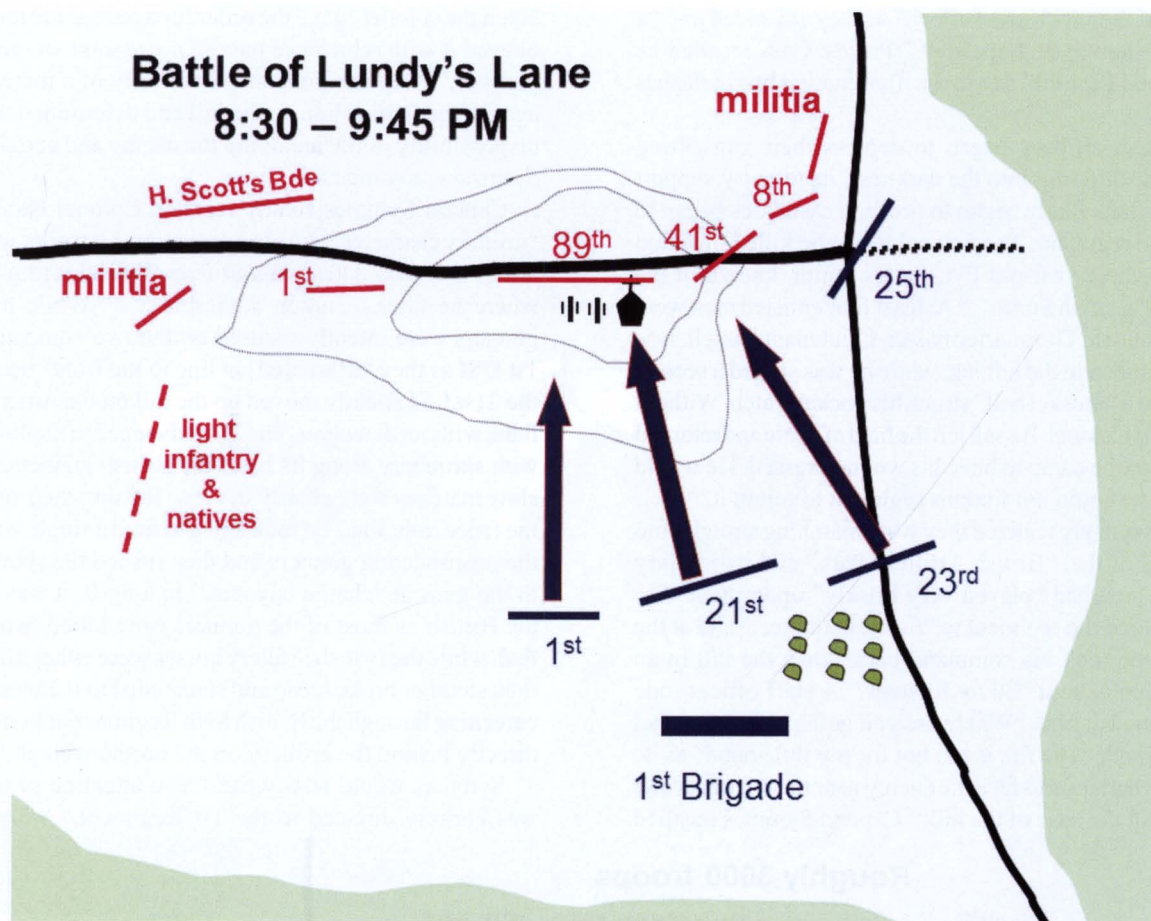


FIG 9. Map courtesy of Richard V. Barbuto.

General Brown realized the British had the advantage on the field with their artillery posted on a hill near a church and cemetery along Lundy's Lane. Brown knew the high ground was the key to the British defense and he determined to carry the hilltop. Meanwhile, General Scott's Brigade had "suffered severely" and was reorganizing as a reserve about 150 yards in the rear.³⁹ Brown gave orders for Ripley's 2d Brigade to take the heights, but was desperately short of assault troops. Brown was just now apprised the 1st Infantry Regiment was on the field of battle. Without wasting any time, Brown issued orders for Nicholas to move "to the left and form a line facing the enemy on the heights with a view to drawing off his force and attracting his attention." Brown would later write "the 1st regiment ... was directed to manoeuvre and amuse the infantry." In other words, he intended for the 1st USI to attack the British line as a diversion and expected them to not stop until making contact with the British line.⁴⁰

About this time, Nicholas was informed the 21st and 23d U.S. Infantry Regiments were also attacking the heights to his east. Nicholas was not aware exactly where they were and was concerned they would fire on their own troops in the darkness. Before moving forward, Nicholas sent his adjutant, Lieutenant Shaw, to find out exactly where his fellow regiments were. Shaw soon returned without making contact with either one. General Ripley led the 23d USI in column north on the

portage road, and then wheeled into line to attack the British left flank. The 21st USI, commanded by Col. John Miller, approached the heights to the left of the 23d.⁴¹

Regardless of Brown's intentions, he issued orders through his staff officers ordering the 1st USI to march straight up the heights in a frontal attack against the British-held hilltop defended by five guns, a rocket detachment, and over one thousand infantry in direct support behind the guns and on the enemy right flank. At the same time, the 432 men of the 21st USI and 300 men of the 23d USI were in position to storm the hill east of Nicholas's 1st USI and on the British left flank and rear. Other than a couple of staff officers and General Scott, Colonel Nicholas and his men had not yet actually seen any of their own troops nor the enemy ever since they reached the battlefield as they prepared to march up the slope into the darkness.⁴²

Although the moon was out, the south side of the hilltop was in the shadows and pitch black, the British on the heights, about one hundred yards or more from the 1st USI, could likely hear the orders from the American officers as they moved from column, deploying them into line to advance up the heights. The British gunners let loose an intense fire against them, yet due to the slope of the hill most of the shots soared over their heads tearing up the young apple trees in the orchard behind them. Colonel Nicholas and Lieutenant Shaw "cheered and

animated the men with great effect," as they advanced into "a very heavy shower of grape shot." Private Gass recalled he felt, "Damned Bashful" due to the illuminating bright flashes of the artillery.⁴³

The British artillery began to depress their guns firing canister and solid shot into the darkness, its infantry support on the right flank likely began to fire, and casualties began to mount in the regiment. The first soldier to be killed in action was twenty-three-year-old Pvt. James Smith, known in the regiment as "Catfish Smith."⁴⁴ At least four enlisted men were quickly wounded. The quartermaster, Lieutenant Bissell, was slightly wounded in the left leg, while he was spared a second wound when a "musket ball" struck his pocket watch. Without informing his Colonel, Bissell left the field of battle and returned three miles to the camp to have his wound dressed. He would later report he could not find his regiment to rejoin it.⁴⁵

Nicholas quickly realized they were marching straight into the muzzles of the, "British Artillery Park" and its infantry supports, which had "played very briskly" upon them. The colonel ordered the regiment to "right about face," and at the quick step, he took his command back down the hill in an orderly fashion about "20 to 30 steps." A staff officer rode up and shouted at him, "Where are you going?" The Colonel dryly remarked, "The fire is too hot for my little band" as he wheeled his battalion to face the enemy near the left of a white farm house at the base of the hill.⁴⁶ Captain Symmes recalled

when the colonel "gave the order for a retrograde movement I obeyed it with reluctance but did not assume or question the motives." Nicholas understood the folly of a mere 150 men against the British line on the hill and determined there "was no possibility of my annoying the enemy and certainty of his destroying my men."⁴⁷

Captain Symmes fondly recalled Colonel Nicholas as a "military character, who always inspires his troops with heroic ardor: and who dares without fear of slander to use caution where he thinks caution advisable" While the British gunners were intently focused on the two companies of the 1st USI as they "March[ed] in line to the front" up the slope, the 21st USI silently moved up the hill on the American right flank without detection. The 21st advanced to a split-rail fence with shrubbery along its base, the British gunners with their slow matches were clearly in view. Resting their muskets on the fence rails, the 21st took aim and fired a single volley upon the unsuspecting gunners and then rushed the short distance to the guns at "charge bayonet." In a flash, it was chaos for the British as most of the gunners were killed, wounded, or fled, while the British artillery horses were either killed where they stood or broke loose and stampeded to the west or north, careening through the British 89th Regiment of Foot, that was directly behind the artillery on the northern slope.⁴⁸

Symmes would later write, "The attention of the enemy was entirely directed to the 1st Regiment," when Colonel

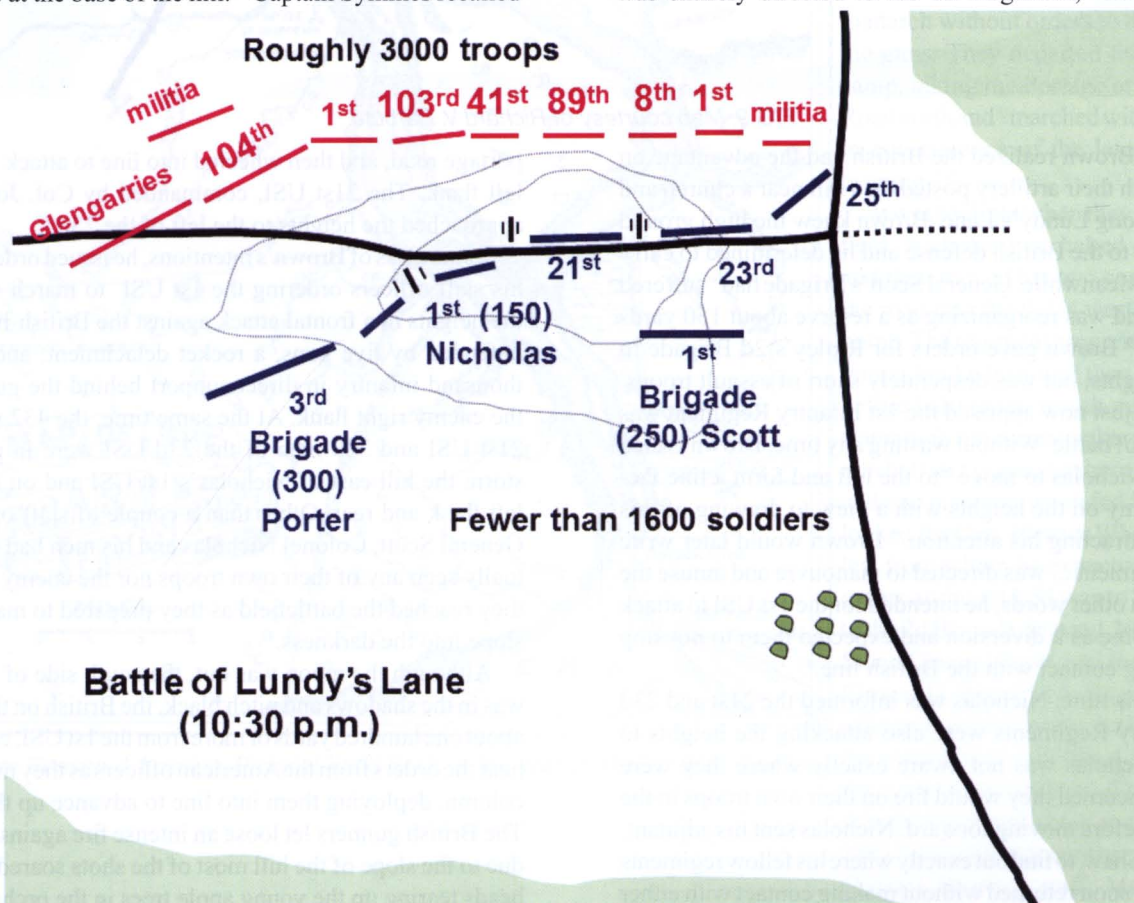


FIG 10. Map courtesy Richard V. Barbuto. Edited and additional information regarding the 1st USI added to the map by the author.

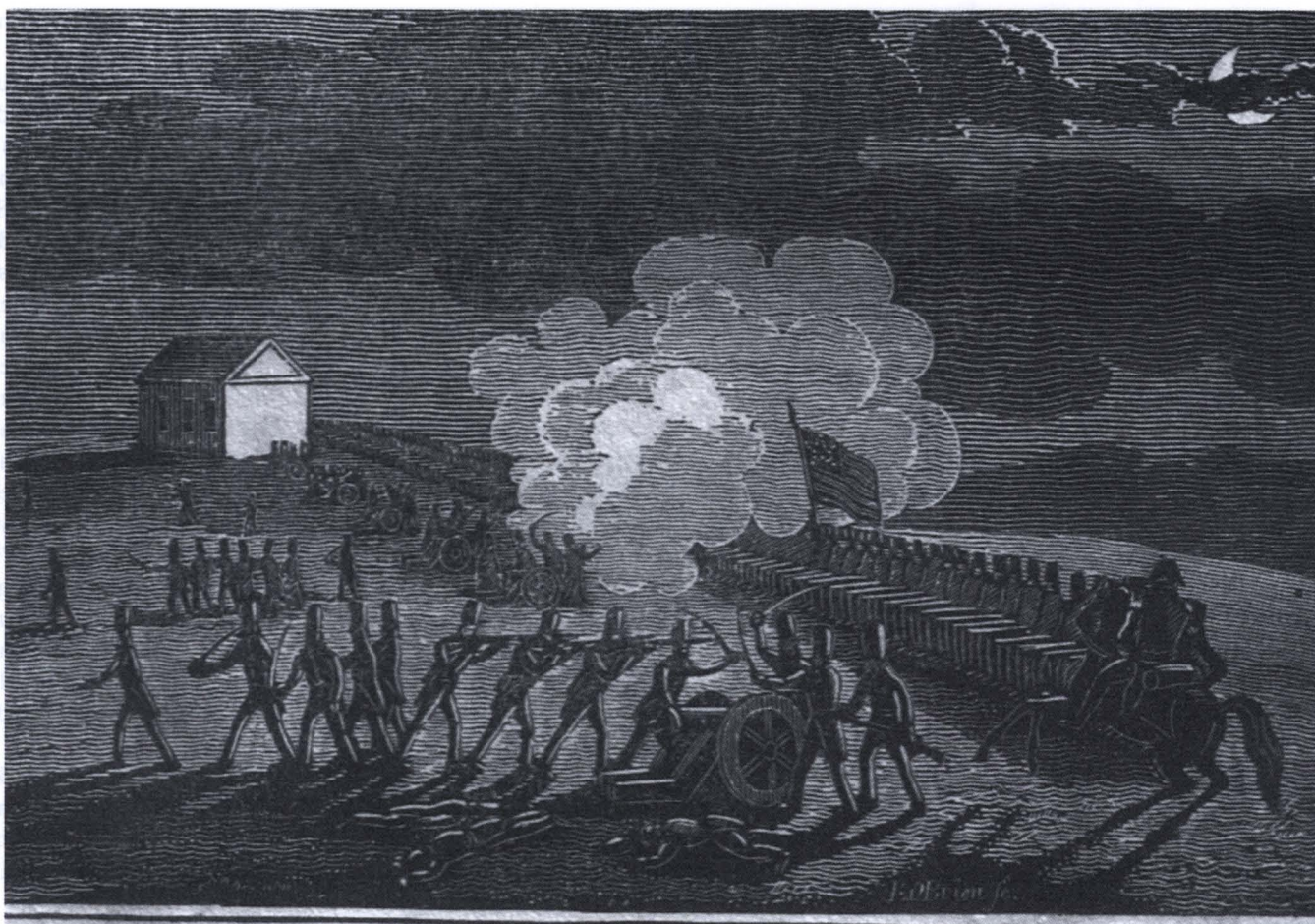


FIG 11. Battle of Bridgewater, 25 July 1814. From *The Glory of America* (New York: Ezera Strong, 1834). Courtesy of the author.

Miller and the 21st USI made their successful attack on the British batteries, capturing it by a “covert charge.” Symmes could have easily pointed out the role the 1st USI had with the success of taking the heights and was “warranted in stating that Col. Miller did not receive a single fire from the cannon of the enemy, and I believe it to be a fact, that his attack was so sudden and unexpected, that they did not use their small arms until they were driven from their battery and forced to retreat.”⁴⁹

Informed by a staff officer the “Enemy’s park of artillery was taken,” Nicholas ordered his command immediately back up the hill.⁵⁰ The regiment passed a broken fence row and a hedge row as they moved into a graveyard through heavy musket fire. He fell in to the right of the 21st USI, until General Ripley ordered him to move his two companies to the left. The 23d USI then took their place on the right of Colonel Miller’s 21st USI and a single company each of the 17th and 19th U.S. Infantry Regiments were placed in line as well. For the first time since arriving on the field, Nicholas met his brigade commander, General Ripley, who was, no doubt, surprised to find the 1st USI was even on the field of battle. General Brown ordered American artillery batteries to the heights to support Ripley’s Brigade. Capt. John Ritchie’s artillery company of two 6-pounder guns and a 5½-inch howitzer, was “placed upon

our center” of Nicholas’s two companies—the first company under Captain Symmes’ command and the second company under the command of Lieutenant Vasquez at an obtuse angle from the line.⁵¹

The British now began three major counterattacks to recover their guns on the heights. The fierce counterattacks reminded Private Gass as a “blast of flame and smoke, as if from the crater of hell ...”⁵² Colonel Nicholas was overheard shouting to his men “give it to them my boys!”⁵³ The first of the three British counterattacks consisted primarily of the 1st Foot (Royal Scots) and the 89th Regiment of Foot. However, the British line was a concoction of several different units that had become intermingled during the melee in the dark to retrieve the lost guns. The British first fired a volley and then attempted to charge with the bayonet to force the Americans from the heights. The action soon became hand to hand, but the charge was halted. The British assault then melted into an exchange of volleys with the American line for about twenty minutes. Only the width of Lundy’s Lane at times separated the two armies. Symmes remembered, “We swept them to the ground.” Nicholas moved the second company a little more forward to the line. Gen. Peter Porter then brought his 3d Brigade of volunteers and Indians up on line just left of the 1st USI. Immediately to their left was Colonel Willcock’s U.S.

Canadian Volunteers; then Fenton's Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers; and then the New York Militia. The 25th USI of Scott's 1st Brigade was placed on the far right flank of the American line along the heights.⁵⁴

It was about this time, Lieutenant Vasquez was found to have been shot in the thigh and also bayoneted in the leg. The veteran Indian fighter from the West would be the only American officer reported as bayoneted during the battle. Sergeant Davenport was detailed to help the officer to the rear. When he returned, he couldn't find his musket he had laid down to perform the service. He soon found another next to a dead British soldier. It was a "Glengarries Musket." Davenport felt it was a "very excellent exchange for the one I lost."⁵⁵

The darkness contributed to confusion and soldiers from both sides were captured when they ventured too far into the enemy's lines. Symmes recalled in his regiment the "cartridges were of a size ... larger than the rest of the army had, this together with [our] white pantaloons made the enemy mistake [the 1st] for a Regt. of their own and led to the taking of prisoners." A captain, a lieutenant, and then two noncommissioned officers of the 89th Regiment of Foot were captured and Captain Symmes personally delivered them to General Ripley. Since most of the regiments in Brown's army were clothed with gray wool jackets and trousers, it was easy for the British to mistake the 1st USI as a British regiment. In the darkness, a blue coat would not look any different than a red coat. After Lieutenants Bissell and Vasquez were both wounded, Captain Symmes found himself as the only platoon officer on the ground. He personally distributed flints and cartridges to the

men. Surgeon's Mate Muir busied himself collecting wagons to move the wounded back to camp.⁵⁶

The second counterattack, which began about a half hour after the first, consisted of several British regiments, including the 89th, 103d, 104th, and the 1st Foot (Royal Scots), that traded volleys with the 1st USI. During this assault, the U.S. Canadian Volunteers to the immediate left of the 1st USI were routed and the rest of Gen. Peter Porter's 3d Brigade followed. Nicholas ordered the second company to refuse their flank, wheeling to the left rear. They then poured volley after volley directly into the British surging line and kept up a destructive fire upon them until the British counterattack collapsed.⁵⁷ Pvt. Alexander McMullen, Fenton's Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, recalled, "Colonel Nicholas had joined us that evening with a regiment of regulars, who had been kept in reserve, but now by skilful maneuvers placed themselves between us and the British and kept up a destructive fire upon them until they fell back, and the firing ceased."⁵⁸ Captain Symmes recalled they "repulsed the enemies charge when the volunteers were quite driven before it." The soldiers were firing buck and ball, of which Symmes felt "nothing could be better for that close night-fight." Each man would empty three cartridge boxes for an average of seventy rounds fired during the battle.⁵⁹

Sometime during the first or second British counterattack, Symmes and the men of the regiment thought they heard orders to charge, and charge they did against the 89th Regiment of Foot and "drove them some distance with the points of our

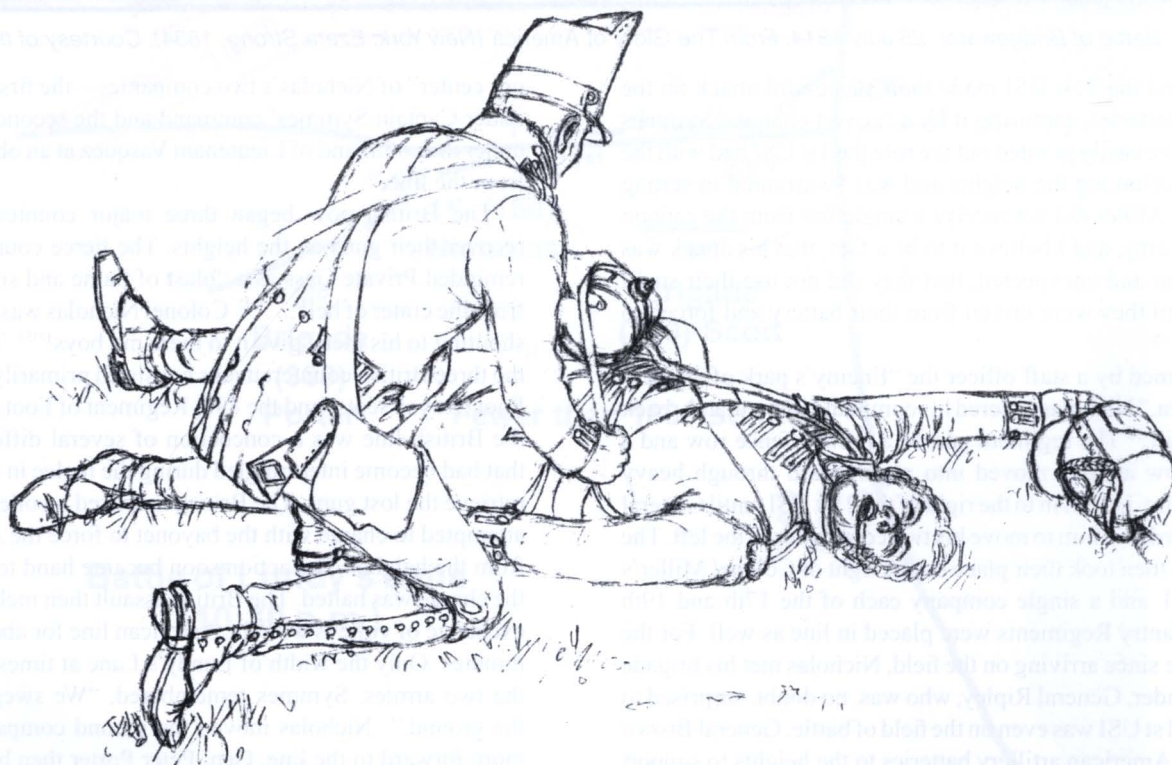


FIG 12. Private, 1st U. S. Infantry, the "Want of water" was severe for the US Troops at Lundy's Lane, private "forages" for water. Courtesy the artist, David P. Geister.



FIG 13. Rare view of Lundy's Lane battlefield, ca. late 1850s, Niagara Falls are in the background, with the cemetery in the center right. A sightseeing observatory tower with lattice-work has been built ca. 1855, north of Lundy's Lane. Daguerreotype by Thomas Easterly. Courtesy the Prints and Photographs Department, Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, MO.

close pursuing Bayonets, at a full charge in which they were the principal suffer[er]s.”⁶⁰ Colonel Nicholas and Adjutant Shaw chased after them and called them back to the line before they would completely disappear into the darkness. The British would charge with the bayonet at least three times, but “their desperate courage did not serve to intimidate our soldiers who seem resolved to perish to a man rather than retreat.” Despite the fact the rank and file had just that morning completed a long fatiguing journey of some fifteen hundred miles, the officers “could hardly restrain the enthusiasm of our men or call them off.” The colonel’s horse was also struck by musket fire during the several counterattacks and would later die from the wounds.⁶¹

Before the third counterattack, Nicholas ordered the second company to advance into line with the first, “abreast of a broken Fence.” Symmes would later write, “When the rage of battle subsided I crept in advance of our Regt. and with my ear to the ground ascertained what was in front.” The third British attack ebbed and flowed amidst the British cannons

on the hilltop, yet again ran out of momentum. “Amidst the clash of bayonets,” Captain Symmes recalled, his men “were once for a moment, pressed back by a charge but as instantly they repelled the onset and resumed the line ... I believe it might be said we saved the Battle.”⁶²

After the third attempt, about 2300, the British finally had enough and halted their efforts to dislodge the American line on the hilltop. Still in line of battle along Lundy’s Lane, the 1st USI and the rest of the American forces stood amid the wreckage of blown up caissons; carcasses of sixty some horses; and the dead and wounded from both armies. “The dead were literally piled in heaps,” recalled Private Gass. Hospital Surgeon Ezekiel W. Bull remembered “such a scene of carnage I never beheld, particularly at Lundy’s Lane, red coats and blue and grey were promiscuously intermingled, in many places three deep, and around the hill where the enemy’s artillery was carried.”⁶³

The “long hard fought night battle” had created a serious “want of water” within General Brown’s army. Lieutenant Bis-

sell remembered, "About midnight we were in possession of the field when we were ordered back to camp for refreshments and a little repose," expecting to again occupy the heights "as the day dawned" the next morning. General Brown had left the field with a serious wound. Incredibly, his last order to General Ripley was to lead the army back to camp and then return to the battlefield before daylight. General Porter believed General Ripley should have disobeyed the order of a seriously wounded man four miles from the scene of battle, but Ripley obeyed. The next morning, Captain Symmes commanded the first platoon in the column returning "to bury the dead." The march was short lived, as the British had recovered their guns and were back in their old positions on top of the hill. A military conference decided to withdraw to the camp at Chippewa and eventually to Fort Erie. The battle of "Bridge Water," now known as the Battle of Lundy's Lane, was over.⁶⁴

The 1st USI suffered 29 percent casualties with 11 killed in action, 30 wounded with 2 missing.⁶⁵ Pvt. Lloyd Pyott, a twenty-eight-year-old former mason from Lancaster, Penn-

sylvania, was wounded by a "musket ball in his left ankle." The surgeon gave more details "the ball entering the lower extremity of the fibula and fracturing that bone in its passage and injuring the articulation of the ankle, which wound is yet painful when standing or walking."⁶⁶ In Symmes company alone, 8 enlisted men killed in action, 2 men mortally wounded, and 1 man missing. Among the wounded were: Lieutenants Vasquez and Bissell; Privates Pyott, Henry Probus, Robert M. Wilson, George Weaver, Ammi Fenn, Abijah Davis, and Sgt. William German.⁶⁷ Among those killed in action was Corp. Charles Mason, who died upon his native soil, Upper Canada, and also the oldest man in Symmes' Company, forty-five-year-old Asa Pease.⁶⁸

Regarding the resolve of the rank and file, Symmes wrote in 1815, "Before we entered this field of battle, I scrutinized the countenances of several platoons, adding a few exciting words, and found them every thing I could wish. They proved so throughout the action. I saw none of them give way at any



FIG 14. Another rare view of Lundy's Lane battlefield, circa late 1850s, showing the steepness of the western slope of Lundy's Lane after passing the cemetery, just out of sight and over the crest of the hill to the right or south side of the road. A second sightseeing observatory tower is on the north side of Lundy's Lane. Daguerreotype by Thomas Easterly. Courtesy the Prints and Photographs Department, Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, MO.

time while facing the enemy.”⁶⁹ Bitterly, Captain Symmes recalled his men “had nothing to flatter or please them, but the pleasure of recounting to one another, their engagements and arderous [*sic*] tours of duty. This would have been sufficient compensation thro life, had not other regiments ... been loaded with Official honors for doing their duty well. If any Regt. found it possible to do more than their duty, the 1st have done no less.”⁷⁰

General Ripley, in brigade orders issued on 28 July 1814 at Camp Erie, thanked Colonel Nicholas and the 1st USI for their “gallant conduct during the battle.”⁷¹ However, General Brown’s report of the battle contained numerous errors. His report stated, “To my great mortification, this regiment, after a discharge or two, gave way and retreated some distance, before it could be rallied.”⁷² None of which was true as the regiment had not yet fired a round and obeyed a direct order to “about face” and marched only about twenty to thirty yards before halting and wheeling to the front. If Brown only intended the 1st USI to demonstrate in front of the British line, then why would he be “mortified” if they didn’t march all the way to the top of the hill and supposedly “gave way?” Obviously, Brown was misinformed by the staff officer who only saw the battalion as it was wheeling at the foot of the hill. Colonel Nicholas would eventually face a court-martial, which ruled he took the correct action and was cleared of the stain of dishonor that was painted by Brown’s published report. Captain Symmes wrote of the “pain I have long felt; at the neglect our Regiment experienced in the Official reports of the Campaign.” He bristled at those authors who had undertaken to “write a history of the late war between Great Britain and the United States ... copying into their works the misrepresentations & misstatements of the Official reports.” The senior captain of the 1st USI while in Canada would make it his life-long pursuit to set the record straight. He always believed the truth would finally prevail and “justice yet be done.”⁷³

John C. Symmes wrote, “I have long wished ... to thank [General Armstrong] for sending the 1st Regt. to Canada because it afforded an opportunity of gathering Laurels, its true the laurels it gathered are hidden but should they not be searched out, and they will sooner or later, like hidden truth, spontaneously arise ... to be heard from; the whole Regt. owes General Armstrong our thanks.”⁷⁴

The veteran 1st U.S. Infantry Regiment traveled from the far frontier some fifteen hundred miles arriving mid-course on the day and hour of a desperate and bloody night battle. Under strength and unknown to General Brown and his staff, they fought hard and did ther duty. Although its story was lost among the inflated egos and reputations of Generals Brown, Scott, and Porter, it is an American story of faithful service to their country.

The author wishes to thank Company members Richard Barbuto and Sally Bennett for their reading of the manuscript and their helpful suggestions.

Notes

1. 1st Infantry Company Descriptive Books: Capt.’s John Whistler and James Rhea no. 55, Horatio Stark no. 223, Eli B. Clemson and John C. Symmes no. 53/128, Simon Owens and Thomas Hamilton, no. 52, Company Books, Records of the United States Army Commands, 1784–821, Records of Units: Infantry, 1789–1815, 1st Infantry Regiment, Record Group 98, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC. A fully recruited infantry regiment could have up to 10 companies of 80 to 100 men each.
2. Col. Jacob Kingsbury to Lt. Col. Daniel Bissell, 28 July 1812, L–5, 1812, V–22 Kingsbury Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, MI. (Hereafter cited as Kingsbury Papers, Burton Collection, DPL); Adjutant Inspector Abimael Nicholl to Kingsbury, 28 March 1812, Office of the Adjutant General Letters Sent, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration. (Hereafter NARA.).
3. Capt. Eli B. Clemson to Lt. Col. Daniel Bissell (Fort Osage officers to the Secretary of War), 22 July 1812, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington: GPO, 1949), 14: 586–590 (hereafter Carter, *Territorial Papers.*); Daniel Bissell Letter Book, 14 July 1812, Daniel Bissell Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Missouri. (Hereafter cited as Bissell Letter Book, Daniel Bissell Papers, MHS.); Maj. Eli Clemson to Col. Jacob Kingsbury, 14 December 1813, Kingsbury Papers, Burton Collection, DPL.
4. James Dalliba, *Narrative of the Battle of Brownstown* (New York: David Longworth, 1816); Bissell Letter Book, 12 September 1812, Daniel Bissell Papers, MHS.
5. Ibid.
6. Andrew Peers, *The Farmer’s Calendar, Almanac, For The Year Of Our Lord 1812* (Bennington, Vermont: William Haswell, 1812), “September ... New moon, 5th day, twenty-eight minutes past two.”
7. David C. Bennett, “A New Perspective on the Last Day’s of Fort Madison,” *Journal of the War of 1812*, 12, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 14.
8. Gen. Benjamin Howard to the Secretary of War, 28 October 1813, Carter, *The Territorial Papers*, 16: 370–373; Captain Clemson/Symmes Company, Descriptive Book, Records of Army Commands 1784–1821, No. 53/128, Record Group 98, National Archives and Records Administration (Hereafter cited as Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA); Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Washington: GPO, 1903), 2: 298.
9. David C. Bennett, “A New Perspective on the Last Day’s of Fort Madison,” *Journal of the War of 1812*, 12, no. 3 (Fall 2009): 20.
10. Maj. Eli B. Clemson to Col. Jacob Kingsbury, 14 December 1813, Kingsbury Papers, Burton Collection, DPL; Col. Kingsbury to Lt. Col. Daniel Bissell, 28 July 1812, Kingsbury Papers, Burton Collection, DPL.
11. Capt. E. B. Clemson to Thomas H. Cushing, Adjutant General, 1 October 1812, Office of the Adjutant General Letters Received, Microcopy 566, Roll 8, no. 366, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration; Jacob Kingsbury to James W. Kingsbury, 3 October 1814, Kingsbury Family Papers, 1791–1924, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO.
12. Maj. E. B. Clemson to Col. Nicoll, Inspector General, 22 December 1813, (Microcopy 566, Roll 20, no. 991), Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1805–1821, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration. “In a conversation I had on Sunday last with the Honbl. Sec. of War ...”; Lewis Bissell to Elihu Shepard, 20 July 1866, Lewis Bissell Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO (hereafter cited as Bissell Papers, MHS).
13. Ensign Baronet Vasquez to Benito Vasquez, 9 November 1811 and 25 November 1811, Vasquez Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO. Captain Simon Owens 1810–1815, No. 52, and Capt. Horatio Stark (reassigned to Capt. Thomas Hamilton) 1812–1815, No. 223, and Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA; “Family of Benito Vasquez,” Vasquez Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO.
14. Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA.
15. Patrick Gass, Military District No. 9, Medical Disability Form, 5 June

- 1815, Old War File 25097, Pension office, NARA: John G. Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass* (Wellsburg, VA: Jacobs and Smith, 1859), 170–173 (hereafter cited as Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass*; Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA).
16. Company descriptive books for Capt. John Whistler's Company (Fort Detroit), Capts. James Rhea/Hugh Moore (Fort Wayne), Capts. Eli Clemson/Symmes (Fort Osage), Capt. Horatio Stark (Fort Madison), and Capt. Simon Owens (Fort Belle Fontaine) have been examined. Records of the United States Army Commands, 1784–1821, Records of Units: Infantry, 1789–1815, 1st Infantry Regiment, Record Group 98, NARA.
17. Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA and Capt. Simon Owens 1810–1815, No. 52, and Capt. Horatio Stark (reassigned to Capt. Thomas Hamilton) 1812–1815, No. 223, Record Group 98, NARA.
18. *Ibid.*; Joseph Whitehorne, *While Washington Burned, The Battle for Fort Erie, 1814* (Baltimore: Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company, 1992), Annex O, 175, 178.
19. Muster Roll Field and Staff, "1. Regt. Infantry," 30 April 1814, signed Jno. Cleaves Symmes, Capt., Mustering Officer, Series 3, NARA; Correspondence with Pat Johnson, 14 August 2005.
20. John C. Symmes Journal, 9U, Symmes Papers, Draper Manuscripts, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Hereafter cited as Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Clemson/Symmes Company Book, NARA.
21. Capt. John C. Symmes to Lt. John Campbell, Brigade Major, 21 November 1813, 1WW, No. 53, Symmes Papers, Drapers Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin (hereafter cited as Symmes Papers, Draper Manuscripts, SHSW).
22. Capt. Simon Owens 1810–1815, No. 52, and Capt. Horatio Stark (reassigned to Capt. Thomas Hamilton) 1812–1815, No. 223, Record Group 98, NARA; Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA.
23. Secretary of War to Delegate Hempstead, 23 March 1814, Carter, *Territorial Papers*, 14: 746.
24. Maj. Eli B. Clemson to Col. Jacob Kingsbury, 14 December 1813, Kingsbury Papers, Burton Collection, DPL; Christian Wilt, 23 April 1814, Wilt Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Missouri; Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass*. Gass was incorrect stating that there were four companies of the 1st Infantry that went to Canada.
25. Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA; Barony Vasquez to Benito Vasquez, 29 May 1814, Newport Kentucky, Vasquez Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO; *Niles Weekly Register* (Baltimore), 18 June 1814, authors collection. As of 29 May, Lt. Colonel Nicholas was still unsure if they were going to Fort Pitt to recruit or to remain at Louisville, KY, when they arrived, as there was "no talk of campaigns for the present."
26. Capt. Simon Owens 1810–181, No. 52, Capt. Horatio Stark (reassigned to Capt. Thomas Hamilton) 1812–1815, No. 223; Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA. A small "W" was notated next to the column with "gaithers" when issued; Records of the Quartermaster General, 14 March 1814, Supply Orders Issued, Philadelphia Supply Agencies, 1795–1858, Entry 2117, Subentry 43, 2 of 8, Record Group 92, NARA. Caps made by Dingee were issued to Major Clemson, 1st USI, recruiting in New Jersey in 1814; Bruce S. Bazelon and William F. McGuinn, *A Directory of American Military Goods, Dealers & Makers 1785–1885* (Manassas, Virginia: REF Typesetting & Publishing, 1987), 20.
27. Col. Daniel Bissell to Gen. T. H. Cushing, 5 February 1813, (Microcopy 566, Roll 19, no. 270), Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1805–1821, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration.; Major E. B. Clemson, Actg. As. Adj. General, Extract from General Orders, Head-Quarters St. Louis, 13 July 1813, Belle Fontaine Letters, 24 August 1808 to 28 July 1813, bound with Fort Madison Garrison Orders, 2 January 1812 to 3 November 1813, bound with Belle Fontaine Letters, 29 November 1812 to 27 February 1814, Special Collections, West Point Library, USMA, West Point, NY. The term "the Baron" was in common use throughout the 1802 to 1812 time period.
28. Franc B. Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present* (Davenport, IA: Luse and Lane, 1858), 150 (hereafter cited as Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present*).
29. Bissell to Shepard, 20 July 1866, Bissell Papers, MHS; Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present*, 150; Extract *Niles Register* (Baltimore), 6 August 1814, *The Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier, 1814*, ed., Ernest Cruikshank (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 4: 74–75 (hereafter Cruikshank, *Documentary History*).
30. Col. Robert C. Nicholas, court-martial 1816, Record Group 153, NARA, (hereafter cited as Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA).
31. Maj.-Gen. Brown to the Secretary of War, 25 July 1814, Cruikshank, *The Documentary History*, 4: 87.
32. Donald E. Graves, *The Battle of Lundy's Lane, On the Niagara in 1814* (Baltimore: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company, 1993) (hereafter Graves, *Battle of Lundy's Lane*).
33. Bissell to Shepard, 20 July 1866, Bissell Papers, MHS.
34. John C. Symmes to William A. Trimble, 8 April 1815, 9U, Symmes Papers, Draper Manuscript, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. (hereafter cited as Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript SHSW); *Kentucky Reporter* (Louisville), 9 April 1821 (notes written on and pinned on the paper by J. C. Symmes), 2WW, Symmes Papers, Draper Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin (hereafter cited as *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW).
35. *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
36. *Ibid.*; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; John C. Symmes Journal, DR-63, 9U, Frontier War Papers, Draper Manuscript, State Historical Society of Wisconsin (hereafter cited as Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW).
37. *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Symmes to Trimble; Statement of Lieut. Shaw, 1st Regiment, United States Infantry, Cruikshank, *The Documentary History*, 4: 357.
38. *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
39. Graves, *Battle of Lundy's Lane*, 124.
40. *Ibid.*, 129; in Jacob Brown to Secretary of War John Armstrong, 7 August 1814, John Brannon, *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States during the War with Great Britain in the Years 1812, 13, 14, and 15* (Washington City: Way & Gideon, 1823), 381.
41. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
42. Graves, *Battle of Lundy's Lane*, 222; Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
43. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass*, 172. There is no evidence Patrick Gass was somehow transferred from his regiment to the 21st Infantry during the middle of the battle, except in the imaginative mind of his biographer. Gass remained with his company during the entire battle.
44. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA; Capt. Simon Owens 1810–181, No. 52, 1812–1815, No. 223, Record Group 98, NARA.
45. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA; Bissell to Shepard, 20 July 1866, Bissell Papers, MHS; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
46. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript; Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA; Graves, *Battle of Lundy's Lane*, 130;
49. *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
50. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
51. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
52. Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass*, 171.
53. Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
54. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
55. *Ibid.*; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present*, 150–151.
56. Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
57. Graves, *Battle of Lundy's Lane*, 138–139; Nicholas court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
58. *Soldiers of 1814: American Enlisted Men's Memoirs of the Niagara Campaign*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Youngstown, NY: Old Fort Niagara Association, 1995), 73.

59. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
60. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present*, 150.
61. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Symmes Journal, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Nicholas Court-martial, RG 153, NARA.
62. Ibid.; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW
63. Jacobs, *The Life and Times of Patrick Gass*, 171; Dr. E. W. Bull, Hospital Surgeon, Army, U.S. to ___, 31 July 1814, Cruikshank, *The Documentary History*, 4: 104.
64. Bissell to Shepard, 20 July 1866, Bissell Papers, MHS; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA.
65. Returns of Killed and wounded in Battle or Engagements with Indians, British and Mexicans, 1790-1814, Eaton's Compendium, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Entry 71, Record Group 94, NARA.
66. Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA; Lloyd Pyott, Military District No. 9, Medical Disability Form, 16 May 1815 and Certificate by George B. Nelson, Surgeon, Pension Records, Old War file 26343, NARA.
67. Clemson/Symmes Company Book, RG 98, NARA
68. Ibid.
69. Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
70. Ibid.
71. *Niles Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 13 August 1814, no.24, "Extract of Brigade Orders, dated Camp at Erie, July 28, 1814, Signed E. W. Ripley, Brig. Gen. Comdg 2d Brigade," author's collection.
72. Jacob Brown to Secretary of War John Armstrong, 7 August 1814, Brannon, *Official Letters*, 381.
73. *Kentucky Reporter*, 9 April 1821, Draper Manuscript, SHSW; Symmes to Trimble, 8 April 1815, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.
74. John C. Symmes, "Several facts relative to the good conduct of the 1st Regiment which have been but little known," Symmes Papers, Draper Manuscript, SHSW.

CMH Visits the Atlanta History Museum, 4 April 2014

In addition to being able to tour the museum's exhibit: "Turning Point: The American Civil War" featuring the Beverly DuBose and Thomas S. Dickey collections, our hosts arranged a viewing of Confederate arms and uniforms from the George W. Wray collection and Company Fellow Leonard Traynor collection which were not on display.



Top right: Marvin Greer shows off a Confederate uniform with blood stains.

Top left: Paul Johnson and several members examine marking details of a collection bayonet.

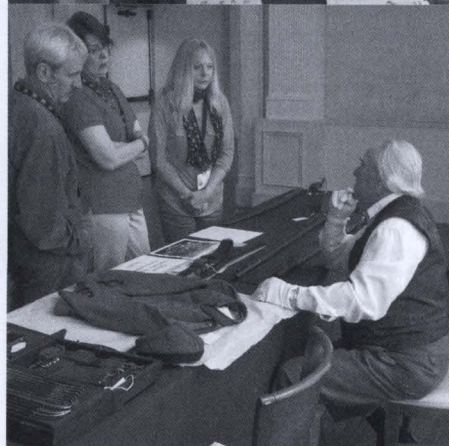
Middle right: No better way to learn about a collection than to quiz Fellow Leonard Traynor, its collector.



Bottom left: Jack Melton answers questions on Civil War projectiles.

Bottom right: Gordon Jones discusses arms with Company members.

Photos by John K. Robertson.





Sergeant

Private

Surgeon's mate

Drummer

Captain

Field Officer

1st Regiment of United States Infantry at Lundy's Lane, 25 July 1814

WHEN the United States declared war against Great Britain on 18 June 1812, the senior infantry regiment of the U.S. Army garrisoned small forts dotting the western frontier. During the winter of 1813, the three companies stationed west of the Mississippi were concentrated at Fort Belle Fontaine, north of St. Louis, in preparation to march east the following spring.¹ Serving on the frontier at the end of a long supply line, the regiment found it lacking in regulation equipment and clothing. One company wore three different uniform coats in one year, wearing the 1810 pattern coat until March 1813 when they finally received the 1812 pattern. In November 1813, the regiment was issued the new 1813 pattern coats.² However, one company was issued fifty new coats, but two were of the 1812 pattern while the others were the new 1813. The 80-man company paraded with 48 men in the new 1813 coats and 32 men in the previous pattern.³

The enlisted men drew new arms and accouterments. Capt. John C. Symmes personally selected muskets for the regiment from five hundred stands of arms, to equip the approximate 220-man battalion.⁴ All of the men were issued "bayonet belts, c. belts and C. Boxes" on 1 November 1813. Two-thirds of the men were issued musket slings while only the sergeants received worms, screwdrivers, and "brush and prickers." The old pattern felt caps were replaced by the new leather 1813 pattern headgear on 3 July 1814 at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.⁵ The caps were likely made by Robert Dingee, Sr., of New York City, who held a contract to provide fifteen thousand infantry caps for the Army.⁶ However, the caps were issued without the "Cockade, Eagle, Plume & Plate," which would not be provided until after the summer campaigns on 28 October 1814. Tall black woolen "gaithers" with infantry (pewter) buttons were also issued to the men of the battalion.⁷

The surgeon's mate wears the completely black uniform coat authorized in 1813 with a "star of embroidery" on the standing collar.⁸ The drummer is dressed in the all-red musician's wool coatee with white metal buttons (pewter) and worsted lace.⁹ The mounted field officer wears the severe dark blue field officers' uniform of the 1813 regulations with epaulettes and buttons of silver and dons the regulation chapeau bras. The captain wears the platoon officer's entirely blue uniform coat with blue worked false buttonholes and his epaulette, buttons, sword mountings, belt plate, and cap trimmings are of silver. The captain also wears a red silk sash under a white buff belt; nankeen pantaloons; and a white worsted pompon on his leather regulation cap.

The private with the fouled musket has the 1812 pattern coatee of blue wool with red collar, cuffs, white skirt turn-backs, and white worsted lace on the collar and shoulder straps. Although the 1812 pattern coatee was to have white worsted lace on the cuffs and breast, most coatees issued late in 1812 or early 1813 lacked this trim. The other figures wear the all blue 1813 pattern coatee

with white lace only on the collar, shoulder straps, and turn-back diamonds. The 1812 pattern coats had pewter eagle buttons with regimental designation while the 1813 pattern coats had scripted "I" pewter buttons.¹⁰ All the enlisted men wear white buff 1808 belts with plain brass plates, black 1808 pattern cartridge boxes, and bayonet scabbards. Overalls are white Russia sheeting. The battalion wore "linen Overalls" which misled the British into mistaking the 1st Infantry as one of their own regiments during the battle.¹¹ All of the men dropped their knapsacks before entering the battlefield.¹² The sergeant clearing the touch hole of the private's musket is identified by his white worsted epaulettes and red worsted sash. A sergeant recalled he had laid his musket down when helping a wounded officer to rear, when he returned to the line his musket was gone so he picked up and used a British Glengarries musket for the rest of the battle.¹³

Art: David P. Geister

Text: David C. Bennett and Thomas G. Shaw

1. Maj. Eli B. Clemson to Col. Jacob Kingsbury, 14 December 1813, Kingsbury Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan.
2. Capt. Eli B. Clemson and Capt. John C. Symmes, No. 53, 1807-1815, Records of United States Army Commands, 1784-1821, Record Group 98, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter NARA), Washington, DC (hereafter Clemson-Symmes Company Book).
3. Lt. John C. Symmes to Lt. John Campbell, Brigade Major, 1 November 1813, Symmes Papers, 1 WW, Lyman Draper Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin (hereafter SHSW).
4. John C. Symmes Journal, 9U, SHSW.
5. Clemson-Symmes Company Book, Capt. Simon Owens 1810-1811, No. 52, Capt. Horatio Stark (reassigned to Capt. Thomas Hamilton) 1812-1815, No. 223.
6. Records of the Quartermaster General, 14 March 1814, Supply Orders Issued, Philadelphia Supply Agencies, 1795-1858, Entry 2117, Subentry 43, 2 of 8, Record Group 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, 1774-1985, NARA (hereafter Philadelphia Supply Agency Book). Caps made by Dingee were issued to Major Clemson, First Infantry, recruiting in New Jersey; Bruce S. Bazelon & William F. McGuinn, *A Directory of American Military Goods, Dealers & Makers 1785-1885* (Manassas, VA: REF Typesetting & Publishing, 1987), 20.
7. Clemson-Symmes Company Book; Philadelphia Supply Agency Book, 1 April 1814, "Infy buttons for 1000 pr of cloth gaithers" were shipped to Fort Fayette, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
8. *Military Laws & Rules & Regulations for the Armies of the United States* (Washington, 1814), regulations of 1 May 1813, 224.
9. Clemson-Symmes Company Book.
10. Philadelphia Supply Agency Book, 25 March 1813, Entry 2117, Subentry 31, 2 of 2.
11. John C. Symmes Journal, 9U, SHSW.
12. John C. Symmes notes in *Kentucky Reporter*, 4 March 1822, 1 WW, SHSW.
13. Franc B. Wilkie, *Davenport Past and Present* (Davenport, Iowa: Luse and Lane, 1858), 150-151. Sergeant Davenport picked up an India Pattern "Brown Bess." Fort further information on the 1st Infantry, see: <http://www.1stusinfantry.com/index.html>.



U.S. Cavalry, Full Dress, 1881

FROM 1866 until 1901, the regular U.S. Cavalry mustered ten numbered regiments of ten companies each. The total establishment for the cavalry amounted to 8,882 including 432 officers. In 1881, most cavalry units were stationed in the West and some were engaged against warriors of Native American nations: the 1st Cavalry saw action in Arizona; the 2d Cavalry in Montana; the 3d Cavalry in Wyoming; the 4th Cavalry in Arizona and New Mexico; the 6th Cavalry in Arizona and New Mexico; the 7th Cavalry in Montana; and the 9th Cavalry in Arizona and New Mexico. A School of Application for the Infantry and Cavalry was also opened at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in May 1881.¹

The fine watercolor of a trooper of the U.S. Cavalry is the subject of this plate. It was made by Charles Wilson Larned (1850–1911), a West Point graduate who went on to become the academy's professor of drawing from 1874 until he passed away in 1911. All West Point graduate officers were expected to have basic proficiency in producing artistic illustrations and many in the Victorian years passed on personal artworks representing their field experience. Not being a commercial artist, much of Professor Larned's artwork was unpublished and remains unknown. This original rendering, along with several others in a large and luxuriously bound album, was presented to a descendant of General Rochambeau during the centennial celebrations of the Battle of Yorktown during the fall of 1881. The album is now part of the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection at the Brown University Library in Providence, Rhode Island.

The enlisted men's uniform was ordered to be:

Coats ... Single-breasted, dark blue basque ... piped with [yellow] ...; collar ... faced with [yellow] cloth four inches back on each side,

cut square to hook up close in front ...; number of regiment ... in yellow metal; skirt of coat on each side of opening behind to be faced with [yellow] cloth, ornamented with four buttons, as per pattern. Two straps of dark blue cloth, piped with the same color as the facings [yellow], let into the waist-seam on each side of the coat and buttoning above the hip to sustain the waistbelt; shoulder-straps of cloth of the color of the facing [yellow] Trousers ... for Enlisted Men ... sky-blue mixture ... , Sergeants to wear a stripe one inch wide, color of facing; and Corporals to wear a stripe one-half inch wide, color of facing Overcoats ... For all Enlisted Men.—Of sky-blue cloth, double breasted, ... with the additional cape ... [yellow] linings and facings ... [(as amended by) G.O. 67, 1873; G.O. 76, 1879]...²

From 1872, the cavalry's enlisted men received a "black felt helmet ... with [yellow] cords and tassels of mohair ... ornamented with yellow metal metal trimmings" This dress helmet had a brass plume socket for the yellow horsehair plume, brass trimmings, and eagle-shaped plate. Enlisted men had black leather chinstraps. From January 1881, the shape of the helmet was somewhat altered. This dress helmet is shown by Larned.³

Art: Charles William Larned
Text: Sidney B. Brinckerhoff

1. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the U.S. Army* (Washington: GPO, 1903), I: 65–76, II: 612–613; William A. Ganoe, *History of the United States Army* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1942), 355–358.
2. U.S. War Department, *Regulations of the Army of the United States* (Washington: GPO, 1881), 298–314.
3. For details on the evolution of this helmet, see: Edgar M. Howell, *United States Army Headgear 1855–1902* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1975), 41–47, 62–70; see also the many photos with commentaries in: John P. Langellier, *Bluecoats: The U.S. Army in the West 1848–1897* (London and Mechanicsburg: Greenhill and Stackpole, 1995), 10–11, 33–64.



Militiamen

Officer

Dorchester, Massachusetts, Militia, King William's War, 1690

Dorchester, Massachusetts, Militia, King William's War, 1690

Plate No. 925

THE year 1689 saw the beginning of the War of the League of Augsburg, or King William's War, as it is commonly known. This conflict pitted France against an alliance of European countries including England, Holland, and Spain. In 1689 and early 1690, the French and Native Americans launched a series of raids from Quebec, or New France, into New England and New York. In August 1690 the New Englanders launched a retaliatory campaign to capture the city of Quebec. This campaign included a naval expedition out of Boston under the leadership of Sir William Phips. The fleet encountered bad weather and did not reach Quebec City until mid-October. Phips' attack on the city was a complete failure, and soon after the fleet began its retreat it encountered violent storms in the St. Lawrence River. Four ships were lost, including the *Elizabeth and Mary*, carrying members of the Dorchester, Massachusetts, militia.

Parks Canada's underwater archaeologists have recently excavated the wreck of the *Elizabeth and Mary* and the weaponry and accouterments illustrated are based on artifacts recovered from the wreck.

Seventeenth century British colonial militia requirements allowed for a wide latitude of arms and accouterments. The 1690 recruitment orders specified each militiaman must supply his own musket, sword or hatchet, powder horn or cartridge box, and knapsack. The weaponry recovered certainly reflects this latitude.¹

The militiaman on the left carries an early seventeenth century matchlock fowler that has been converted to flint. This is the oldest weapon that was recovered. Over his left shoulder he wears a bandolier. This is made up of a leather crossbelt from which are suspended twelve leather charge holders, a leather priming flask, and a ball bag. All are protected by a leather flap which is sewn to the belt. The edge of the flap is "pinked," or cut in small decorative scallops. Two such bandoliers were found. Both had pinked flaps. Although bandoliers were being replaced by cartridge boxes by 1690, many were still in use. The 1691 probate inventory of David Joans, cordwainer, of Dorchester, includes "a muskit [*sic*] & two rapiers belts bandeoleers [*sic*] & powder." At the man's waist hangs a hatchet or belt axe. A number of these were recovered, including wooden handles of a wide variety of lengths and forms.²

The center militiaman carries a shorter, lighter musket of the carbine type fitted with a dog lock. Over thirty-three long arms were recovered. Of these, a number were "carbines."

Three of the carbines are of similar form and have similar, inexpensive hardware. They show a lack of wear and repair that suggests they may have been new and acquired specifically for the expedition.

This man wears a waistbelt with a cartridge case of the "belly box" type. Cartridge cases carried individually paper-wrapped charges, with or without a ball in them. Three belly boxes were found. Two were of leather with an interior, thin wood lining to hold the shape. The third (shown here) was completely of heavy leather. Also attached to the waist belt is a frog holding a hatchet. A leather thong, through a hole in the handle, is just visible. One of the hatchet handles recovered still retains just such a thong. The powder horn is conjectural as no objects of horn survived.

The right-hand figure is an officer and has a silk sash indicating his rank. He wears a wide shoulder belt for a sword with a large buckle. Several such buckles were found. In the officer's right hand is a brass-hilted hangar. Over a dozen sword hilts were found, including some of very fine quality, for hangars and small swords. The figure also holds a pistol in his left hand. Remains of at least four pistols were recovered, including the wood stock of a small, later example that originally had very fine steel furniture. Hanging from a strap over his left shoulder is a small powder horn for his pistol. An elaborately pierced brass plate was found that fit over the plug end of such a horn. It is decorated with a motif of two crossed muskets.

The clothing on the figures is based largely on extant examples in museums, period probate inventories, and period images. However, almost thirty shoes and shoe parts were found and the footwear is based on these. About two-thirds of the shoes were closed with laces and one-third with buckles. The buckles were all of a small size, typical of the period. Over one hundred buttons were found, mostly of pewter. They were all small, averaging just over one centimeter in diameter, and highly domed. Men's outer garments (coats and jackets) typically had a large number of buttons. A coat alone could have up to one hundred.

Art: Francis Back
Text: Phil Dunning

1. Ernest Myrand, *1690 Sir William Phips devant Québec* (Montréal: Beauchemin, 1925), 137.

2. Abbott Lowell Cummings, ed., *Rural Household Inventories* (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1964), 62.

THE MESSAGE CENTER

CMH HEADQUARTERS

From the President

As I write this message it occurs to me it is for the fall issue of our Journal which means once again it is time for us to renew our memberships. So, if you are not a life member and have not received your membership renewal notice you should contact our Administrator, Dave Sullivan, and let him know. If you have received your renewal notice and haven't taken the time to respond to it, I kindly ask you to do so before 31 October. By doing so, you will be able to take advantage of the discounted renewal rate and help us at the same time. Regardless, your renewal is due no later than 31 December. We certainly hope you will want to maintain your association with us, so, please don't set that renewal package aside and forget about it. Oh, and please don't forget to mark and mail in your ballot for the Board of Governor's election, which is included in your renewal package.

On the thought of membership, why not give one or more as gifts to friends this Christmas. You won't have to shop and both your friend and the Company will benefit. In addition, your name will be entered into our annual raffle to receive a life membership. For each new member that you sponsor, you receive a chance to win this raffle. The winner is selected each year at our Annual Meeting. Also, if you sponsor three new members in a given year, you receive your membership free for the next year. So really, everyone wins.

Do you know a member who is deserving of recognition within the Company for either his/her service, scholarship, or both? If so, we have awards for that. I believe many of our members who deserve recognition go without receiving it because of a lack of knowledge within the membership regarding our awards. If you aren't familiar

with them, they are listed on our Web site along with the criteria for each. The process for nominating someone to receive these awards is provided there as well. Our basic award for service is the Commendation Award and for scholarship—the Founder's Award. For outstanding service and scholarship combined there is the Fellows Award and for those who have been recognized with the Fellows Award and who continue to contribute a high level of service to the Company over a period of years, there is the Distinguished Service Award. There is also an award available for those who write articles for our Journal the subject of which relates to the material culture of our armed forces—the Emerson Award. This award is issued annually for the best qualifying article published during that year and the winner is selected by a committee, which has been especially appointed to oversee the selection of this award's winner each year. Please visit our Web site and educate yourself regarding our awards and get busy nominating some deserving member who might otherwise be overlooked.

Are you aware we have local chapters? If you are not a member of one, they are listed on our Web site. Check to see if there is one in your area and if there is join. There is no better way (other than attending our Annual Meetings) to fully enjoy your membership in this great organization of ours. If there isn't one in your area, why not consider organizing one? Contact our VP for Administration, Alex de Quesada, at this e-mail address: vpadmin@military-historians.org and he will advise you regarding how to move forward to make it happen.

As I always close these messages, I remind you this is your Company, get excited about it and get involved.

*Stephen M. Henry,
President*

The Board of Governors of the Company of Military Historians has awarded Life memberships to Frank Arey and Tim Terrell in recognition for more than ten years of outstanding service as assistant editors of *Military Collector and Historian*.

New Members Fall 2014

George A. Lottes by David Bennett
Larry G. William, Sr.,
by David M. Sullivan
Douglas Barker via CMH Web site
Will Vanderberg
by David M. Sullivan
Audrey Scanlan-Teller
by Tracey McIntire
Roger W. Johnson
by David M. Sullivan
Charles E. Chapman by Judson Pratt
Matthew Edward Reen by Les Jensen
Judge Henry E. Shaw, Jr.,
by Jack and Maggie Grothe
Dean C. Garretson
by John Thillmann
Don Erickson via CMH Web site
Alan Wika via CMH Web site
Robert E. Grim
by Jack and Maggie Grothe
Robert Owen via CMH Web site
Marvin Alonzo Greer
by Gordon L. Jones
Jasper Oorthuys via CMH Web site
Daniel McLaughlin, CMDCM,
USN (RET.) via CMH Web site
John Durham reinstated
via CMH Web site
Christof Mueller via CMH Web site
Peter Belmonte
by Jack and Maggie Grothe
Robert T. Oles reinstated
via CMH Web site
Ray Ahrenholz by David M. Sullivan
Brice Franklin Scalley
by David M. Sullivan
William Buser reinstated
via CMH Web site

Raffle Winners

Jim Madden won the original artwork depicting the 1834 U.S. Marine Corps uniforms by the late Peter Copeland (Fellow, DSA).

Julie Kowalsky won the collection of MUIA plates.

Tom Crawford won Life Membership for sponsoring three new members in 2013.

Richard O. Culver, 1936–2014

Company member Richard O. “Dick” Culver, Jr., went to join his Marine Corps brothers in Valhalla on 24 February 2014, at Hayden, Idaho, at the age of 77 years.

Dick was born on 9 April 1936 in the infirmary on Alcatraz Island, California, because his parents couldn’t get to the mainland. His father was then a lieutenant of the guards at Alcatraz. Dick graduated from high school in Hopewell, Virginia, in 1953 and then attended Virginia Military Institute (VMI) as a member of the Marine Corps Reserve. Upon his graduation from VMI with a bachelor’s degree in physics, he waited until the day of the birthday of the Marine Corps and enlisted into active service on 11 November 1958. During his time at VMI, Dick competed as captain on the VMI pistol team and on the Marine Corps Reserve rifle and pistol team at the national matches. He later received his master’s degree in physics at graduate school in Monterey, CA.

Dick went through the ranks as an enlisted man and attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned a second lieutenant. He was eventually promoted to major, which rank he held when he retired. Dick was a third generation retired U.S. Marine Corps officer. Dick served two tours in Vietnam. During his first tour, 1967–1968, he received a Purple Heart for wounds he sustained on his first day of combat. He recovered and led Force Recon patrols, completing his first tour of duty. Also during his first tour, Dick was awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action. While serving as the commanding officer of Company H, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, Captain Culver exposed himself to hostile enemy fire several times during a firefight with a North Vietnamese Army company, rallied his Marines, coordinated fire and medevacs, called in artillery and air support, and forced the enemy to break contact after suffering numerous casualties. By his superior leadership, bold initiative, and selfless devotion to duty at great personal risk, Captain Culver upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service. Dick returned to Vietnam for a second tour



Major Culver as the guest speaker at the American Embassy, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, at the U.S. Marine Corps Birthday Ball in 1986. Courtesy Tom Crawford.

of duty from 1971 to 1972. In the last days of the conflict, he supervised the evacuation of embassy personal and civilians from the rooftop of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon.

After Dick returned from Vietnam, he: Capt. Jack Cuddy, USMC; and Lt. Col. Charles Reynolds, USMC; started the Scout Sniper Instructor School at Quantico, Virginia, in March 1977. Marine sniper Carlos Hathcock (ninety-three confirmed sniper kills in Vietnam) worked for them as the NCOIC.

Dick also competed on the Marine Corps rifle and pistol team, receiving numerous medals, and later becoming the CO of the team.

After retiring Dick traveled to Saudi Arabia with a contract to train the Saudi Arabian Marine Corps. After four years, Dick returned to the United States and was the Kellogg, Idaho, High School J.R.O.T.C. senior instructor for five years.

Dick authored many articles on the Marine Corps as well as his experiences reviewing and testing various rifles, including several in *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*, *Guns and Ammo*, and various other magazines.

Maj. Dick Culver was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery on 28 May 2014.

Tom Crawford

THE LAST POST



♦
Richard O. Culver

Hayden, Idaho

George C. Neumann

North Attleboro, Massachusetts

Fellow, DSA
♦

On Our Covers

The Newark City Guard, 1845

One finds relatively few images of volunteers of New Jersey in the middle of the nineteenth century, so we are pleased to present this color plate of the Newark City Guards. It is the work of J. Penniman who, in 1844, created and lithographed the plate that was printed by L. Nagel at number 74 Fulton Street. Below the image was a statement that one John C. Moore was “a Member of [the] City Guards attached to the 3rd Regt.; Essex Brigade of Infantry” at Newark, New Jersey, and dated 7 May 1845. It was signed by Capt. George V. Hankins.

Little seems known about this unit, but it was probably formed in the early 1840s since, in October 1842, it was issued with 60 muskets with browned barrels as well as 60 bayonets, scabbards, belts and belt-plates, and “cartouch boxes and belts” along with “1 artillery sword and belt” from the New Jersey State Arsenal. After the outbreak of the Mexican War, the unit volunteered to be part of the New Jersey Volunteer Regiment of Infantry on 25 May 1846. As seen on this plate, the Newark City Guard had a handsome uniform consisting of a grey coat with blue collar and cuffs; gold buttons and lace; white epaulets for the men and gold for the officers; shako with gilt ornaments; white plume and cords; dark blue winter and white summer trousers. The belt-plate is a gilt oval marked “CG” for

the officers, a brass rectangle with white metal "CG" for the other ranks.

The original plate is in the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, Rhode Island, by whose courtesy it is kindly reproduced on our cover.

René Chartrand

Notes: *Votes and proceedings of the ... General Assembly of the State of New Jersey* (Woodbury, NJ: A. S. Barljer, 1843), 23; John O. Raum, *The History of New Jersey: From Its Earliest Settlement to the present time* (Philadelphia: J. E. Potter & Co., 1877), 2: 400.

New Jersey Volunteers, 1880s–1890s

In the late nineteenth century, illustrations on cigarette cards and uniform manufacturer's catalogues often showed soldiers in uniform. In the United States many of these renderings illustrated the dress worn by the many units of state national guards and volunteers. This cover selects a few units in New Jersey.

The Veteran Zouaves in the town of

Elizabeth, raised in 1878, had about 40 members with up to 60 honorary members ("including eleven ladies"). It went on a transcontinental tour to San Francisco in 1886 and, two years later, on a southern tour to New Orleans. Its last outing was to Gettysburg and the Washington area in 1907 after which it dissolved. A cigarette card (upper left) shows its dark blue and red zouave uniform for its enlisted men while the card (upper center) illustrates the very different dress used by the colonel and, presumably, the other officers that included a white tunic and a helmet covered with red fabric. The colonel shown is J. Madison Drake who was awarded the Medal of Honor when serving in the 9th New Jersey Volunteers during the Civil War.

The trooper wearing a spiked helmet belongs to the Essex Cavalry (lower left). This is a detail from a plate in the catalog of the Boylan Manufacturing Company in New York City. The Essex Troop of Cavalry was organized in Newark from

1890 and augmented to two troops in 1895 when the Redbank troop was raised. It was said of this unit "it carried off the honors of the day, [its troopers] being especially mentioned for their soldiery bearing" at "the great Columbian Parade in 1892, in New York City."

The 4th New Jersey Infantry Regiment of Jersey City wore the standard U.S. Infantry uniform as shown by the image of its sergeant-major (upper right). It also had, according to another cigarette card (lower center), a howitzer company wearing the red facings of the artillery.

The 7th New Jersey Infantry Regiment was based in Trenton and Lambertville. As can be seen (at lower right), its officers wore the standard U.S. infantry uniform.

René Chartrand

Sources: Todd Albums, Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, RI; J. Madison Drake, *Historical Sketches of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars* (New York: Webster Press, 1908), 271–272.

CMH Awards Presented at the 2014 Annual Meeting

The Company of Military Historians recognizes the achievements of its members via a multi-level system of honors and awards.

Commendation Award

The *Commendation Award* recognizes outstanding service to the Company. A Commendation may be awarded for acts of service that bring distinction to the Company or to a chapter or which improve services to members. The member's work may have been a one time contribution or continuing service over a period of time in one or more areas.

H. David Whieldon (not present) for his long and active service to the West Point Chapter.

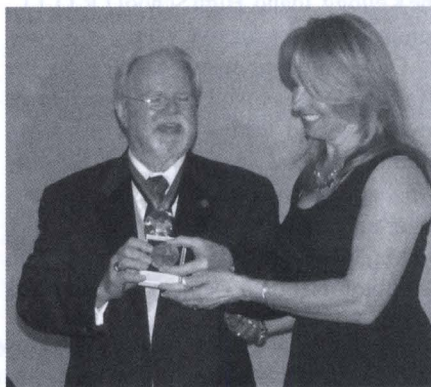
Nancy Ahern and **Marko Zlatich** for their service on Annual Meeting Host committees, service to the Chesapeake Chapter, and financial support of the Company.

The Miller Award

Steve Henry, Company President presents the Miller Award for Best Display (right) to Joyce Henry for her display "Uncommon Soldiers: Soldier Women of the Civil War." See pages 286–287 for the display photos.



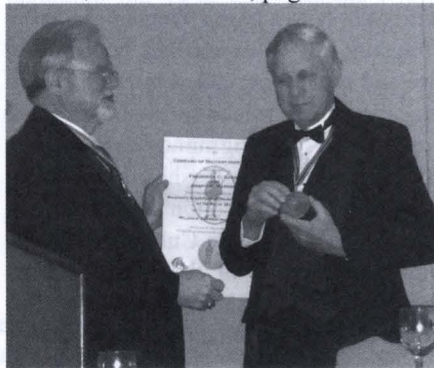
Nancy Ahern and Marko Zlatich receive the Commendation Award from President Henry.



Emerson Writing Award

Given annually for the single best article specifically related to Material Culture in *Military Collector & Historian*, the award is named in honor of past Company President Lt. Col. Bill Emerson, who proposed its creation to the Board and who so generously funded the minting of the medals which are part of this recognition.

The award for 2013 was earned by Fred Gaede and Joseph Marsden (not present) for their paper: *Maryland's Acquisitions of Muskets and Bayonets for the War of 1812*, *MC&H*, Summer 2013, page 108.



An Interesting Helmet From Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows

Alejandro M. de Quesada

THIS piece was acquired from an auction several years ago. Initially, it appears to be basically a Model 1880 Army summer helmet with accessories from an Army Model 1881 dress helmet (spike and base) and a fraternal organization (side buttons). In fact, it is a Model 1881 dress helmet with a white cloth cover (made of four panels) and secured with a blackened, tarred-canvas trim sewn around the rim of the helmet. In many ways, the helmet follows the style commonly used by the Uniform Rank of the Knights of Pythias, a fraternal organization. The gold lace "chinstrap" is purely decorative and appears to be made from lace normally used on

naval uniforms. The side buttons used in securing the lace are typical of those used on fraternal and even theatrical helmets. It is emblazoned with a silvered American eagle perched on a globe within a brass laurel wreath on the front of the helmet. This emblem is noted as being used by the wild west show in documents and posters of the era. The inside of the helmet is lined with black silk and, from the leather sweatband up, is lined in red silk. A printed label is found with the words "BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST SHOWS" with an image of Col. Bill Cody. A truly interesting piece on how surplus military hardware can be adopted for civilian use.

All illustrations courtesy the author.

FIG 1. Front view.



FIG 2. Side view.



FIG 3. Interior view.



FIG 4, left. Interior detail.



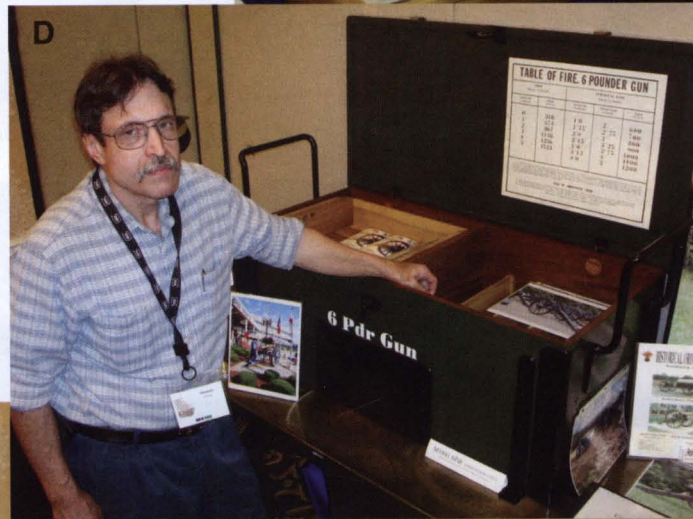
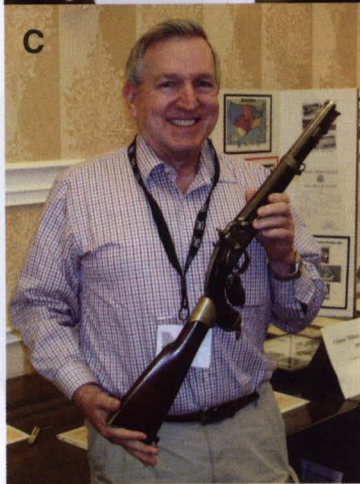
FIG 5. Helmet plate detail.

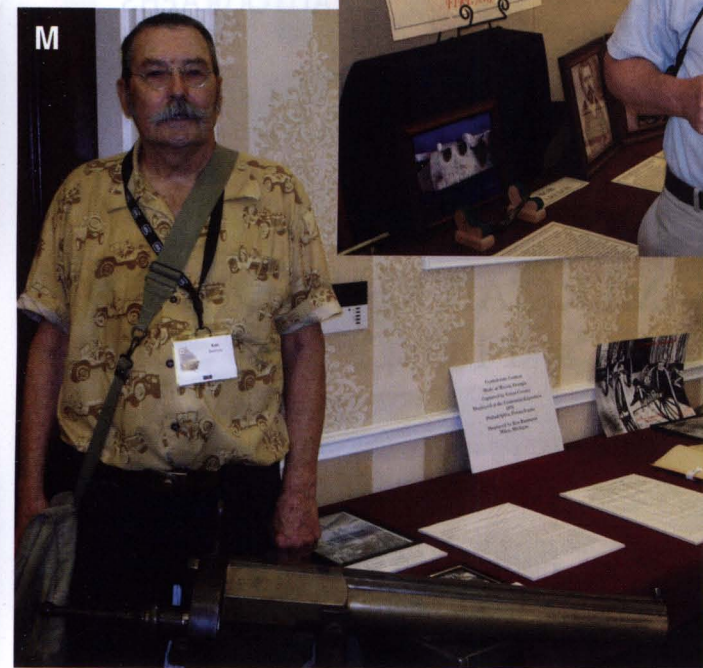
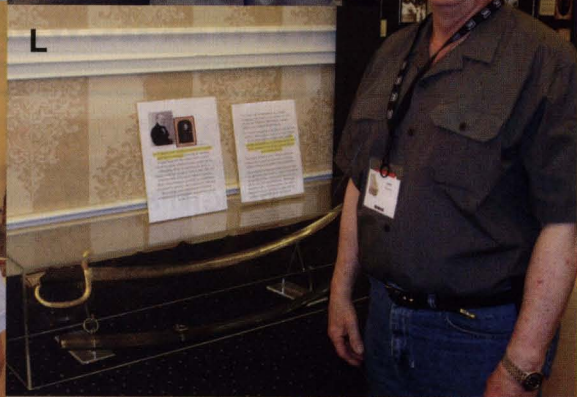
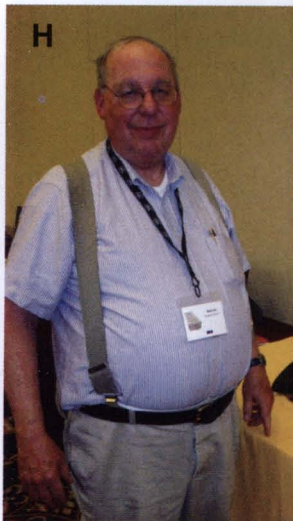


Member Displays at the Atlanta 2014 Meeting

Photos by John K. Robertson

Competitors for the Annual Miller Award for Best Display: A: Bill Emerson, Citizen's Military Training Camps: 1920–1941; B: Paul Johnson, They Were in Georgia in 1864; C: Vince Rausch, U.S. Springfield Armory Pistols, 1818–1915; D: Tom Bailey, Historical Ordnance Works; E: Joyce Henry, Uncommon Soldiers: Soldier Women of the Civil War; F: Gerald Roxbury, Faces of the Confederate Navy; G: Les and Juanita L. Jensen with Jim Beale IV, Denis E. Reen; H: Sam Higinbotham, The Gas Operated 1903 Springfield; J: Frederick C. Gaede, Percussion Caps; K: Bob Carlson, Colonel LeMats Percussion Revolving Fire Arms; L: John Thillmann, Col. George Talcott's Artillery Officers Saber; M: Ken Baumann, Confederate Cannon Made at Macon, Georgia; N: Alex de Quesada, Confederate Pikes, 1861–1865.





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William K. Emerson
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army

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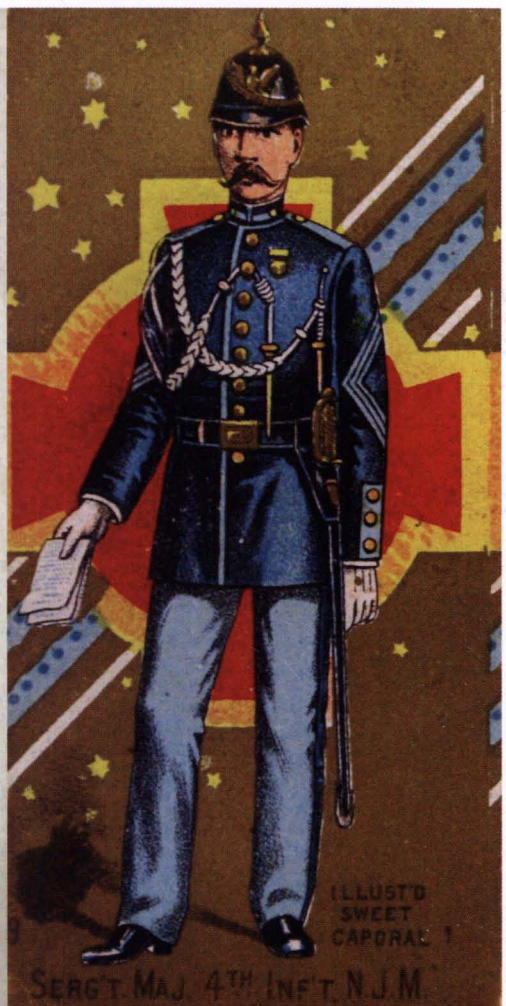
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