

THE FUGELMAN



**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SECOND
WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY
ASSOCIATION**

THE BLACK HAT BRIGADE---THE IRON BRIGADE

1861-1865

VOLUME XXIII ISSUE 3 MARCH, 2014

**FU-GEL-MAN: A well-drilled soldier placed in front of a military company as a model or
guide for others.**

PASS IN REVIEW

From the quill of Lt. Colonel Pete Seielstad



What a winter! Cold, snow & no sign of spring! Those damn rodents in Sun Prairie and Punxsutawney. On the other hand, I do hope you have been busy with your winter projects; cleaning muskets, repairing uniforms and equipment can really make the winter months go by fast. (Or so I thought.)

During the remaining winter months, return to the books and re-read the manual. With the drill manual at your side, improve your skill at handling the rifle and bayonet. The inherent safety of the drill manual will keep each man protected and that should be the primary concern for us all. The movements to load should become secondary in nature. Without looking, know where the cartridge box is. Pulling the spent cap off the cone and replacing it with another is done with ease because you have practiced the move over and over. Eyes toward the front, the well-drilled soldier brings his weapon to his shoulder and keenly listens for the order from his captain, “Ready, aim...fire!”

Three years or the duration of the war, the men of the 2nd Wisconsin Association has been very successful in taking part in the 150th anniversary events. There is one more that is our focus and that will be the Overland Campaign. We don’t have enough participation to charter a bus. However, a couple dozen of us will make the trip to Spotsylvania, Virginia and our Wisconsin Boys of ‘61 will be well represented.

As we look forward to 2014, keep in mind that the Iron Brigade changed dramatically 150 years ago. To compensate for the Iron Brigade’s casualties, hundreds of Easterners were folded into it after Gettysburg. This new blood “forever destroyed the identity of the unique Western organization,” said Alan T. Nolan in his classic history of the unit. Conscripts – draftees – made another fundamental change to the previously all-volunteer force. For the 2nd Wisconsin, they are looking ahead and can comprehend the end of their enlistment nevertheless there will be more fighting in the Wilderness and

Spotsylvania. Take a special moment now and then to think of the boys of 61.

Your obedient servant,

Lt. Col. Pete Seielstad



SAM AMUNRUD REMEMBERED

Last September I wrote an article giving an update on the members of the Poor Boys Mess and what their future would hold. On February 5, 2014 I learned of the death of Sam Amunrud. He tragically had a brain aneurism and passed away as a result.

It's not totally uncommon for one of the boys to give me a call and when Parker called to relay the message, I was shocked. What? How? This can't be true! As Parker filled in the details we both broke into tears.

Sam was a member of the 1st Engineer Battalion and received a funeral with full military honors. At the graveside the pastor said Sam had always belonged to God and is now with Him. The honor guard fired three volleys in salute and Taps was played. It is a heart-rending feeling and I could not hold back my tears for my young friend.

Young men often challenge the older generation and Sam and the rest of the Poor Boys are no exception. And I don't think I'd have it any other way. Our meetings consisted of friendship and camaraderie and at events we challenged ourselves of keeping to task and NOT wanting the 'veterans' to wish we had never shown up. For Sam and his pard, Parker, they gave a new meaning for chaotic. At Coon Valley their tent on the company street looked like it had exploded. I exploded too. Yeah, I had a talk with them. If Sam was ever to complain about the food, just mention the cook-off competition and the squirrel they prepared for their entry. (No they didn't win and I can't begin to describe the taste.) Sam was Sam and he discovered himself through the hobby of re-enacting as well school and his other interests. In five short years I observed Sam as he became a man.

One of the things we do as a member of the Mess is leave each other with a handshake. At his high school graduation party I shook Sam's hand & gave him a parting man-hug. Sam was moving on with a firm footing given to him by his parents, Jo and Mark.

We are all different in one way or another. As Civil War re-enactors we are a little bit eccentric and that might be the bond that keeps us together. Sam and I would talk about things that seemed of no importance at the time. But, when I review in my mind our conversations on history and how men make choices, it all makes sense now. In his actions, his decision to enlist and by becoming an organ donor he grew into a man.

I am truly glad Sam was apart of my life. I will miss him.

With deep regret and sorrow,

Lt. Col. Pete Seielstad

2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment Association

Poor Boys Mess Advisor

**CAMPAIGN SCHEDULES OF
THE COMPANIES AND
ASSOCIATION**

REGIMENTAL DISPATCHES

**ANOTHER FALLEN BROTHER FROM THE
SECOND WISCONSIN**

SAM AMUNRUD

REST IN PEACE

I again have sad news to report in the passing of another part of the 2nd Wisconsin. Samuel "Sam" Amunrud of the Poor Boys' Mess, Company B., 2nd Wisconsin passed away on 5 February 2014 at the age of 19.



Sam was a patriot in the true sense of the word. Born in La Crosse on August 26, 1994, Samuel "Sam" Mark Amunrud beloved son of Mark and Jo Amunrud unexpectedly and tragically died of a brain aneurysm on February 5, 2014, at the University of Kansas Hospital, Kansas City.

Kansas.

Sam loved the outdoors and adventure. According to Sam, "all great adventures begin by going West - 270 degrees due West!" He was active with the Company B, 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, and "The Poor Boys." Immediately prior to his passing Sam was a member of the 1st Engineer Battalion, one of the oldest and most decorated Engineer Battalions in the United States Army.

He had a very special bond with his brothers in arms! He will surely watch over them in whatever the future holds for them.

His parents, many loving family members, army buddies and special friends survive him. Sam's generosity continued after death. His decision to be an organ donor restored life's promise to many.



Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 1:00 PM at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, La Crescent, MN. Pastor Michael Woods will officiate. Burial with Military Honors will be in the Prince of Peace Cemetery. Friends may call at the church on Wednesday from 10:00 AM until the time of services.

The family requests that memorial donations be directed to the

Wounded Warrior Project, 4889 Belfort Road, Suite 300, Jacksonville, FL 32256.

**A SPECIAL JOINT ACTION ON
BEHALF OF THE MEN OF THE
SECOND WISCONSIN**

In a recent joint operation members of Battery B (Lyle Laufenberg), Company K (Pvt. John Decker) and representing for the evening the regimental surgeon for the Second Wisconsin and Member of Company K Pvt. Jim Dumke were provided the opportunity to make a presentation before the young folks and citizens of Evansville, Wisconsin. The purpose of the event was to celebrate the birthday of our esteemed President, Abraham Lincoln. The event was held at the Evansville Public Library on Wednesday, February 12th, 2014.

Jim Dumke discussed the various instruments used by a surgeon during the War of the Rebellion and the process of conducting an amputation. Three quarters of all surgeries during the war were amputations, totaling about 60,000.

Sgt. Laufenberg discussed the role of a light artillery battery and the process involved in firing the guns. The sergeant used a video for his presentation and some in the crowd were familiar with the battery from its presence at the Evansville event in May.

Pvt. Decker had a great presentation on the men from Evansville and the immediate area who served during the war. Some of these men served in the Second Wisconsin and others from other regiments served in the Iron Brigade. The editor was struck by the fact, as detailed by Pvt. Decker, that 38 per cent of the military aged men from this small community served in the late war. The following photos were provided by Lyle Laufenberg for use in The Fugelman. Thank all of you for your efforts to share the history of the late unpleasantness on behalf of the Second Wisconsin regiment!

SCHOOL OF THE CAMPAIGNER – PART ONE

TIPS FOR SLEEPING WHILE ON CAMPAIGN

BY TOM KLAS

Gentlemen:

The following article by Tom Klas is first an interesting read. It also gives us some wonderful incite to the life of the soldiers in the Iron Brigade while in camp. The article is well worth the time it takes to read and this editor cannot thank Tom Klas enough for sharing it with the readers of The Fugelman.

Hi gents,

Having spent many events during May in hot/warm/cold Virginia conditions, I wanted to share some basic tips to enjoy your experience at the Wilderness reenactment and events beyond. What I am looking to cover over the next months is an introduction to the cooking skills, camping, and soldier's skills the men of the Second Wisconsin and the Iron Brigade of the West had while on campaign. In part one of this series I will go down the path of sleeping campaign and ideas to help you enjoy your time and get an experience of what boys of the Ragged Second had.

Looking back to the Men of the Second - here is the journal of Sgt. Cornelius Wheeler of Company "I" Second Wisconsin from May 4 to June 11th, 1864 to show how the men of the Second were very much on the move and had to soldier with preservation in mind in the spring of 1864.

May 4th - this morning we hare read an order from Gen. Meade and at an early hour we march by Stevensburg, cross the Rapidan at Germania Ford, and go upon picket duty along the railroad near Chancellorsville. Distance 20 miles. May 5th, march to Wilderness Tavern, engage the enemy in the woods; distance ten miles. May 6th, move forward, engage the enemy in the afternoon. May 7th, march toward Spotsylvania Courthouse. May 8th.our march continues all night. Here we build rifle pits and await the arrival of the main army. May 10th, move forward and charge the enemy's breastworks, but find

these too strong to take by assault. May 11th, march to the rear of line of battle. May 12th, march to the left of line of battle. May 13th, march back toward the right; three miles. May 14th, march to the left of line in the rear of the Ninth Corps; seven miles. May 21st, march to Guinea, eight miles. May 22nd, to Wolf's Church, twelve miles. May 23^d, cross the North Anna River at Jericho Ford, ten miles. May 25th, march to the left of line, two miles. May 26th, recross the North Anna. May 27th, march nearly parallel with the Pamunky River about four miles from New Castle; distance eight miles. May 29th, march toward the Chickahominy River, bivouac in line about six miles from the river; distance four miles. May 30th, march southward about three miles and form line. Here we remain until June 5th, when we march left. Camp near Cold Harbor; distance twelve miles. March to Bottom Bridge on the Chickahominy; distance eight miles. Here we remain until June 11th. This day the term of the Second Regiment's three year period expired. It was relieved from duty and under command to Maj. Geo. Otis, started for home, after a march of twenty miles to White House landing.The veterans of the Second Regiment who had re-enlisted and with the recruits whose terms had not expired, were organized into an independent battalion consisting of two companies, and on the day of our departure for the field the 11th of June, sixty four were placed under the command of Capt. D. B. Daily, Co. B, the battalion being assigned to provost duty at division headquarters, Gen. Lysander Cutler commanding. (43-45)

The Army Clothing System: The philosophy regarding the clothing system of the army was to keep the men warm and the ability to dry off in varied conditions. If you have in your kit a correct wool issue shirt and cotton canton flannel issue drawers, you will aid in keeping the night chill away and keeping moisture away from your body. Cotton shirts when wet, have a tendency to stay damp longer and draw chill. Cotton socks also do the same. If you dislike wool as a shirt - try a wool blend such as a contract variant issue shirt that is not scratchy. If you really want to wear cotton, put on an extra shirt at night and make sure your original shirt is dry. In addition, if you prefer cotton shirts and socks, try to bring an extra set of both in your bedroll or knapsack. As for drawers, cotton or linen are better than nothing and will aid in keeping warm in the field and ward off chaffing. You can tuck your drawers into your socks to keep out critters and aid in staying comfortable.

When looking at coat selections for spring and fall of 1864, Second Wisconsin members have some choices to consider. For those thinking about wearing a fatigue blouse (sack coat) you might want to consider how thick the wool flannel truly is on your coat; especially if you wear an unlined coat. I would suggest you might want to consider a correctly constructed blouse that *is lined with woolen flannel* or in some cases linen or cotton. As stated by Patrick Brown in his monograph, For Fatigue Purposes: The Army Sack Coat of 1857-1872:

Quartermaster specifications specified the blouse to be made from “dark blue flannel” weighing 5 ½ ounces to the yard with the material being twenty seven inches wide. The requirements called for three yards of ¾ blue flannel. This is a very light weight cloth. Flannel is by definition made from yarn that is only slightly twisted and woven loose to give in an open texture. This makes the fabric rather spongy and it lacks the strength of more substantial goods such as kersey and broadcloth. Every coat in the group met this definition. As an experienced collector has described the sack coat as being about equal in weight and protection to a modern windbreaker and this comparison was found to be accurate. Sack coat flannel when held up to the sun will readily allow light through in small points. A still breeze will cut right through a sack coat. (16).

To a better degree, the uniform or frockcoat if of proper materials will aid in keeping away that chill vs. the fatigue blouse. A good study by Michael R. Cunningham, Phd. in the Watchdog back in 1994 pointed out some interesting statistics.

The frockcoat is often assumed to be a dress item, but 46% of the Army of the Potomac chose to wear frock coats into the field. Gardiner’s photographs of the Federal dead at the Rose Farm at Gettysburg, for example show them wearing frockcoats. The Quartermaster General’s Report of 1865, indicates that 218,288 frock coats were issued in 1864.

The federal enlisted frockcoat contains indigo dyed dark blue woolen cloth of 21 ounces to the yard and a tighter weave. If correctly made the uniform coat should also have padded chest of cotton and sleeve lining of muslin. This will help keeping you warm if it is an option you have in your kit. The good news is the men of the Second Wisconsin and Iron Brigade still drew dress coats during the winter of 1863 and these could be seen in the ranks and in tintypes taken in the spring of 1864. It is something to keep in mind for spring and fall 1864 events. Even though the sack coat was issued at greater rate during 1863-1864 in the Second Wisconsin, you still have some documented flexibility to choose your coat of preference.

.

Making the Best of your Kit While Sleeping: Keeping your head and feet warm are essentials when campaigning. By using some period methods, you can stay warm even in the worst conditions.

- 1. When it gets cold, separate yourself from the ground and cover your head and feet. If you are by yourself place any type of bedding material down (straw, pine needles, leaves) and lay your gum blanket down. Then start placing your equipage and rifle musket on your gum blanket edge and rollup your musket in the outer six inches of blanket. This will keep your musket dry if it rains and next to you to avoid theft.**
- 2. Take your bootees off and place your hat over your bootees and keep them close to you.**
- 3. Take off your worn socks at night. Place new ones on and turn the ones you just wore inside out. Place them on top of your new socks. If they are wool this will dry your socks you have just worn and keep your feet warm.**
- 4. Wear a sleeping cap to keep the warmth in and wool mittens at night. Your head loses a lot of heat. Keep it covered with a wool or cotton sleeping cap. Also wool mittens are easy to carry and keep hands warm when temps fall below 45 degrees.**
- 5. If with a pard, place one gum blanket on the ground, throw both your wool blankets on top, and layer with another gum blanket rubber side out sleeping next to each other. This method although close quarters will keep you warm, even without a shelter tent. Soldiers of the 2nd were used to this and took care to keep warm in damp conditions.**

- 6. Use your knapsack as a pillow and rest your head on an extra shirt or handkerchief. This will aid in your rest and avoid that stiff neck in the morning.**
- 7. Bring some extra twine/rope in case of inclement weather and you do not have a pard to make an entire shelter tent with. Taking two Y sticks and twine, you can make a lean to with your shelter half blocking the wind/rain. In this case move any rocks and stones below, if possible find some leaves or pine needles as your protection vs. damp ground. Lay down - blanket then gum blanket on top with your musket out of the rain next to you.**
- 8. Keeping Matches Dry and Candles - It is always nice to have two candles and a pack of matches. Try to get a tin to keep your matches in. You can find period candle holders to read or write in your journal at night or to run to the sinks in a period correct manner.**
- 9. Fill up your canteen before bedding down. It is great to take a drink at night or if you have medications you need to take. I always live by the idea it is best to fill up before sundown. Try to organize your tent half so you can find it when needed.**
- 10. If you need a Greatcoat, just make sure you can carry it in and out of an event. Greatcoats in early spring and fall weather are wonderful to have. Try to learn how to fold and carry your Greatcoat in a period way. Most common methods were to roll up your coat and place it on top of your knapsack using the overcoat straps. Here is a link to how to fold up your Greatcoat for campaign use.
<http://www.dougdobbs.com/cwr/greatcoat/rolling%20overcoat.htm>**

Below is some insight on the use of the shelter half and how the boys tented thanks to John Billings in his book Hard Tack and Coffee:

Each man was provided with a half-shelter as a single piece was called, which he was expected to

carry on the march if he wanted a tent to sleep under. A single half shelter, it can be seen, would make a very contracted and uncomfortable abode for a man; but every soldier was expected to join his resources for shelter with some other fellow. (52)

It was not usual to pitch these tents every night when the army was on the march. The soldiers did not waste their time and strength much in that way. If the night was clear and pleasant, they lay down

without roof-shelter of any kind; but if it was stormy or a storm was threatening when the order came to go into for the night, the shelters were then quite generally pitched. This operation was performed by the infantry in the following simple way: two muskets with bayonets fixed were struck erect into the ground the width of a half shelter apart. A guy rope which went with every shelter half was stretched between the trigger guards of the muskets, and over this as a ridgepole the tent was pitched in a twinkling (53).

One of my favorite sources to look at the ways how federal Civil War infantry soldiers survived is by taking a look at the diary of William Ray of Company "F" 7th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment. This Huckleberry gives us insight into a another unique approach for the Iron Brigade to make shelter in poor conditions. On June 27th, 1862 he states:

I forgot to tell you about how nice Bill [Smith] & I fixed up our tent. Well, we went into the woods and skinned 4 large pine trees, getting the bark according to the size of the tent and staked up a piece on each side about a foot wide for more and sitt the tent on top of that and put a piece at the back end about two feet wide so that when the oilcloth was put up it closed up the back end entirely so that when it rained, it would not beat in. And we put a floor in of bark which will keep us dry when it rains and keep the dampness from us. We can sleep good on it. And in the Country, the nights are cool & not musketoos to truble. And we sleep under two blankets an about midnight we can get under the blankets 7 cover it up the same as I would last winter. You may think me exaggerating but it is the truth but there are some that have only one blanket between them and of course they cannot sleep under two. But I wont tent with a man that wont carry his blanket & if a man cannot carry it, there is a way provided for it to be taken along. (103-104).

A few days later, William Ray describes how trenching around his tent and using his rubber blankets kept him dry. On July 2nd, 1862 Ray writes in his diary:

And a rainy day all day but steady, commenced early in the morning and rained till about midnight. Our tent kept us perfectly dry. That is it did not leak any and at night we fixed up two oilcloths at the front of the tent which kept the rain off our blankets as the tent is so short that our feet comes outside when we lay straight. (106)

Later in the Petersburg Campaign, William Rays records twice how he handled the elements without the comfort of his shelter half in poor weather. At the Battle of Weldon Railroad on August 18-19, 1864, Ray discusses how he handled being away from camp and in the line of enemy pickets without fire or shelter.

It is now near 10 oclock P.M. and all appears to be settled except the skirmishing, which of course will continue night. Well I take off my knapsack after finding a big leaning tree & take off my oilcloth & put it around my shoulders & seat myself on knapsack. Now I conclude I will have some sugar & hardtack & some water that I had carried in my canteen all day. I ate with a good appetite as I had not had anything since leaving camp except nibbling on a cracker once & all the boys were in the same fix. I have made no mention of such a thing allowed but we cant complain for we know that it has not been advisable to do so & now we dare not build a fire.

Well after eating I lay down on the leaves, sticks, &c and put my oilcloth over me & try to catch a little sleep. But to no use. The rain pours down. I feel the water soaking through my clothes from underneath but to tired to move. (311).

On October 27th, 1864 during the Battle of Hatcher's Run William Ray once again describes how the men of the Iron Brigade handled not having fires or shelter tents while in a holding skirmish line:

But at any rate, we were not relived or ordered back as we had anticipated. But ordered to put out Videttes & make ourselves as

comfortable as possible without fires. I soon made a bed by just taking my rubber of my knapsack & laying down, spread it over me with my knapsack as my pillow. But I could not sleep for we was wet to the skin. As I said before, twas raining all the time now. It being now about 10 P.M. I should judge. (332).

A unique post Civil War source, the book How to Camp was written by a veteran of the Army of the Potomac; John M. Gould. He uses a great portion of what he learned as a soldier to write this book in 1877. Although this pertains to post war hiking and camping, there is still plenty to pull from that has applications to the Civil War soldier and how to survive those spring and fall elements. Here is a link to his book online <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17575/17575-h/17575-h.htm>

In our next newsletter, I take a look at rations and ideas how to prepare. You might be surprised at the variety and best methods to cook like the boys of 61" did. Also for April I will have an updated Suggested Uniform and Equipage List out to everyone.

Works Cited

Aubrey, Doc. Echoes From the Marches of the Famous Iron Brigade. Gaithersburg: Ron R. Van Sickle Military Books, 1988.

Billings, John D. Hardtack & Coffee. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Brown, Patrick. For Fatigue Purposes...The Army Sack Coat of 1857-1872. Warren: The Watchdog Review, 2003.

Cunningham, Michael. "'Evaluating Reproduction Federal Enlisted Men's Frocks." The Watchdog. 2.4 (1994): 2.

**Herdegen, Lance & Sherry Murphy eds. Four Years With the Iron Brigade:
The Civil War Journal of William Ray, Company F Seventh Wisconsin
Volunteers. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2002.**





Figure 1 Lyle Laufenberg on the left, John Decker in the middle and Jim Dumke on the right.



Figure 2 The instruments of the surgeon, the bloody apron and his Hardee Hat

ATTENTION TO ORDERS

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

BADGERS:

Now is the time to step forward to sign the roll for a one-time opportunity to stand to line and fire as did the Boys of '61-'65 at such places as Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Atlanta...

Planning is underway for an authentic live fire event at the Boscobel Rifle Range during the Boscobel, Wis., reenactment. We have been given permission to fire in the opening two events of the American Civil War Shooters Association Skirmish. This special “traditional” event using authentic-style rifle-muskets and paper cartridges would be fired about 9 a.m. Sunday morning. It would be completed in about 90 minutes.

All rifle-muskets (original or replica) must be pre-inspected for safety and in “as issued” configurations. Field load cartridges used will be authentic issue

paper rounds with the Model 1855 Harpers Ferry style bullet designed by William Burton. Twenty proper "minnie balls" will be issued to each registered participant along with instructions for making the correct paper cartridge. Eye and hearing protection are required. Participation will be limited.

This live fire will be as authentic as we can make it. The squads of four will be formed as "Comrades in Battle" around the 2nd Wisconsin companies mustered into the 6th Wisconsin after the veteranization of 1864.

If interested, we need some information to proceed:

What type of rifle-musket will you be using?

What company manufactured your weapon (i.e. Euroarms, etc)?

Your name, mailing address, email, telephone contacts.

Your attention and suggestions and questions are invited to herdegen@tds.net.

Lance J. Herdegen, herdegen@tds.net , 6th Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer

Infantry

**Gary Van Kauwenbergh, garyvank@aol.com , 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer
Infantry**

Event Coordinators

This editor had the opportunity to participate in a similar live fire activity several years ago in Streator, Illinois. The men from the Second Wisconsin skirmish team were there as well. The only one I was familiar with was Jim Boullion. We fired at targets and competed

among the men of the 104th Illinois. We did not use paper rounds, however. It was a blast. I had a hard time getting the idea of the sights down given the bullet trajectory but after a little coaching from Jim Boullion I was able to hit the tiles used as targets on occasion!!! I highly recommend you consider this opportunity. Give God the Sunday morning off and join the skirmishers for a never to be forgotten experience.

A CALL TO ALL COMPANY TREASURERS!

Below find a very important message to ALL Company treasurers! Please make sure this is done as expeditiously as possible since our government requires this information and we want to make it as smooth as possible for our treasurer, Scott Frank.



FROM THE TREASURER OF OUR ASSOCIATION

It is that time once again, for the US Government to keep tabs on all those who uphold the Union. All companies need to send in your form 990's to me so I have them in my possession by March 31st. We do not (thankfully) pay taxes according to this information, but we have to turn it in to the government so they can be sure they know what we do in a year's time and what we do with our money. Your cooperation in this endeavor is much appreciated. You can e-mail it to me at scottfrankdesigns@Hotmail.com or snail mail it to me at:

**Scott Frank
W9041 Spruce Road
Beaver Dam, WI 53916**

Thank you for your cooperation!

**AN IMPORTANT CALL TO MEMBERS OF THE
SECOND WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY**

The following dispatch has been received in the office of The Fugelman. This event is one of the concluding events of the Sesquicentennial of the War of the Rebellion. For the men of the Second Wisconsin it would mark the end of their enlistment as volunteers. While this event doesn't have the magic of the Battle of Gettysburg (what could), it is one of the final events of the sesquicentennial cycle. Next year the big events will be Appomattox or Lincoln's funeral event. For new members this will be the last opportunity to participate in a large scale battle format reflecting the 150th anniversary of the War of the Rebellion. The editor encourages members to consider attending this event. The Overland Campaign and the Battle of the Wilderness sounded the death knell of the Rebellion!



Gentlemen,

At last count [Sunday], we had only 16 people who have signed on for the bus trip to the National event in May. I'm sorry to report that these numbers need to improve prior to chartering the bus. If not, the cost of the trip will rise dramatically by an additional \$175. The cost for a double motel room & bus is now at \$409.00. [\$584.00 !? Ouch!]

Please get the word out that if anyone has planned to take the bus he should contact me or Dave Seilski ASAP.

Dave has contacted the bus company and we have been given till the end of February to secure the reservation on the charter.

Bottom line: If we don't get the numbers, we'll have to: 1. Pay more \$\$, 2. Find another way of getting there -personal vehicles or rent a van. 3. Cancel our trip to the 150th Overland Campaign event.

There you have it. Let me know if you can come up with more men. Ten would be good, 14 would be better, 30 would get you promoted to Colonel.

Best of luck,

Pete

FROM THE CAMPS OF THE COMPANIES OF THE SECOND WISCONSIN

INFANTRY



COMPANY B

John Dudkiewicz has reported an update to the Company B link on the Second Wisconsin website. The link will take one to the Company B facebook page. The editor went to the page and it is nicely done. Check it out and say hello to our comrades! The link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Company-B-2nd-Wisconsin-Volunteer-Infantry-LaCrosse-Light-Guard/195192460506734>

COMPANY K

**COMPANY K DRILLS SCHEDULED FOR
MARCH**

That is correct Gentlemen! The headline above is not deceiving and it ain't April Fool's Day yet. Not only is there a drill scheduled for March 1st, but one for March 22nd as well!! Both drills are to begin at 9:00 a.m. and last until noon. Since this year's national event is set for early May the drill schedule for Company K has been somewhat telescoped to fit the tighter schedule for our first events of the year.

As in the past, the drills are scheduled to take place at the Waterloo High School gym. Come in full uniform with your rifle and all the accoutrements. Remember to bring the canteen with water to hydrate during the drills. Arrive ready to work! We want to maintain our reputations as one of the best units in the country for drill and effort on the field.





Figure 3 Pvt. Decker illustrates how Lincoln aged during his time in office

BATTERY B-4TH UNITED STATES LIGHT ARTILLERY



SAM WILKESON (THOMAS SOBOTTKE) TO RETIRE FROM ACTIVE SERVICE!

A FOND ADIEU TO A MULTITALENTED MEMBER OF BATTERY B AND THE SECOND WISCONSIN

The following communication was received at the offices of the Fugelman on February 8th, 1864. Many of us have had the opportunity to interact with Sam Wilkeson at events over a large number of years. The notice of his "retirement" from our hobby is a sad one. It is always hard to say goodbye under any circumstances! This editor had not really had an opportunity to interact with the reporter from the New York Times before the event at Old World Wisconsin in 2013. Sharing an interest in the reportorial profession our conversations were interesting and this editor was impressed with Tom's ability to stay in the his first person impression and his vast knowledge of the War of the Rebellion. Clearly he will miss the members of the battery and the infantry of the Second Wisconsin, but it seems clear that we will miss him as much as he misses us!!

Fair weather my friend and may God bless you in all your endeavors in the future and also direct his healing grace to you. Below is Tom's communiqué to Battery B and the Fugelman believes it is worthy to be shared with all our readers:

Captain Brant Doty and Sargent Christopher Bestul, Battery B 4th United States Light Artillery:

Smiling Sam Wilkeson has graced the pages of Battery history since 1996. Though people like Skip McCutcheon and John Utterback have longer

service in re-enacting generally, no man in the Battery in its entire history has been continuously involved so long. So it is with the full knowledge of what I have gained from all of you that I recognize that it is time to retire. I was going to have the "last hurrah" be this season 2014 or perhaps if health permitted in 2015. I was planning this year to handle communications for the Battery, along with doing the Hartland School Event, Heritage Hill, and Old World Wisconsin as an at large member of the 2nd Wisconsin. We all know that the Battery and the 2nd are and have been among the most distinguished units in all of re-enacting since I came in and perhaps before. The 2nd is always among the best drilled and dressed out units wherever they go. And Battery B has old Bess, featuring what I believe in my capacity as an American history professor, is one of two actual tubes that the original Battery B fought with for over two years after Gettysburg, via that gift to the Army Battery in 1896 by General John Gibbon himself, one of two that replaced those lost (not taken by the enemy) in that firefight between Union guns surrounding the gatehouse to the town cemetery and those on Brenner's Hill where a full battalion of Confederate artillery tried to take out Union guns and failed on 2 July 1863.

Health issues prominently and directly related to what my Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML) progressively is doing to make my peripheral neuropathy (foot problems) and with what I take for the disease via first Gleevec and now Dasatinib that raise my sensitivity to heat, rendering me unable to maintain an acceptable margin of personal safety on the re-enacting field, a place no longer tenable in wool nor heavy flannel and cottons, is what drives my retirement from the field.

It is not whatsoever anything greater than that. Wonderfully, I have come to respect and care about the friendships I have made over the years--all of them. These need not cease. I have a wonderful framed certificate recognizing my service signed by all the then members of the battery some six or so years ago at a meeting at Wally and Shelly Hlaban's. It deeply touched me that day and is very important now. I emotionally connect it to all of those with whom I have ever served on re-enacting fields from Shiloh to Gettysburg and more, over our 17-years together. It's essence were things like the two years at Pewaukee so close to my home that were idyllic. It is that stale cold beer shared with John Utterback with no one awake in camp at Wade House one year at 2:30 in the morning in almost bone chilling cold where we discussed our early life divorces and what we took from that experience and so many other things. It is the heat of so many battles in our season events over the years where powder smoke smacked me in the face in 1997 at the Antietam National Event on a gun line where our gun was with fourteen others firing continuously, while a band played patriotic tunes, and ground and air pyrotechnics, and 10,000 infantry directly to our left front fought it out, muskets blazing. It was the cornfield portion of that battle event in 1997 where an entire regiment (1,000 strong in battle line) came

up a little rise in the field to discover all fifteen or so pieces there were loaded and ready to fire double canister (that was the order at least I heard Eric Peterson give to all) and the commander of the insurgent men say very audibly "Oh Shit! We defeated them but let the Rebels charge us as a consolation prize, as to our right a battle scenario that spun out of control (that happens with tens of thousands men who must command smaller units and react to real conditions they see in their front). A man died of a heart attack. An ambulance on the field and corn thrown at the Rebs in our front and in return at them, marked its ending.

It was things like the friendship of the Battery B's not only in touring a real Octagon House with my wife Kathy, for which she is extremely grateful, and taking their picture in full period dress (including Kathy) we'll both never, ever forget or lose sight of. It is the wonderful family feeling with at least two, nay-- all three major commanders of the Battery since I came in where the Battery B's provided seemingly real letters from home for all of us, boxes wrapped in plain paper featuring licorice whips, peanuts, and all sorts of goodies at several Green Bay Train Museum events. It was at one such event me getting into some great Oh Be Joyful from a jug one year. (that was fun!) It is the camaraderie from all of you for so long and it still is there and it will not stop if I have anything to say about that. I know my Battery mates and all of those in the 2nd's fine infantry companies will say the same.

It was an August freelance visit on my part to a re-enactment at Leesburg Virginia that 2001, where I charged with the 2nd Wisconsin at First Bull Run in the biggest fight of the whole struggle. I saw Jackson's Virginians on the hill. Then, coming close I realized I was armed only with a correspondent's pencil and notebook and politely dropped behind the battle lines to be given a large handful of ice on a 115 to 120 heat index midday mad dogs and Englishmen out in the noonday sun literal experience. I wisely placed the entire mass under my hat on my head and slunk over to the shade of some small saplings, to observe in a crouch or prone position the unsuccessful but noble attempt of the 2nd in its first real fight to get at the enemy. This was followed by my having a long weekend as an "extra" shooting the film God and Generals. It was just one site used of fourteen in the movie. I ironically was in the original Stonewall brigade and carried the State of Virginia colors complete with its Sic Semper Tyrannous state motto. My appearance was the finest example of minimalist acting ever conceived! I even had a color company mob of Confederate Virginians circa early 1861 encircle me in close, and demand to know with genuine Southron drawls all, why this Yankee interloper was permitted in the movie unit at all! A Virginia Shenandoah born and raised man for real, a comrade newly made, and who had already said I was turned out as a new recruit ought to be, "You're a real Virginian now!" and after one of nine takes of the main scene I was in, saved me from disaster. Now I was a fully galvanized

Shenandoah Valley Reb! (that's for you Skip McCutcheon!) I was in one other scene in the background doing #4 with Matthew of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John fame, the VMI recruited Confederate Battery in the fuzzy background as Jeb Stuart met Jackson for the first time. I would have fired the gun or pulled the lanyard that day we drilled with a safety school experienced re-enactor but full crews and the powder and primers did not get to the movie site along with a proper battery commander that day at all-- Rats! They were nice 12 pound Napoleon smoothbores with red painted gun carriages though. Ten days later it was 911. That marks out that time reverently in my mind.

This camaraderie is also represented by Brant and Carna Doty taking John Utterback and me in after a long night of it with the First Brigade Band in Madison recently. It is Lyle Laufenberg waiting so patiently for me in Madison and being there for me with Linda, his wonderful wife, when my illnesses almost got the best of me at so many other times in recent years. Such deep and abiding friendships can only be lifelong treasures.

Finally, it was crystalized by the deep and soul-like hospitality and generous warmth we all felt, from David Dresang. We all miss him so much. But he is now under the Lord's care in a very good place, with everyone and so many of those preceding us in the real units and of the current re-enacting corps, who now encamp together across that dark river mentioned by so many Civil War veterans. God speed to them all and may God go with you down here as we make our ways in the world.

So, with no regrets but a deep sense of fulfillment, I close my active duty with Battery B 4th U.S. and the boys of the old 2nd.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Martin Sobottke, portraying Samuel Wilkeson of the New York Tribune and aid de camp, to the Captain commanding.

P.S. Captain Sir, I felt this turn of events at least will allow Sargent Bestul to assign another soldier, with the communications duties I was to take on but now cannot. Better now in the cold of January than in March or April when infantry companies turn to drill, and the battery maintenance days and safety school portend another active duty year and season. Please forward this e-mail to the entire command and also the Honorable James Dumke 2nd Wisconsin editor of the Fugleman.

**ARTILLERYMAN DELIVERS BABY
DAUGHTER**

An unusual report was received by the newsletter from our correspondent, Lyle Laufenberg, in February. It appears that one of the artillerymen has delivered a baby girl in Denmark—the country not the city.



Figure 4 SANDIE GRAM A MEMBER OF DENMARK'S BATTERY B

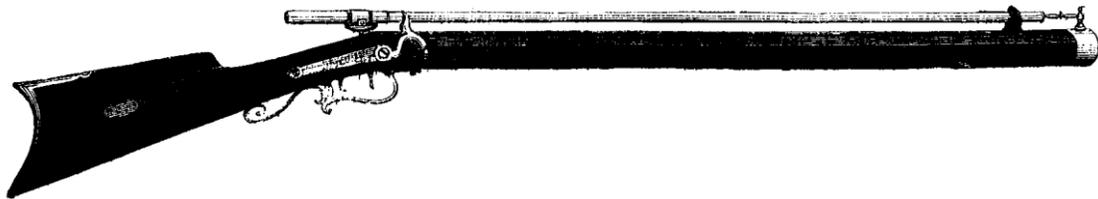


Figure 5 "NILA" A NEW REENACTOR JOINS THE FRAY

Sandie Gram is a member of Battery B, 4th U.S. Light Artillery, posted in Denmark. Mrs. Gram traveled to Gettysburg for the 145th anniversary of the great battle and while here met with the Battery B contingent that is a member of the Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Association (yes, our very own!)

On January 9th, 2014, Sandie gave birth to a daughter after eleven and a half hours of labor. It was a somewhat difficult birth, but the result was the lovely lass pictured above. The baby was given the beautiful name of Nila. On behalf of the members of the Second Wisconsin (here in North America) we extend our sincerest congratulations to the parents of Nila on the birth of their daughter and hope for a wonderful future for the whole family.

THE SKIRMISH TEAM



CIVIL WAR MILESTONES

MARCH

MARCH

- Mar. 1, 1864** **A Union raid on Richmond led by Col. Ulric Dahlgren is turned back by cavalry forces under Custis Lee.**
- Mar. 2, 1864** **Col. Ulric killed in an ambush as his failed raid on Richmond came to an end.**
- Mar. 2, 1864** **The Senate formally promotes U. S. Grant to Lieutenant General**
- Mar. 4, 1861** **Abraham Lincoln is sworn in as 16th President of the United States of America.**
- Mar. 4, 1864** **Lincoln's Second inauguration.**
- Mar. 6, 1831** **Gen. Phillip Sheridan, U. S., born**
- Mar. 8, 1862** **The Confederate Ironclad *Merrimac* -named the *Virginia* by the CSA-- sinks two wooden Union ships then battles the Union Ironclad *Monitor* to a draw. Naval warfare is thus changed forever, making wooden ships obsolete.**
- Mar. 9, 1862** **The Monitor and Virginia conclude their battle, fighting to a draw, but the Virginia had to withdraw due to damage.**
- Mar. 10, 1864** **Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant receives command of all the armies, replacing Henry Halleck, who is relieved of duty at his own request.**
- Mar. 17, 1862** **General McClellan begins moving the Army of the Potomac to Fort Monroe, the beginning of the Peninsula Campaign.**
- Mar. 18, 1964** **Arkansas voters ratify a pro-Union state constitution that ends slavery.**
- Mar. 21, 1864** **President Lincoln signs legislation allowing Colorado and Nevada to become states.**
- Mar. 28, 1864** **A large group of anti-war Copperheads attack Federal soldiers on furlough in Charleston, Illinois. Nine men are killed and 12 wounded in the disturbance.**

APRIL

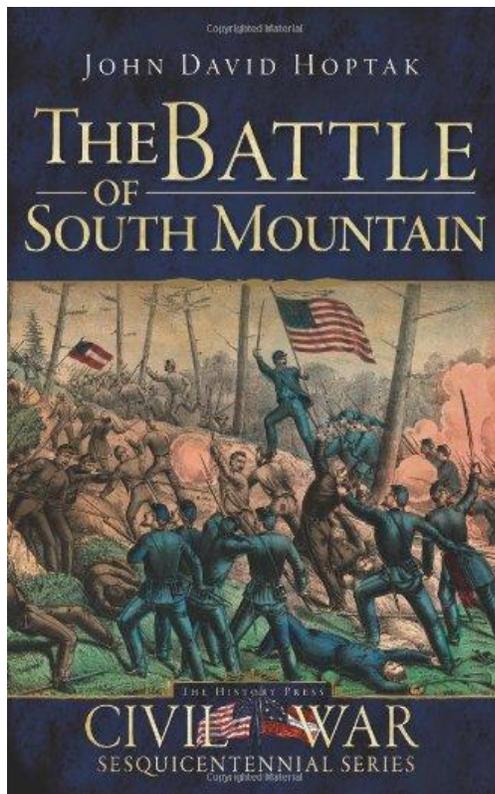
- Apr. 4, 1864** **Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan assumes command of the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry Corps.**
- Apr. 6, 1864** **Meeting in New Orleans, the Louisiana Constitutional Convention adopts a new state constitution abolishing slavery.**
- Apr. 7, 1864** **The U.S. Senate approves the 13th Amendment 38-6.**
- Apr. 12, 1861** **At 4:30 a.m. Confederates under Gen. Pierre Beauregard open fire with 50 cannons upon Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. The Civil War begins.**
- Apr. 12, 1864** **Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest captures Fort Pillow in Tennessee and the result has been called a massacre given the slaughter of black troops at the fort. Forrest was also accused of taking advantage of a flag of truce to improve his positions to attack the fort.**
- Apr. 14, 1865** **At 10:00 p.m. John Wilkes Booth will enter the Presidential box at Ford's Theater and fire a bullet into the brain of Abraham Lincoln. Booth would successfully manage to escape from the theater and be on the run for 12 days.**
- Apr. 15, 1861** **President Lincoln issues call for 75,000 volunteers.**
- Apr. 15, 1865** **At 7:22 a.m. President Lincoln would succumb to the wound inflicted by Booth the night before. Lincoln would die in a small boarding room at the Peterson House. His death would unleash massive scenes of mourning across his beloved Union!**
- Apr. 17, 1861** **Virginia secedes from the Union, followed within five weeks by Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina, thus forming an eleven state Confederacy with a population of 9 million, including nearly 4 million slaves. The Union will soon have 21 states and a population of over 20 million.**

- Apr. 17, 1864** **Lt. Gen. Grant ends prisoner exchanges with the Confederate army.**
- Apr. 18, 2014** **Good Friday**
- Apr. 20, 1827** **Gen. John Gibbon, USA, born.**
- Apr. 20, 1864** **The U.S. War Department reduces rations for rebel prisoners in response to reports that the Confederates are mistreating Union prisoners.**
- Apr. 20, 2014** **EASTER**
- Apr. 22, 1864** **“In God We Trust” becomes the official motto on U.S. coins under the new Federal Coinage Act.**
- Apr. 26, 1865** **Union cavalry and national detectives would track John Wilkes Booth to a tobacco barn on the Richard Garret farm near Bowling Green, Virginia . After refusing to surrender the barn was set ablaze and during the stand-off was shot and mortally wounded.**

The Battle of South Mountain

CIVIL WAR TRUST AUTHOR INTERVIEW

The Civil War Trust recently had the chance to sit down with John David Hoptak, author of *The Battle of South Mountain*, a new account of this important 1862 Maryland Campaign battle fought just before the fateful Battle of Antietam.



CIVIL WAR TRUST: JOHN, YOUR NEW BOOK , THE BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN, IS A WELCOME ADDITION FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT 1862 BATTLE. WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO WRITE AN ACCOUNT OF THIS BATTLE?

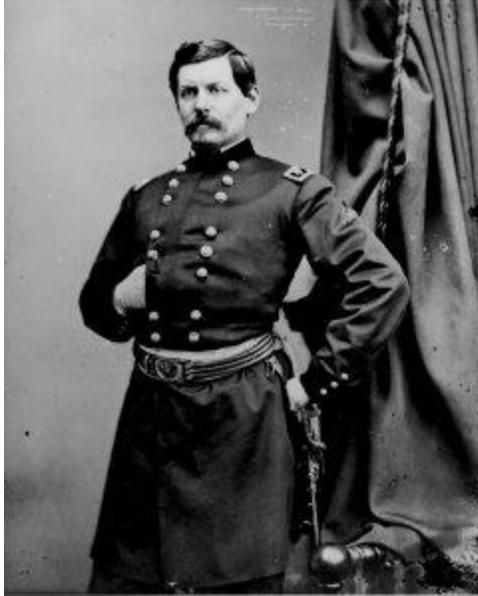
John Hoptak: There were several reasons. Strange as it sounds, growing up as I did studying the Civil War, even from my earliest days I have felt something of an attachment to the Battle of South Mountain simply because I was born on the same day on which it was fought, September 14. Aside from this, being a student of the Federal Ninth Army Corps, South Mountain interested me because the Ninth Corps did all the fighting at Fox's Gap. Most importantly, however, I decided to write on South Mountain because it has long remained one of those understudied battles of the Civil War, languishing for so long in the shadow of Antietam. Indeed, despite the tens of thousands of Civil War-related titles to have hit the shelves since the cessation of hostilities, only two focus specifically on South Mountain: John Priest's Before Antietam and Tim Reese's excellent study of the fighting at Crampton's Gap titled Sealed With Their Lives, both of which are out of print. My intention with The Battle of South Mountain was to present a succinct narrative history of this important battle, focusing on the action at Frosttown, Turner's, Fox's, and Crampton's Gaps, while at the same time placing the battle within the larger context of the consequential Maryland Campaign of September 1862.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: GIVE US A SENSE OF WHAT BOTH SIDES WERE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1862.

At its most basic level, the Army of the Potomac was attempting to force its way across the mountain in order to carry out George McClellan's instructions of cutting "the enemy in two and beating him in detail." Lee's forces, on the other hand, were simply trying to prevent this from happening. In his drive north across the Potomac, Robert E. Lee originally had no intention of defending the South Mountain passes; he, instead, wanted to draw the Army of the Potomac across and bring it to battle west of the mountain. However, with Lee's army still dangerously divided on the morning of September 14, in executing the orders and falling behind the timetable spelled out in [Special Orders No. 191](#)—with Longstreet's forces near Hagerstown and Jackson's at Harpers Ferry—and with McClellan advancing rapidly from Frederick, Lee was forced to defend the mountain. Just ten days into his first invasion of Union soil, Lee lost the initiative and was forced on the defensive.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: DESPITE HIS REPUTATION FOR THE OPPOSITE, YOUR ACCOUNT REALLY SHOWS UNION GENERAL GEORGE MCCLELLAN AS AN AGGRESSIVE AND VIGILANT LEADER. HOW WOULD YOU RATE MCCLELLAN'S GENERALSHIP AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN?

JH: George McClellan remains one of the most polarizing and most controversial figures of the Civil War, and I am sure some of what I argue in *The Battle of South Mountain* will raise some eyebrows. Yes, I do think he moved much more aggressively during the first stages of the Maryland Campaign than is typically and traditionally described. What gets lost in so much interpretation of the campaign was the tremendous amount of pressure resting on McClellan's shoulders. Early September 1862 witnessed some of the darkest days the United States would experience during the entirety of the war; spirits were low both in the army and on the home front following a lamentable summer's worth of defeats, and with two Federal armies driven into the safety of Washington's formidable defenses. With Confederate forces pushing north across a 1,000 mile front, both in the East, with Lee's men threatening a drive across the Potomac, and in the west, with Bragg's and Kirby Smith's men moving north through Tennessee and into Kentucky, and with Great Britain leaning very close to offering recognition of the Confederate States of America, George McClellan was called upon once again to help sort out the mess, and bring order to the chaos that defined the Federal forces in the East.



Major General George B. McClellan (National Archives)

With great energy, McClellan immediately went to work, incorporating John Pope's Army of Virginia into his own Army of the Potomac and organizing the dozens of new regiments arriving daily in Washington, while at the same time preparing for a pursuit of Lee's columns into Maryland. No easy task, yet one McClellan tackled admirably. Of course, McClellan could not know where Lee was headed, but nonetheless did a good job in organizing the pursuit. What aided McClellan in his pursuit of Lee was the fact that Confederate Cavalry general Jeb Stuart did not do a good job in keeping Lee up to date on the movements of the Army of the Potomac. Lee was almost lulled into a false sense of complacency.

On September 8, Lee wrote to Jefferson Davis from Frederick that as far as he knew the Union army was still gathering in the defenses of Washington. Yet by this date, McClellan was already well on the way out of the city; the following day, the same day Lee issued Special Orders No. 191, the Army of the Potomac was already halfway between Washington and Frederick. McClellan learned of the Confederate evacuation of Frederick and picked up the pace of the Federal pursuit so that by the evening of September 12, his leading forces were arriving in the Maryland city. His orders to Burnside, commanding his right wing, and to Pleasonton, his cavalry chief, were to continue pushing west the following day. Thus, when McClellan was handed the lost copy of 191, his advanced forces were nearly already at the foot of South Mountain. Special Orders 191 made clear that Lee has divided his forces and McClellan planned to exploit this by ordering his men to force their way across South Mountain. While Burnside with the right wing—the First and Ninth Corps—were to keep the Confederate “main body” at bay at Turner's Gap, William Franklin's Sixth Corps was instructed to punch through six miles south at Crampton's Gap, destroy McLaws's force of

Maryland Heights and thereby lift the siege of Harpers Ferry. This is one example of the aggressiveness, if you will, of McClellan's orders for September 14, for in order for Franklin to carry out these instructions, he had to first leave the Sixth Corps's bivouac site at Buckeystown, march no less than thirteen miles, across the Catoctin Mountains, battle their way through Crampton's Gap at South Mountain, then turn south, destroy McLaws and then turn around, and move north to assist Burnside. Nothing about this says "caution" to me. I'm sure there'll be those who disagree with this assessment, but that's the purpose of studying history. My job is neither to vilify nor defend McClellan or any other commander, just to call it as I see it, as best I can.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: THE BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN FEATURED FIERCE FIGHTING AT THREE DIFFERENT ROUGH MOUNTAIN PASSES. WHAT WAS THE SOLIDER EXPERIENCE LIKE AT THIS BATTLE?



Detail of North Carolina Monument at South Mountain (Brian Swartz)

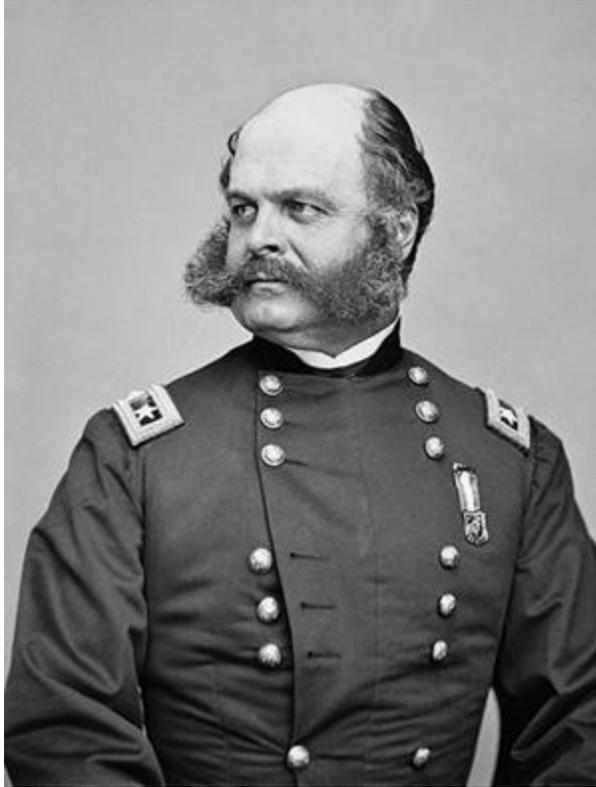
JH: The terrain over which these soldiers fought at South Mountain was incredibly difficult, particularly at Frosttown Gap, which was defended by Robert Rodes's Alabamians and attacked by Hooker's First Corps. As Hooker noted, the mountain was difficult to ascend "even in the absence of a foe in front." Lee's men may have been outnumbered, but at Frosttown, Turner's, and Fox's Gaps, they did enjoy a strong defensive position. When visiting the battlefield today, it is sometimes impossible to imagine that soldiers actually fought there. It is no easy climb. One can also get a sense of the difficulty in maintaining orderly formations, because of the ground, because of the confusion of battle, and so on. In many cases, especially at Frosttown and Crampton's Gaps, the fighting bogged down into small unit actions, with squads of victory-flushed Union soldiers advancing ahead of others, with Confederates retreating pell-mell up the mountain slopes; all was confusion, all was chaos. The fighting even extended well after night

fell; the bright muzzle flashes briefly illuminating the darkness, with the pitiable cries and groans of the wounded, with the men groping about in the dark seeking their companies. It is all impossible to describe.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: DID ROBERT E. LEE CHOOSE SOUTH MOUNTAIN AS A PLACE TO GIVE BATTLE? HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA'S LEADERSHIP AT THIS BATTLE?

JH: As noted above, Lee felt he had no choice; McClellan forced him to give battle at South Mountain. Lee did not originally intend to defend the mountain passes, but had to lest his army, as McClellan envisioned, be cut in two and destroyed in detail. Regarding Confederate leadership, it should be remembered that Lee never once set foot on the battlefield, the injuries to his hands prevented him from doing so. He thus had to trust in his subordinates. Some, such as D.H. Hill, Robert Rodes, Alfred Colquitt, and Samuel Garland, turned in fine performances, while others, such as Roswell Ripley and even Paul Semmes did not. Of course, as with all officers at every battle, they did the best they could under the circumstances. There was little time for setting up proper defenses and becoming familiar with the terrain. So many of the Lee's brigades were simply rushed into the fight one at a time, as soon as they arrived on the mountain top.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: DID YOUR RESEARCH OF THE BATTLE PRODUCE ANY NEW OPINIONS OR SUBJECTS OF INTEREST RELATED TO SOUTH MOUNTAIN?



Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside (Library of Congress)

JH: As pointed out by my friend Dr. Thomas Clemens, an expert on the 1862 Maryland Campaign who recently edited Ezra Carman's exhaustive account of the campaign, the fighting at Fox's, Turner's, and Frosttown Gaps was largely Ambrose Burnside's show. As commander of the right wing, Army of the Potomac, Burnside orchestrated an impressive double-envelopment of the Confederate position on the mountaintop, with Reno's Ninth Corps attacking the Confederate right and Hooker's men striking at the Confederate left, while John Gibbon's famed "black hat" brigade probing the middle. From above, Burnside's attack must have resembled a large pitchfork, with his blue columns sweeping up the difficult mountain terrain. One wonders how much of this Lincoln paid attention to; was it to him more evidence of Burnside's tactical/strategic leadership, his soundness for command he demonstrated earlier in the year in North Carolina that first caught Lincoln's attention? Aside from Burnside's creditable showing on September 14, it is interesting that during the early stages of this campaign, Jeb Stuart did not turn in all too great a performance in reporting Union troop movements during the early stages of the campaign; indeed, his scarcity and even inaccuracy of reports may have lulled Lee into a sense of complacency, believing that time was on his side, even when it was quickly slipping away. Further, while Lee is often, and most of the time justifiably credited with an ability to "read" his opponents, during the campaign, he entirely misjudged McClellan's rate of advance and had erroneously assumed that the Federal garrisons at Martinsburg and

Harpers Ferry would obligingly flee with the movement of his army across the Potomac. Of course they did not, which forced Lee to alter his campaign by dividing his forces. His army fell behind what was an impossible timetable for the completion of the Harpers Ferry expedition and still remained divided on the morning of the Fourteenth, when McClellan attempted to force his way across the mountain.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: VICTORIOUS AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN, DID MCCLELLAN AND THE UNION ARMY MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE A DIVIDED ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA BEFORE THEY ACTUALLY MET AT ANTIETAM ON SEPTEMBER 17TH?

JH: There is no question that South Mountain was a Union victory, in the tactical sense. They drove Lee's men off the mountain and compelled Lee to order a retreat on the night of September 14, not only of his forces on the mountain, but of Jackson's forces at Harpers Ferry as well. Lee thus decided that night to abandon his northern campaign. However, as the hours ticked by the following morning, on Monday, September 15, the fruits of the Union's hard-won victory began to wither. Yes, there were several missed opportunities, especially early on September 15. But the blame for these missed opportunities cannot rest entirely on McClellan's shoulders. McClellan wanted a vigorous pursuit on the morning of September 15, and was still hoping to lift the siege of Harpers Ferry. His orders were to move out at daybreak and strike at Lee's columns, if they were found to be on the march. It was his subordinates, instead, who let him down. William Franklin, in Pleasant Valley, did not so much as budge that morning. McClellan wanted him to push south through the Valley and destroy McLaws's isolated command; doing so, would have lifted the siege and may have led to the destruction of a full twenty percent of Lee's army. Instead, Franklin, convinced he was up against tremendous odds, did not do so. Harpers Ferry fell, which allowed McLaws's force to cross the Potomac and escape. McClellan also ordered Burnside to have the Ninth Corps on the road at 8:00 a.m., in pursuit of D.H. Hill's and Longstreet's retreating columns. But by noon, the Ninth Corps still remained at Fox's Gap. When McClellan arrived on the high ground east of the Antietam late that afternoon and examined Lee's strong line of defense on the heights on the other side of the creek, only a portion of his army was on hand and it was too late in the day, he decided, to mount any further offensive action.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN BATTLEFIELD FEATURES SOME OF THE MOST INTERESTING TOPOGRAPHY OF ANY CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELD. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE PLACES TO VISIT AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN?



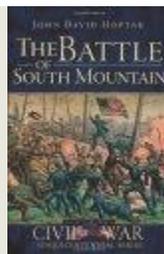
View of the Reno Monument at Fox's Gap - South Mountain Battlefield (Rob Shenk)

JH: The South Mountain battlefields are certainly worth a visit; I urge everyone with an interest in the Civil War to head on out to these fields. There are some portions of it that are a little difficult to navigate. Because of the terrain and because the battle was so spread out—I like to say the battle was fought on three islands, separated by miles from one another—it is also sometimes difficult to get a sense of the entirety of the action. There is virtually no commercial or any other kind of development there, so in that sense at least little has changed. I have long enjoyed visiting Fox's Gap and standing at the Reno Monument, which marks the spot where the beloved commander of the Ninth Corps received his death wound. It is quiet there and, I must admit, an eerie sense that this battle “just happened” often overtakes me. The same can be said when I travel to Burkittsville and travel along Mountain Church Road, where the main Confederate line defending Crampton's Gap was positioned. Looking across the expansive farmland to the east of this roadway, it is easy to picture the massive blue waves sweeping directly toward you—the men of Slocum's division, who suffered heavily in their attack. In some places, the original stone walls that lined this roadway still stand. The War Correspondents Memorial Arch—a very interesting memorial—atop the mountain at Crampton's Gap is worth a visit as is the Washington Monument north of Turner's Gap, which was the

first monument in the nation built and dedicated to the memory of our first president. Be sure also to stop on by the Visitor Center. The battlefields are situated along the Appalachian Trail, for those hikers out there, or for anyone wishing to enjoy a pleasant, a peaceful stroll through history.

CIVIL WAR TRUST: HOW HAS THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN BATTLEFIELD CHANGED SINCE 1862? LOOKING FORWARD WHAT WOULD YOU LOVE TO SEE HAPPEN AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN FROM A PRESERVATION OR INTERPRETATION POINT OF VIEW?

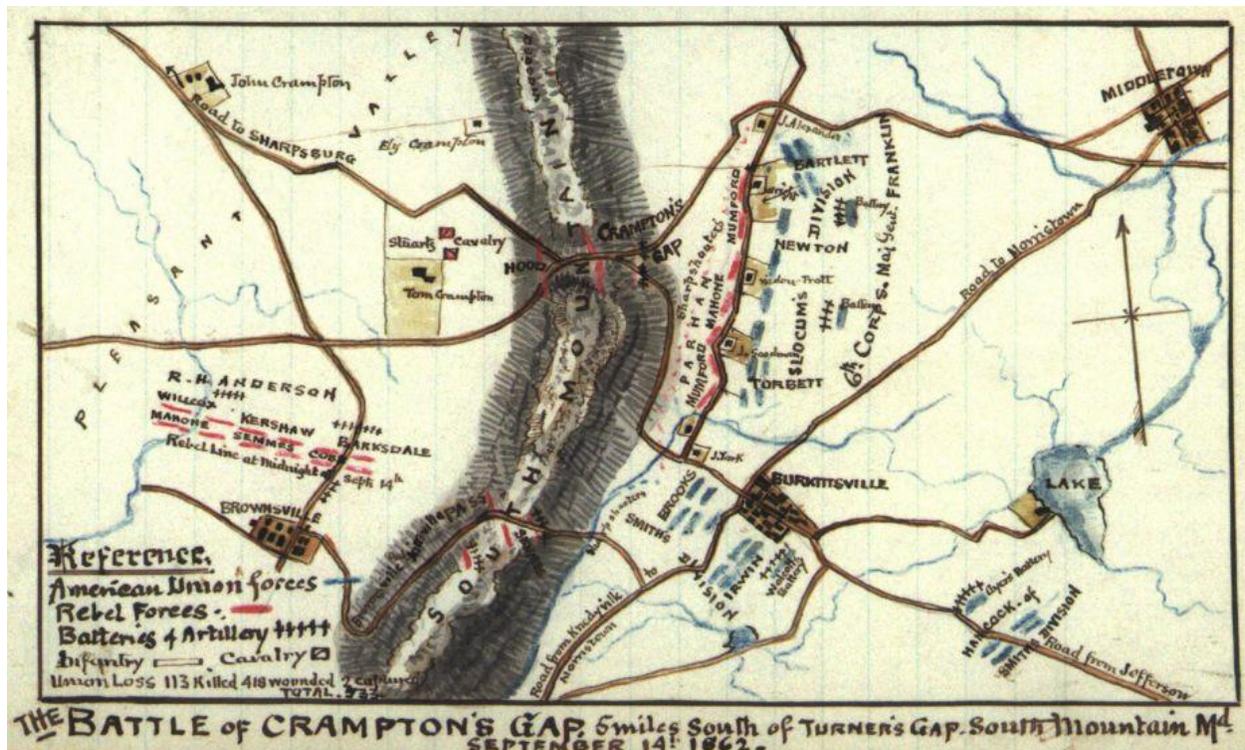
JH: Excepting increased tree coverage and vegetation in some portions of the battlefield, very little has changed. As mentioned above, there is little commercial development that has impacted the battlefield. The good news—very good news—is that the South Mountain State Battlefield, as of January of this year, has been added to National Register of Historic Places, and our thanks are due to John Miller, Robb Bailey, Isaac Forman, Paul Miller, and everyone else for their efforts for making this happen. It is also my understanding that more than 100 acres of important battlefield ground has recently been acquired by the Battlefield, mostly in the areas to the north of Bolivar, where Meade's division of Pennsylvania Reserves formed their attack against Rodes's Alabamians. Other acreage recently acquired includes a part of the field where Garnett's Virginians struggled against the Federals of John Hatch's Division. Within the past few years, there has been a partnership established between the South Mountain State Battlefield and the Antietam National Battlefield. All of this is very good news. Special events and programs are currently being planned for the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the battle. It is clear, then, that there has been an increased awareness of the importance of this battle and of these battlefields. As far as looking ahead, I would like to see this awareness continued, for increased awareness will bring about increased preservation. And these fields need to be preserved and the story of what happened there needs to be known.



John Hoptak was born on the 116th Anniversary of the Battle of South Mountain, on September 14, 1978, in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. A lifelong student of the American Civil War, Hoptak holds a bachelor's degree in history from Kutztown University and a master's in history from Lehigh University. He currently serves as an Interpretative Park Ranger at Antietam National Battlefield, and as an adjunct instructor at American Military University, where he teaches courses in American history, Civil War history, and Mexican-American War history. In addition to The Battle of South Mountain, Hoptak is the author of

several of other books, including *First in Defense of the Union: The Civil War History of the First Defenders* (2004), *Our Boys Did Nobly: Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, Soldiers at the Battles of South Mountain and Antietam* (2009), and *Antietam: September 17, 1862* (2011). He is a long-time member of the Civil War Trust and is dedicated to the preservation of Civil War history. Hoptak led the effort to restore the 48th Pennsylvania Monument at Antietam National Battlefield by conducting a nationwide initiative to restore the missing sword from the statue of Brigadier General James Nagle, an effort successfully completed in 2010.

<http://www.civilwar.org/books/interviews/battle-of-south-mountain.html>



The Battle of Crampton's Gap : 5 miles south of Turner's Gap, South Mountain, Md. September 14th 1862.

Sneden, Robert Knox, 1832-1918.

LINCOLN ON THE U-W MADISON CAMPUS



The above photo was taken on the University of Wisconsin Campus on Abraham Lincoln's 205th birthday. Mr. Lincoln seems to be contemplating this unending winter! The editor has no knowledge of who the photographer was. The photo was sent to the editor by his son who is a student on the Madison campus.

**A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH
MEDICAL DEPARTMENT COLUMN
BY JAMES C. SCHMIDT**

***(February/March 2014 Civil War
News)***

Imagine for a moment that you are a life insurance agent sitting in your office in early 1861 ... the day's mail includes a piece of correspondence from one of the brave Union soldiers garrisoned at Fort Sumter, with a very serious question:

“I am desirous to be informed whether, in case we are attacked by the forces of South Carolina, and I lose my life in the defense, the Company will pay the amount of the policy to my family.”

How do you reply?

That very note came into the offices of New York Life in February 1861. For months – anticipating a crisis – the company principals had debated how they would handle war claims, but here, in their hands, was the impetus needed to make a final decision.

They wrote back to the soldier; first, admitting that the risk of war was not legally covered, but then vowing:

“[Should] any of the brave men now doing duty at Fort Sumter ... fall in its defence ... we doubt not but that there is patriotism enough in our Trustees to waive the legal question ... and pay the amount insured.”

The history of life insurance in America, from its origins in the early 1800s up to and including the Civil War, is the subject of an interesting and award-winning book: *Investing in Life: Insurance in Antebellum America* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010; soft cover reprint, 2013).

Author Sharon Ann Murphy, Ph.D., is an associate professor at Providence [R.I.] College with special interests in 19th-century U.S. social, economic, and business history. The book won the Hagley Prize in business history in 2012.

I enjoyed it very much, indeed. I was especially interested as the book represents a unique intersection of so many of my own interests in 19th-century history, all in one volume — corporate history, slavery, the Civil War, and, of special interest to readers of this column, medicine and health.

Murphy’s book is a very thorough examination of the birth and growth of the American life insurance industry from the early 1800s through the Civil War. The author’s research is exceptional.

In addition to period newspapers, published company histories, and other secondary literature on the insurance industry in the 1800s, she made special use of a few collections of America’s earliest insurance companies, at least one of which included correspondence to and from the company, so one gets both a customer and a corporate perspective.

The beginning of the book is interesting as it explains how the companies had little actuarial or mortality information for the United States and had to make assumptions by adapting British mortality and premium tables

instead. It was interesting to learn that the insurance companies pressed for changes to the census questionnaire

Investing in Life then describes the evolution of the major insurance companies. Some are still in business, including New York Life and MetLife – which started as the National Union Life and Limb Insurance Co.), the development of agency/agent system, the moral and religious arguments for and against life insurance, the grim, but interesting, involvement of some companies in insuring the lives of slaves, and, finally, the role of firms in insuring the lives of soldiers during the Civil War.

The author also challenges some conventional wisdom on the history and evolution of the life insurance industry in America.

As I hinted at above – and this should not be surprising given the subject matter – there is a considerable amount of material related to 19th-century medicine. This includes:

Physicians: Just as many do today, antebellum insurance companies required a medical examination of potential customers to determine possible risk factors. One firm required all agents to “select a physician of experience, and one in whose character entire confidence can be placed. His opinion will be taken in every case.” (p. 66).

Insurance firms were very conscientious about the credentials of the examining physician, disallowing eclectics and other “non-traditional” schools of medicine. The examining physicians were asked to assess the applicants’ specific health condition, give an opinion on their potential life span, and advice on whether an additional premium should be charged.

Geography: Presumed and demonstrated differences in disease patterns across the continent also played strongly into assessing health risks and premiums. As a general rule, living or traveling in the Deep South was either prohibited or engendered increases in premiums or limits on policy values.

New York Life & Trust President William Bard declared that he “declin[ed] altogether insurances for the whole year in New Orleans or in other Southern or particularly unhealthy places.” (p. 35). The firms were also very cautious about insuring persons in California.

War Risks: Policies had almost always included military service and war exclusions, but most companies excused these limits and added a modest “war risk” premium of a few percent on soldier and sailor policies, in no small part because they felt it their public and patriotic duty.

Many actuaries and insurance businessmen quickly realized that the real problem was not in the easily intuitive risk of death on the battlefield, but rather from disease. As one insurance executive warned, “[T]he losses by battle are small in comparison to what they are estimated to be by disease contracted in camp or by exposure.” (p. 270).

In short, this excellent book provides a look at matters of life and death in the Civil War era in a way that you may not have considered before.

It also provides an interesting connection between ourselves and our antebellum and wartime ancestors: there’s a chance that the life insurance company you use today may be the same as the one they used!

WEB EXCLUSIVE: Find this month’s column in the “Medical Department” archive at <http://civilwarmed.blogspot.com/> and see several pieces of mid-1800s insurance ephemera from my collection, including: 1848 personal insurance questionnaire for a London-based firm; an 1866 booklet from a Connecticut-based life insurance firm; an 1863 property insurance document.

Jim Schmidt lives near Houston, Texas, where he is a pharmaceutical research scientist. He is the author, editor, and/or contributor to five books on the Civil War, including, most recently, Galveston and the Civil War (The History Press, 2012). He welcomes feedback and ideas for the column at schmidtjamesm@gmail.com. Past “Medical Department” columns are at <http://civilwarmed.blogspot.com>

http://www.civilwarnews.com/archive/articles/2014/febmar/medicaldept-021402.htm?utm_source=Campaigner&utm_campaign=FebruaryMarch_2014_Newsletter_&campaigner=1&utm_medium=HTMLEmail

“A HORSEMAN IN THE SKY”

By Ambrose Bierce

ONE sunny afternoon in the autumn of the year 1861, a soldier lay in a

clump of laurel by the side of a road in Western Virginia. He lay at full length, upon his stomach, his feet resting upon the toes, his head upon the left forearm. His extended right hand loosely grasped his rifle. But for the somewhat methodical disposition of his limbs and a slight rhythmic movement of the cartridge box at the back of his belt, he might have been thought to be dead. He was asleep at his post of duty. But if detected he would be dead shortly afterward, that being the just and legal penalty of his crime.

The clump of laurel in which the criminal lay was in the angle of a road which, after ascending, southward, a steep acclivity to that point, turned sharply to the west, running along the summit for perhaps one hundred yards. There it turned southward again and went zigzagging downward through the forest. At the salient of that second angle was a large flat rock, jutting out from the ridge to the northward, overlooking the deep valley from which the road ascended. The rock capped a high cliff; a stone dropped from its outer edge would have fallen sheer downward one thousand feet to the tops of the pines. The angle where the soldier lay was on another spur of the same cliff. Had he been awake he would have commanded a view, not only of the short arm of the road and the jutting rock but of the entire profile of the cliff below it. It might well have made him giddy to look.

The country was wooded everywhere except at the bottom of the valley to the northward, where there was a small natural meadow, through which flowed a stream scarcely visible from the valley's rim. This open ground looked hardly larger than an ordinary door-yard, but was really several acres in extent. Its green was more vivid than that of the in-closing forest. Away beyond it rose a line of giant cliffs similar to those upon which we are supposed to stand in our survey of the savage scene, and through which the road had somehow made its climb to the summit. The configuration of the valley, indeed, was such that from our point of observation it seemed entirely shut in, and one could not but have wondered how the road which found a way out of it had found a way into it, and whence came and whither went the waters of the stream that parted the meadow two thousand feet below.

No country is so wild and difficult but men will make it a theater of war; concealed in the forest at the bottom of that military rat trap in which half a hundred men in possession of the exits might have starved an army to submission, lay five regiments of Federal infantry. They had marched all the previous day and night and were resting. At nightfall they would take to the road again, climb to the place where their unfaithful sentinel now slept, and, descending the other slope of the ridge, fall upon a camp of the enemy at about midnight. Their hope was to surprise it, for the road lead to the rear of it. In case of failure their position would be perilous in the extreme;

and fail they surely would should accident or vigilance apprise the enemy of the movement.

II.

The sleeping sentinel in the clump of laurel was a young Virginian named Carter Druse. He was the son of wealthy parents, an only child, and had known such ease and cultivation and high living as wealth and taste were able to command in the mountain country of Western Virginia. His home was but a few miles from where he now lay. One morning he had risen from the breakfast table and said, quietly but gravely: "Father, a Union regiment has arrived at Grafton. I am going to join it."

The father lifted his leonine head, looked at the son a moment in silence, and replied: "Go, Carter, and, whatever may occur, do what you conceive to be your duty. Virginia, to which you are a traitor, must get on without you. Should we both live to the end of the war, we will speak further of the matter. Your mother, as the physician has informed you, is in a most critical condition; at the best she cannot be with us longer than a few weeks, but that time is precious. It would be better not to disturb her."

So Carter Druse, bowing reverently to his father, who returned the salute with a stately courtesy which masked a breaking heart, left the home of his childhood to go soldiering. By conscience and courage, by deeds of devotion and daring, he soon commended himself to his fellows and his officers; and it was to these qualities and to some knowledge of the country that he owed his selection for his present perilous duty at the extreme outpost. Nevertheless, fatigue had been stronger than resolution, and he had fallen asleep. What good or bad angel came in a dream to rouse him from his state of crime who shall say? Without a movement, without a sound, in the profound silence and the languor of the late afternoon, some invisible messenger of fate touched with unsealing finger the eyes of his consciousness—whispered into the ear of his spirit the mysterious awakening word which no human lips have ever spoken, no human memory ever has recalled. He quietly raised his forehead from his arm and looked between the masking stems of the laurels, instinctively closing his right hand about the stock of his rifle.

His first feeling was a keen artistic delight. On a colossal pedestal, the cliff, motionless at the extreme edge of the capping rock and sharply outlined against the sky, was an equestrian statue of impressive dignity. The figure of the man sat the figure of the horse, straight and soldierly, but with the repose of a Grecian god carved in the marble which limits the suggestion of activity. The gray costume harmonized with its aerial background; the metal of accouterment and caparison was softened and subdued by the shadow; the animal's skin had no points of high light. A carbine, strikingly

foreshortened, lay across the pommel of the saddle, kept in place by the right hand grasping it at the "grip"; the left hand, holding the bridle rein, was invisible. In silhouette against the sky, the profile of the horse was cut with the sharpness of a cameo; it looked across the heights of air to the confronting cliffs beyond. The face of the rider, turned slightly to the left, showed only an outline of temple and beard; he was looking downward to the bottom of the valley. Magnified by its lift against the sky and by the soldier's testifying sense of the formidableness of a near enemy, the group appeared of heroic, almost colossal, size.

For an instant Druse had a strange, half-defined feeling that he had slept to the end of the war and was looking upon a noble work of art reared upon that commanding eminence to commemorate the deeds of an heroic past of which he had been an inglorious part. The feeling was dispelled by a slight movement of the group; the horse, without moving its feet, had drawn its body slightly backward from the verge; the man remained immobile as before. Broad awake and keenly alive to the significance of the situation, Druse now brought the butt of his rifle against his cheek by cautiously pushing the barrel forward through the bushes, cocked the piece, and, glancing through the sights, covered a vital spot of the horseman's breast. A touch upon the trigger and all would have been well with Carter Druse. At that instant the horseman turned his head and looked in the direction of his concealed foe—seemed to look into his very face, into his eyes, into his brave, compassionate heart.

Is it, then, so terrible to kill an enemy in war—an enemy who has surprised a secret vital to the safety of one's self and comrades—an enemy more formidable for his knowledge than all his army for its numbers? Carter Druse grew deathly pale; he shook in every limb, turned faint, and saw the statuesque group before him as black figures, rising, falling, moving unsteadily in arcs of circles in a fiery sky. His hand fell away from his weapon, his head slowly dropped until his face rested on the leaves in which he lay. This courageous gentleman and hardy soldier was near swooning from intensity of emotion.

It was not for long; in another moment his face was raised from earth, his hands resumed their places on the rifle, his forefinger sought the trigger; mind, heart, and eyes were clear, conscience and reason sound. He could not hope to capture that enemy; to alarm him would but send him dashing to his camp with his fatal news. The duty of the soldier was plain: the man must be shot dead from ambush—without warning, without a moment's spiritual preparation, with never so much as an unspoken prayer, he must be sent to his account. But no—there is a hope; he may have discovered nothing—perhaps he is but admiring the sublimity of the landscape. If permitted he may turn and ride carelessly away in the direction whence he came. Surely it will be possible to judge at the instant of his withdrawing whether he

knows. It may well be that his fixity of attention—Druse turned his head and looked below, through the deeps of air downward, as from the surface to the bottom of a translucent sea. He saw creeping across the green meadow a sinuous line of figures of men and horses—some foolish commander was permitting the soldiers of his escort to water their beasts in the open, in plain view from a hundred summits!

Druse withdrew his eyes from the valley and fixed them again upon the group of man and horse in the sky, and again it was through the sights of his rifle. But this time his aim was at the horse. In his memory, as if they were a divine mandate, rang the words of his father at their parting, “Whatever may occur, do what you conceive to be your duty.” He was calm now. His teeth were firmly but not rigidly closed; his nerves were as tranquil as a sleeping babe’s—not a tremor affected any muscle of his body; his breathing, until suspended in the act of taking aim, was regular and slow. Duty had conquered; the spirit had said to the body: “Peace, be still.” He fired.

III.

At that moment an officer of the Federal force, who, in a spirit of adventure or in quest of knowledge, had left the hidden *birouac* in the valley, and, with aimless feet, had made his way to the lower edge of a small open space near the foot of the cliff, was considering what he had to gain by pushing his exploration further. At a distance of a quarter mile before him, but apparently at a stone’s throw, rose from its fringe of pines the gigantic face of rock, towering to so great a height above him that it made him giddy to look up to where its edge cut a sharp, rugged line against the sky. At some distance away to his right it presented a clean, vertical profile against a background of blue sky to a point half of the way down, and of distant hills hardly less blue thence to the tops of the trees at its base. Lifting his eyes to the dizzy altitude of its summit, the officer saw an astonishing sight—a man on horseback riding down into the valley through the air!

Straight upright sat the rider, in military fashion, with a firm seat in the saddle, a strong clutch upon the rein to hold his charger from too impetuous a plunge. From his bare head his long hair streamed upward, waving like a plume. His right hand was concealed in the cloud of the horse’s lifted mane. The animal’s body was as level as if every hoof stroke encountered the resistant earth. Its motions were those of a wild gallop, but even as the officer looked they ceased, with all the legs thrown sharply forward as in the act of alighting from a leap. But this was a flight!

Filled with amazement and terror by this apparition of a horseman in the sky—half believing himself the chosen scribe of some new Apocalypse, the officer was overcome by the intensity of his emotions; his legs failed him and

he fell. Almost at the same instant he heard a crashing sound in the trees—a sound that died without an echo, and all was still.

The officer rose to his feet, trembling. The familiar sensation of an abraded shin recalled his dazed faculties. Pulling himself together, he ran rapidly obliquely away from the cliff to a point a half-mile from its foot; thereabout he expected to find his man; and thereabout he naturally failed. In the fleeting instant of his vision his imagination had been so wrought upon by the apparent grace and ease and intention of the marvelous performance that it did not occur to him that the line of march of aerial cavalry is directly downward, and that he could find the objects of his search at the very foot of the cliff. A half hour later he returned to camp.

This officer was a wise man; he knew better than to tell an incredible truth. He said nothing of what he had seen. But when the commander asked him if in his scout he had learned anything of advantage to the expedition, he answered:—

“Yes, sir; there is no road leading down into this valley from the southward.”

The commander, knowing better, smiled.

IV.

After firing his shot private Carter Druse reloaded his rifle and resumed his watch. Ten minutes had hardly passed when a Federal sergeant crept cautiously to him on hands and knees. Druse neither turned his head nor looked at him, but lay without motion or sign of recognition.

“Did you fire?” the sergeant whispered.

“Yes.”

“At what?”

“A horse. It was standing on yonder rock—pretty far out. You see it is no longer there. It went over the cliff.”

The man’s face was white but he showed no other sign of emotion. Having answered, he turned away his face and said no more. The sergeant did not understand.

“See here, Druse,” he said, after a moment’s silence, “it’s no use making a mystery. I order you to report. Was there anybody on the horse?”

“Yes.”

“Who?”

“My father.”

The sergeant rose to his feet and walked away. “Good God!” he said.