

# 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Company C

"The Sentinel" September 2020

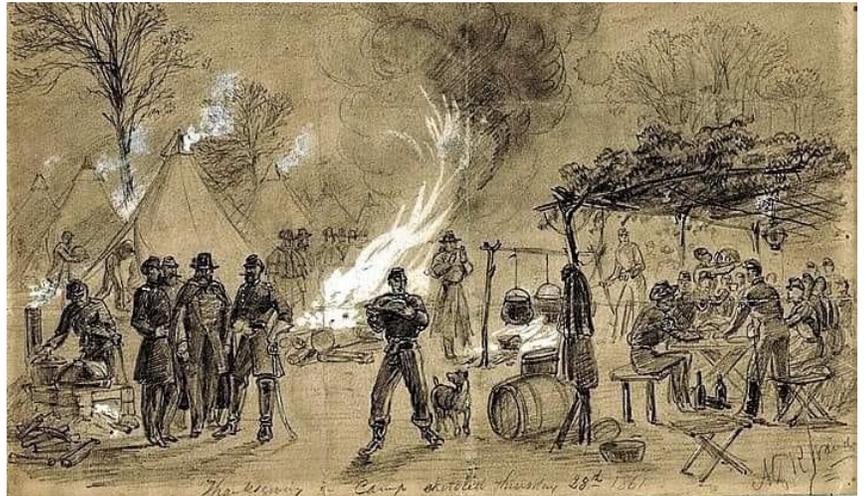
Newsletter of The James Creek Guards



"Clubs Are Trump!"

## This Month:

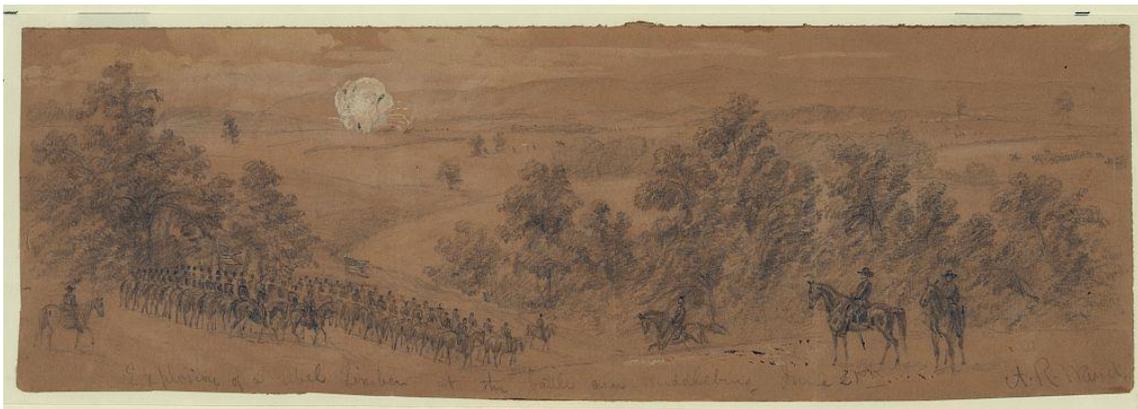
1. The Battle of Middleburg and The Fight At Goose Creek Bridge
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*I am always looking for newsletter content, so please forward your articles, book reviews, event summaries/photos, stories, 53<sup>rd</sup> memories, etc. to me for inclusion in a future edition of "The Sentinel". Matthew Steger, editor*

## **THE BATTLE OF MIDDLEBURG AND THE FIGHT AT GOOSE CREEK BRIDGE**

By Dan Welch – posted on nps.gov



*Explosion of a Rebel Limber at the Battle near Middleburg, June 21, 1863, by Alfred Waud (Library of Congress)*

The fighting on June 19, 1863, at Middleburg, Virginia, and the movements of Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's Confederate cavalry during the following day, led Army of the Potomac cavalry commander, Maj. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton, to believe that Stuart's cavalry was supported by infantry. Because of this, Pleasonton requested infantry to support his mounted command. The request was approved and orders were filtered down the chain of command. The assignment fell to Brig. Gen. James Barnes's division of the Federal Fifth Corps, which was

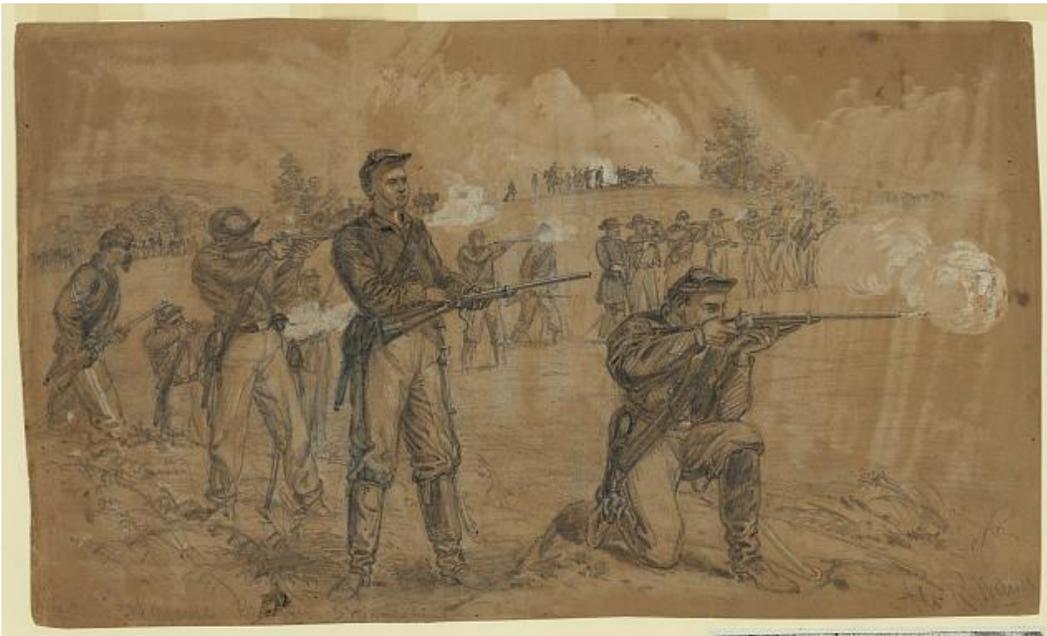
marched toward Middleburg. The scene was now set for yet another day of fighting in the Loudoun Valley all due to the Army of the Potomac's push to gather intelligence on the movements and intentions of the Army of Northern Virginia.

The week of largely cavalry engagements in the Loudoun Valley during the middle of June 1863 are often overlooked due to the many other events that transpired during that fateful summer. This can also be said of the Gettysburg campaign itself, as a few moments from the campaign have become a fixture in the popular historical lexicon at the expense of others. It was only after years of hard work by historians and preservationists that the story at Brandy Station on June 9, 1863 entered into accounts of the campaign. And further overshadowing events of the campaign was the battle that resulted. Over July 1-3, 1863 numerous actions across two large fronts of battle took place. Yet, due to many influences over the intervening 157 years some were forgotten while others became entrenched in popular memory.

For many, the story of Gettysburg is a meeting engagement on July 1, Little Round Top on July 2, and Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863. Even within the microcosm of Little Round Top, these same principles hold true. Certain units and actions have been pushed to the forefront of historical memory while others have been forgotten. At Little Round Top, Col. Strong Vincent's brigade of Federal soldiers, including the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry, have for decades received the lionshare of ink in the telling and retelling of that moment of battle on July 2. But the heroic stand of Col. Joshua Chamberlain of the 20th Maine and the other units of Vincent's brigade, was not their first combat experience during the Gettysburg campaign. Their first action during the campaign was just outside of Middleburg, at Goose Creek on June 21, 1863.

"On the morning of the 21st, before daylight, we were aroused from our slumbers and ordered to move towards Middleburg in support of the cavalry, which was expected to attack the rebel cavalry force on that day," wrote A.M. Judson, regimental historian of the 83rd PVI.<sup>[i]</sup> Another soldier in Vincent's brigade, a sergeant in the 16th Michigan, also remembered an early start to the day. "At 1 o'clock a.m. the bugle sounds to arms and up we get on the double quick. We cook our coffee, pack our knapsacks and leave them in charge of a guard...."<sup>[ii]</sup> With the infantry brigade on the march towards the Union cavalry position at and just beyond Middleburg, a plan of attack that utilized them in the coming push westward was in the works.

Upon ordering infantry support to Pleasonton's assistance on June 21, Hooker created a plan of attack that utilized both the infantry and cavalry. Vincent's brigade would be sent westward from Middleburg south of the Ashby's Gap Turnpike, while Col. John Gregg's cavalry brigade moved down the pike itself. Additional cavalry units under the command of Brig. Gen. John Buford was to be sent north as a flanking column. The remainder of Buford's command not in the flanking column would remain behind as a reserve for the attacking force.



*Union cavalrymen skirmish with Confederates during by Battle of Middleburg, sketch by Alfred Waud (Library of Congress)*

It was a long march before Vincent's men arrived in support. Major Holman S. Melcher, 20th Maine Infantry, recorded that the brigade was put in "light marching order," before "passing through Kittoctan [Catoctin] mountains at Aldie. March to Middleburg 6 miles and one mile beyond."<sup>[iii]</sup> Between 7:00 and 8:00 am, Vincent's brigade arrived on the field. They were ordered

into line with the rest of the Federal cavalry already in position. It was not long after their arrival that Stuart's artillery opened on the growing Federal line. Lewis T. Nunnelee, a gunner in Stuart's horse artillery, wrote in his diary of the opening of the battle that morning. "At 7 a.m. cannonading was heard in front which was being carried on by Hart's Battery and the enemy....As soon as they made their appearance on the opposite heights we opened fire on them," wrote the 42-year-old pre-war dry goods worker.<sup>[iv]</sup> Stuart's artillery continued to shell the line. Although the Federal units were not taking heavy casualties, the fire was unnerving to say the least. A correspondent from The New York Herald overheard Vincent's orders to his men regarding the battery to "Stop that damn battery from howling."

Vincent's brigade had their orders. They were to move their line of battle forward, or westward, south of Ashby's Gap Turnpike to turn the Confederate position. Their advance took them across the Bittersweet Farm and straight towards the position of Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton's Confederate cavalry. A.M. Judson, 83rd Pennsylvania recalled the movement of the brigade.

*"Between seven and eight o'clock General Pleasanton sent orders to Col. Vincent to advance at least one regiment of infantry and dislodge the enemy's carbineers from one of the stone walls in front. The Sixteenth Michigan...was accordingly directed to press forward and carry out the order. At the same time Col. Vincent sent forward the Forty-Fourth...and the Twentieth Maine...with directions to press the enemy hard and pick off the gunners from his battery".<sup>[v]</sup>*

Although three regiments of Vincent's brigade pressed forward against the Confederate position, one was not. The 83rd Pennsylvania was sent on a far flanking movement against the Confederate right, anchored by the 1st North Carolina Cavalry. "The Eighty-Third...was directed to move rapidly through the woods, to our left, keeping [our] force concealed, and the instant [we] had passed the stone walls to merge and take the enemy in flank and rear," wrote Judson.<sup>[vi]</sup> Pleasanton's request for infantry had paid off. Hampton's brigade pulled out after the flanking movement by the 83rd and Robertson's brigade, north of the turnpike on Battle Knoll, also pulled back. Judson wrote triumphantly in the regimental history of the 83rd, "The movement was entirely successful. Finding their position turned, the enemy fled in confusion, and the Sixteenth advanced on the double quick, on the right, and compelled them to abandon one piece of artillery, a fine Blakely gun."<sup>[vii]</sup> Judson was correct about the capture of the gun by the 16th Michigan, later claimed to have been accomplished by Federal cavalry in the field. Some accounts placed Lt T. Frank Powers and Sgt. John Kuehn, Company A, 16th Michigan as the first Federal soldiers to reach the captured gun.

With Stuart's cavalry pulling back, one issue of his defensive position quickly became apparent. To get to his fall back positions further westward, the Confederate cavalry had to cross two bridges over two waterways. The first was a small bridge over Cromwell's Run and the second, further west, a stone bridge over Goose Creek. Both of these bridges were along the Ashby's Gap Turnpike. To ensure that he had enough time to get his men across these spans, Stuart ordered Wade Hampton's 1st South Carolina Cavalry, Col. John Black commanding, to push forward, slow down the Federal push, and act as a rear guard for Stuart's withdrawal. It was a daunting task that Black and his men performed ably. While Black and his men labored in their hot work, Stuart created a new defensive position west of the stone bridge over Goose Creek. It was a strong line, set up along a significant height overlooking the bridge and creek. When the Federal assaulting force finally arrived at Stuart's new position, their attack stalled as they saw the strength of the opposing line.



*Confederate Cavalry Commander Jeb Stuart's Horsemen sparred with Union infantry under Colonel Strong Vincent and Union Cavalry under Judson Kilpatrick at Goose Creek Bridge on June 21, 1863  
(Library of Congress)*

A.M. Judson recalled Stuart's new position in the regimental history of the 83rd Pennsylvania. "The enemy were posted behind two stone walls; one at the foot of the hill, a few rods beyond the bridge, and the other at the top and almost concealed by the tall growth of wheat through which it ran."<sup>[viii]</sup> Alfred Pleasanton and Judson Kilpatrick paused to come up with a new plan of attack, taking into consideration the challenges of Stuart's new line. While they did so, Federal and Confederate artillery traded shots once more. Minutes ticked by. After nearly an hour of cannonading, and no signs of a forward push by Kilpatrick and Vincent's forces, Stuart sent orders for his other units to fall back toward Ashby's Gap.

These far-flung units would meet towards the village of Upperville. Stuart was not the only one looking at Upperville, however. During the most recent lull in the battle, Pleasanton had finally settled on a plan to move forward. If Kilpatrick could push his men across the bridge, and Buford's troopers could swing southward from their positions to the north, the Federal cavalry could unite at Upperville before pushing into Ashby's Gap. These orders are quickly sent out.

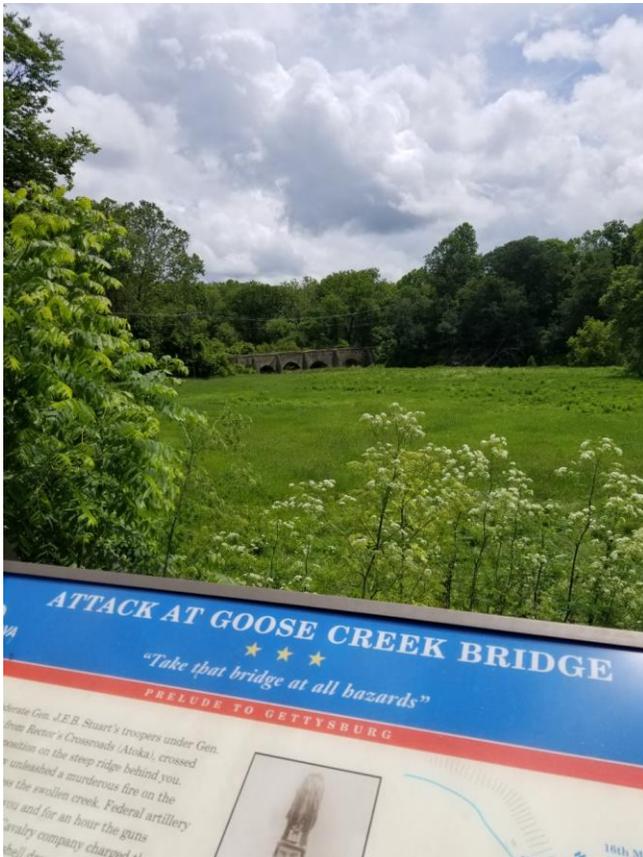
The first attempt by Kilpatrick to take the bridge by cavalry alone was sent reeling backward with no success. The next attempt combined a frontal assault across the bridge, consisting of the 2nd New York Cavalry and the 16th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, with the remainder of Kilpatrick's and Vincent's men to attack across the creek wherever they could get across. One writer noted the excitement of the moment the orders were received and Vincent's brigade went into the fight. "Now happened one of the liveliest and most exciting times we had ever experienced: we were carried along, as it were, by the very tempest, whirlwind and, I might say, joy of battle into the midst of

the enemy's ranks.”<sup>[ix]</sup> The action was quick. “As a bound the skirmishers of the Sixteenth, followed by those of the Eighty-Third, dashed over the bridge with a general yell, and shouting ‘Shoot them!’ ‘Take them prisoners!’” rushed up the hill, drove them from behind the walls and again put them to flight, taking a number of prisoners, both officers and men,” wrote Judson.<sup>[x]</sup> Once again, Stuart’s line, under pressure from front and flank, was ordered to pull out from his position.

The continual falling back told on the men in Stuart's ranks. An artillerist in Stuart’s Horse Artillery later recalled, “We were all disgusted and more or less demoralized from having to practically run about eleven miles the same day from the infernal devils. Such a thing had never occurred before and wouldn’t have this time if their forces hadn’t been combined and so many of them.”<sup>[xi]</sup> Not only was there a collective feeling of low morale after a day spent constantly falling back, but there was a fear of the loss of their vaunted reputation. Lewis Nunnelee wrote simply, “Our disorderly retreat will give the enemy cause for a grand flourish of trumpets. As Genl. J.E.B. Stuart was personally in command today, he will have to look to his laurels in the future.”<sup>[xii]</sup>

With Stuart’s most recent orders, the Federal attacking force was once again on the move. More fighting took place along Trappe Road and Vineyard Hill near Upperville later that day. Vincent’s brigade, however, was beyond spent. The combination of marching and fighting at the pace of the cavalry, all the while during intense summer heat, had pushed the brigade to exhaustion. “Altogether, our brigade was mainly instrumental in driving the enemy six miles from their original position; and we kept on, following them until we came in sight of Upperville, near Ashbys Gap. In doing this we had travelled (together with the morning’s march and the detours made in turning the enemy’s positions) nearly twenty miles; our men were too much fatigued to follow any further, and it was deemed advisable to halt and leave the pursuit to the cavalry,” Judson recalled. They were ordered back towards Middleburg. Their first battle of the campaign was over. Other, additional Federal infantry was brought up to take their place.

Today, the action at Goose Creek Bridge is largely overlooked, both by academics and the public at large. Most campaign histories in the historiography give the all day fight of June 21, 1863 just several pages, with even lesser ink spent on the actions at Goose Creek Bridge. Further, the number of visitors to the location of this battle are also few, although the local traffic that zooms by the turn off towards the bridge and Civil War Trails marker remains constant. Yet, in stark contrast, Vincent’s brigade at Gettysburg, and especially their action at Little Round Top have received numerous works in historiography. Whole books have been written on Chamberlain, Vincent, Rice, O’Rourke, Hazlett, and the other heroes of the successful Union defense of their position on July 2, 1863. Furthermore, Little Round Top remains one of the most visited areas on the battlefield today. But, for the men of Vincent’s brigade, weeks before their moment in history at Gettysburg, they had “one of the liveliest and most exciting times we had ever experienced” during their fight at Middleburg and Goose Creek Bridge on June 21, 1863.



A Historical Tablet Discusses the Fighting at Goose Creek Bridge, Middleburg, VA  
(NPS Photo)

#### NOTES –

- <sup>[i]</sup> A.M. Judson, History of the Eighty-Third Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers (Erie: B.F.H. Lynn), 63.
- <sup>[ii]</sup> Kim Crawford, The 16th Michigan Infantry (Dayton: Morningside House, Inc., 2002), 327.
- <sup>[iii]</sup> William B. Style, ed., With a Flash of His Sword: The Writings of Major Holman S. Melcher, 20th Maine Infantry (Belle Grove Publishing Co.), 33-34.
- <sup>[iv]</sup> Robert J. Trout, “Cavalier Gunner,” Civil War Times, June 2008, 29.
- <sup>[v]</sup> Judson, History of the Eighty-Third, 64.
- <sup>[vi]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[vii]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[viii]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[ix]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[x]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[xi]</sup> Shoemaker’s Battery: Stuart Horse Artillery, Pelham’s Battalion After Ward Commanded by Col. R. P. Chew, Army of Northern Virginia, reprint (Gaithersburg: Butternut Press) 42.
- <sup>[xii]</sup> Trout, “Cavalier Gunner,” 30-31.

## PROPOSED DRILL EVENT –

Eric and I are trying to put together a drill event this fall on private land (Charlie Smithgalls) south of Lancaster for a private drill weekend without the somewhat ‘over the top’ NPS-like rules. Our friend Rusty Dicks contacted Charlie through Charlie’s daughter to see if we could even do an event on his land and was given the green light. Eric and I will be working on some logistics to make this happen, assuming we have enough interest from the membership to do the event. We have also invited our friends from ELF (1<sup>st</sup> MD, 3<sup>rd</sup> MD, and 7<sup>th</sup> PA Reserves).

The proposed weekend is 17~18 October (the same weekend as the Cedar Creek event which was cancelled) and I foresee something similar to our Landis Valley winter drill. This would give us an opportunity to hang out (we’ve not been together, in essence, since the party in January), get some needed drill and training in, etc. There is sufficient land available for setting up camp, drill as much as we want, incorporate some kit training, etc. Charlie also offered the ability to do a live-fire, if we had interest. Charlie does CW artillery, as many of you know. Each man would be responsible for their own rations.

Eric and I need to know ASAP who has an interest in attending either 1 or both days. **Please respond to Eric (reenactor53@gmail.com) by this Wednesday (9/2/20). Once we get replies, Eric and I will send follow-up info based upon the response we get.**

## THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF LEVI J. FRITZ

(thank you to Rich Sauers for providing this series)

*[Note – any grammatical and typographical errors were kept intact as they are original to the letter - editor]*

Levi J. Fritz served in Company A, 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He enlisted in 1861 and was mustered out with the regiment in July 1865. During the course of the first three years of the conflict, Fritz wrote a number of lengthy missives to the *Montgomery Ledger*, a Pottstown newspaper.

Headquarters, 53d Regt. P. V.  
Camp Near Harper’s Ferry, Va.  
Thursday, Oct. 23d, 1862.

Messers. Editors:—Last Thursday morning, by day light, our regiment was in light marching order with two day’s provision in haversacks, for the purpose of taking part, in a reconnoitering party. The force consisted of General Hancock’s Division (late Richardson’s) one brigade of Sedgwick’s, the 6th Regular Cavalry, and Pettit’s and two other batteries; the whole being under the command of Gen. Hancock. By special order the advance, consisting of the gallant 1st Minnesota, and the 53d Pa., was put under the command of Col. Brooke. At 7 o’clock, A.M., the line of march was taken up, and the troops moved out the Charlestown road. The rebel pickets were found at Halltown, a place of one house and mill, about four miles from the Ferry, and were immediately driven in, the rebels opening on our troops with a battery of four field howitzers. One of our batteries took position unlimbered and briskly engaged the enemy, while the main force of infantry was drawn up in line of battle. Col. Brooke’s command—53d Pa. and 1st Minn.—went forward as skirmishers; Company A, Lieut. Mintzer commanding, was deployed so as to cover the front of our regiment, and the infantry advance—the position of honor and of danger. After a stubborn resistance for some time, the rebels withdrew their artillery and fell back more than a mile; and our lines were quickly moved forward. Another and fiercer cannonading now commenced and for a while it sounded as if a general engagement was pending.

Gen. Hancock sent forward the 61st and 64th N.Y. regiments to the aid of Col. Brooke, whose right was menaced by a large force of rebel cavalry. Again the enemy was forced back, this time to Charlestown; our skirmishers pressing hotly after occasionally getting near enough to exchange shots. Before Charlestown was reached, the portion of the 6th Reg. Cavalry, that forward the advance, flinched and fell behind the lines of the infantry skirmishers; this dishonorable action of the “regulars” left Company A in the extreme front. Lieutenant Mintzer, nothing daunted, gallantly led on his command, and entered the town. A squadron of rebel cavalry dashed into the street, only fifty yards beyond; several well directed volleys made these “secesh” skedaddle, on the borders of the place they made a stand, but as the brave boys of company A continue to advance, all the while keeping up a sharp fire, they left and sought the shelter of the woods. Thus the town was captured and was held by the Pottstown company, more than an hour afterwards the main column arrived. Col. Brooke was appointed Military Governor, and Capt. S. O. Bull, Provost Marshal, of the place. The reconnoissance was pushed several miles beyond the town, a desultory fire being kept up by the enemy. William S. Lessig was wounded in the side by a minie ball, while nobly doing his duty. (He is in the hospital near this place and is recovering.)

Charleston is a pretty little village, about eight miles from these Heights, and is well known as the place where John Brown was tried and hung and is one of the hottest nests of a rampant treason on the sacred soil. The ladies (the white ones, and those, the shade of whose countenances, approximate so near that color, that only the practiced eye of a ‘civalry’ would notice anything Samboish) were particularly anxious to insult

our men, and proclaim their secesh principles. More than a hundred of rebels wounded at Antietam, were left in the hospitals of the place. In order to escape being paroled, before our troops entered the town, these were removed to different private residences, where it was supposed, they would not be looked for. Col. Brooke being informed of this dodge, at once ordered a thorough search of every house in the place. Part of this duty was performed by Lieut. Mintzer and his command, and an interesting time he had of it. The women of the house would use the plainest kind ‘of talk,’ and raise the biggest kind of a ‘tempest in a tea pot.’ One place the secesh crinoline desired to know if the Yankee women were ready to take the field and fight, as they the southern feminine community were ready to meet them! What do our fair readers say to this, will they accept the challenge, and at once organize Crinoline Guards and Petticoat Brigade, burning neglected broomsticks, and turning the hoops of peace to the whoops of war, dash, with all the gorgeous and mysterious paraphernalia of a fashionable ‘get up,’ to the battlefield to meet the fire eating ‘ladies’ of the South!

In one house that the Lieutenant visited in the course of his search there was a mother with several ‘grown up’ daughters. After demuring for some time against the right of search, the old lady finally gave way, and lead the Lieutenant through the house. No secesh were found. As he was passing through the hall to make his exit, one of the females in the parlor, opened the door and asked her mother in a voice pitched fortissimo—“Mar, did he look up the chimney?” When the women passed our men on the streets they would, to use a vulgar term, “draw up their noses,” and hold in their dresses, so that they would not be tainted by touching a Union uniform. Doesticks tells of a family in South Carolina by the name of Damphool. The gentler (!) Sex of Charlestown, Va., must be all nearly allied to that noted family.

Orderly Sergeant Root, who commanded the right of Company A, was about to pull down some pail fence surrounding a house that stood on the way of his advance into the town. The lady of the house came to the door, and holding up her hands in holy horror, she wished to know how they could be so bad as to tear . . .

When the 53d left Camp Curtin, a year ago, for the seat of war, the *Ledger* published a roll of 101 men, constituting Company A. As an item of interest, we send you the roll of the company as it now is –noting the deaths, discharged, &c:

Present For Duty

1st Lieut. Commanding—Wm. M. Mintzer  
 Orderly Sergeant—John H. Root  
 1st Corporal George Sheetz  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Corporal Tobias B. Schmearer  
 5<sup>th</sup> Corporal E. K. Weand  
 6<sup>th</sup> Corporal Jno. F. Fryer

Privates

John Ayres	David Hoffman
Jonas W. Burns	John G. Heft
Frederick Boyer	James Dunwoodie
Samuel H. Campbell	Benneville Harp
Ellhanan Cook	Israel W. Jones
Frank B. Detwiler	Henry D. Kline
Ephraim D. Engle	Jonah Keim
George Edwards	Christian Lessig
Evan Fryer	George W. DeLong
Dabiel B. Foreman	Enos D. Longenecker
William Graham	Warren Missimer
Sylvester E. Missimer	Francis Shick
Eli K. Nagle	Isaac Spots
Francis T. Potts	Peter Seasholtz
Harry Rotes	Levi Walleigh
David Robinson	Edward Warley
Augustus S. Royer	John S. Weand
George W. Rahn	Cornelius Uxley
Joseph Spang	

Captain S. O. Bull has been acting Major since June 1st 1862.  
 Sergeant Wm. G. Yorgey is absent on recruiting service.

On Extra Duty.

S. H. Rutter and L. J. Fritz, on extra duty in the Adjutant’s Office.  
 H. F. Butz in the Hospital Department.

Sick and Wounded in General Hospitals.

2d Lieut. John T. Potts, wounded at Antietam, September 17th—at home.



Sergeant Joseph B. Davis, sick since August 28th, at hospital in Annapolis, Md.  
Corporal Charles W. Gausline, sick since September 1st at Newport News, Va.  
Peter Moser, sick in Philadelphia hospital since May 18th.  
James Bickhart, wounded at Battle of Nelson's Farm, Georgetown, D.C.  
Huzinga Missimer, sick in Philadelphia hospital since July 5th.  
Samuel Saybold, sick in Philadelphia hospital since July 15th.  
Jacob C. Schanely, John Goldsmith, Peter Arnold, G. W. Holt, Alexander McCallicker, John McFarlan, Robert Simmers, Thomas Donahue (bugler) are all sick in General Hospitals, but we do not know where.  
Eaglebert Lessig, accidentally shot at Centreville, Philadelphia hospital.  
Mahlon V. Smith, wounded September 16th at Antietam.  
William S. Lessig, wounded on the reconnoissance to Charlestown, Va., in hospital near Harper's Ferry, Va.

#### Dead and Discharged.

Eli H. Graham—killed at the Battle of Fair Oaks.  
Jacob Nagle—died in Philadelphia hospital of wounds received at the Battle of Fair Oaks.  
Corporal Abraham H. Wein—died in Richmond of wounds received at the Battle of White Oak Swamp.  
Corporal Myers Daily—killed at the Battle of Antietam.  
Gotlieb Deagle—killed at the Battle of Antietam.  
William H. Rhoads—died of wounds received at the Battle of Antietam.  
Milton Brant—died December 6th, 1861, at Washington.  
Samuel B. Raifsnyder, died November 2d, 1861, near Washington.  
Jacob K. Boyer, died September 10th at Seminary hospital, Georgetown, D.C.  
George Comfort, died September 21st at Seminary hospital, Georgetown, D.C.  
Henry F. Binder, died October 26th, at Bolivar Heights, Va.  
William Carr—discharged for disability at Camp Curtin, Pa.  
Owen Boyer—discharged for disability March 8th, 1862.  
Abel Detwiler—discharged for disability.  
Andrew Sassaman—discharged for disability.  
Holeman V. Potts—discharged for disability caused by wounds received at the Battle of Fair Oaks.  
Michael Boyer, Andrew Missimer, and W. F. Yocum have been transferred to the Regular Artillery.

#### Prisoners of War on Parole.

Sergeants Thomas Clark and Charles Geiger. Privates John H. Boyer, George Beard, Josiah Godshall, Richard Gable, H. A. Holt, William Penn Johnson, Harvey Skean, Jacob D. Taney. These were all taken at the Battle of Fair Oaks, and were paroled September 16th. They have not yet been exchanged.

#### Deserted.

Lewis Young, deserted at Harrisburg, Pa.—Orlandus Clay was on June 13th, 1862, detached from the regiment to serve in Battery A, 4th Regiment Artillery—since deserted. Morgan Snyder deserted from Harrison's Landing.

#### Remarks.

Lieut. Mintzer was slightly wounded at Fair Oaks. David Houck and Evan Fryer were wounded at Fair Oaks, and returned to the Company after several weeks absence in hospital. Wm. H. Graham was slightly wounded at Peach orchard. Andrew Missimer was taken prisoner at White Oak Swamp, and exchanged a few weeks later.

The skies look winterish—fires are comfortable, and—how do you like the draft?

Yours &c. L.J.F.

[Ledger, October 28, 1862]

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT –**

Pards,

I feel like a broken record for the past several months saying that there's not much to report on. This month is slightly different (just slightly). You'll see info elsewhere in this edition regarding a drill event that Matt and Rusty have presented and I also sent this info in a prior email. Please take a look and let me know what you think. Matt and I decided that we'll only move forward if there's enough interest to make it worth the time in planning. I need to confirm with Charlie Smithgall this week if we'll be coming or not so your timely response is appreciated. For those who haven't heard, Cedar Creek has been officially cancelled for 2020 (shocking!). All registrations will be honored for next year's event. I also just learned that the Adopt-A-Position program has been suspended for the rest of the year. The position at the Park that oversees the program has been vacant since mid-June and the Park has a handful of other vacant positions and does not have the resources to manage the program right now. They do expect to resume in 2021. I'm disappointed in this decision because we, and many other groups, have put countless hours of effort into maintaining our positions on the Battlefield. Those of you who have actively participated in the past five years or so know that we have made dramatic improvements to the area surrounding the 53rd's monument. When I was there back in June, I could see a noticeable difference since we had to cancel the work day in April. IF we're able to get back there in the Spring, it will have seen 18 months of growth since we were last there. We'll have work to do for sure!

As of now, Remembrance Day is still happening. I know this isn't a huge draw for us but I'm hopeful that you will give it serious consideration this year since we've lost everything else up this point. Even if the event is cancelled, we're discussing options at the NR level for our own private commemoration ceremony at the National Cemetery and other locations on the Battlefield. Making those backup plans will be easier if I can have an idea of what unit turnout will be. If nothing changes from our current situation, who is willing to commit? Send me text, email or a call to let me know in the next couple of weeks.

This is also the time of year when I typically start asking for event suggestions for the upcoming year. Assuming we get the green light for 2021, send me the event details along with a name and contact info for the event organizer.

Take care!  
Eric

## **UPCOMING EVENTS –**

### **29-30 August - Gettysburg Living History - cancelled**

See Eric's notes above.

### **12-13 Sept. - Civil War Days – Landis Valley Museum (Lancaster)**

See Eric's notes above. Also, please stay tuned to the unit Facebook page and email for updates as we get closer to this event.

### **17-18 Oct. – Proposed Drill Weekend (Lancaster)**

See the article above about this possible event.

## ***The Civil War Merchant -***

*(if you have something for sale or are looking for something, submit it for inclusion in a future edition of "The Sentinel")*

### **For Sale –**

Listed by Rick Kramer for a friend. All items in good shape unless noted otherwise. Contact Rick directly for any inquiries/questions - [auktion8@comcast.net](mailto:auktion8@comcast.net)

Grey Blanket with black stripe	50.00
Keune McDowell Kepi some brim cracking	20.00

### **Wanted –**

Rusty Dicks is looking for a few items for his son Jacob who plans on joining the 53<sup>rd</sup> (whenever we can actually have an event). You can contact Rusty directly at: [jeepfreak@ptd.net](mailto:jeepfreak@ptd.net):  
Canteen, leather strap, and possibly a rifle.

## 2020 Calendar of Events -

- ~~11 Jan. Annual Holiday Party - Dobbin House (Gettysburg)~~  
~~1-2 Feb Winter Drill (Landis Valley)~~  
~~29 Feb - 1 March National Regiment School of Instruction (Gettysburg)~~  
~~14 March Cartridge Rolling Party (Sgt. Fasnacht's home)~~  
~~4 April Adopt A Position - 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI Spring Monument Cleanup (Gettysburg) (CANCELLED)~~  
~~2-3 May National Regiment Camp of Instruction (Gruber Wagon Works) (CANCELLED)~~  
~~16-17 May USAHEC Event - 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI MAX Effort (CANCELLED)~~  
~~25 May Hummelstown Memorial Day Parade (CANCELLED)~~  
~~29-30 Aug Gettysburg Living History (Spangler Spring - Gettysburg NMP) (CANCELLED)~~  
~~12-13 Sept. - Landis Valley "Civil War Days" (Lancaster) 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI MAX Effort (CANCELLED)~~  
~~12-13 Sept. - Burkittsville Re-Enactment (Burkittsville, MD) (CANCELLED)~~  
~~17-18 Oct. - Proposed Private 53<sup>rd</sup> Drill Weekend with ELF (Lancaster)~~  
~~17-18 Oct. - Cedar Creek Re-Enactment (Middletown, Virginia) 53<sup>rd</sup>/NR Max Effort (CANCELLED)~~  
~~7 Nov. - Adopt-A-Position - 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI Fall Monument Cleanup (Gettysburg)~~  
~~21 Nov. - Remembrance Day Parade (Gettysburg)~~  
~~5 Dec. - 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI Annual Meeting (Sgt. Fasnacht's home)~~



### Secondary Events -

- ~~3-5 April Lee's Last Stand Re-Enactment (CANCELLED)~~  
~~18-19 April Spring Drill at Ft. McHenry (ELF) (CANCELLED)~~  
~~8-9 August Cedar Mountain Re-Enactment (1st MN)~~  
~~5-6 Sept. - Bedford Village (1<sup>st</sup> MN)~~

### 53<sup>rd</sup> PVI Contacts

President: Eric Ford ([reenactor53@gmail.com](mailto:reenactor53@gmail.com))  
Vice President: Pete Zinkus ([zinkusp@gmail.com](mailto:zinkusp@gmail.com))  
Treasurer/Secretary: Matthew Steger ([n3ntj@comcast.net](mailto:n3ntj@comcast.net))  
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Webmasters: Steve Dillon ([steve@gofoxpro.com](mailto:steve@gofoxpro.com)) and Matthew Steger ([n3ntj@comcast.net](mailto:n3ntj@comcast.net))  
Website: <http://www.53rdpvi.org>  
Sergeants: Mark Fasnacht and Marc Benedict  
Corporals: Mike Espenshade and Matthew Steger  
53<sup>rd</sup> PVI Member Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/53rdPVI>  
National Regiment Phone line: 800-777-1861 (code 61) NR Website:  
<http://nationalregiment.com>

