



# Battle Cry

Founded 1961,  
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table  
P.O. BOX 254702  
Sacramento, CA 95865-4702  
<http://sacramentocwrt.com/>



Volume 53, No. 10  
October, 2013  
2013 Officers:

**Bob Hanley**  
President

[acivilwar@aol.com](mailto:acivilwar@aol.com)

**Don Hayden**

Immediate Past President  
[djhbooklover@yahoo.com](mailto:djhbooklover@yahoo.com)

**Ann Peasley**

Vice President

[apeasley@wildblue.net](mailto:apeasley@wildblue.net)

**Silver Williams**

Program Director

(916) 408-4574

[snw5678@aol.com](mailto:snw5678@aol.com)

**Maxine Wollen**

Secretary

[factsofmax@gmail.com](mailto:factsofmax@gmail.com)

**George Foxworth**

Treasurer

[gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net)

**Nina Henley**

Member at Large

[whenley@surewest.net](mailto:whenley@surewest.net)

**Wayne Henley**

Member at Large

(916) 564-4608

[r.sickert@comcast.net](mailto:r.sickert@comcast.net)

**Brent ten pas**

Newsletter Editor

[brentrtp@gmail.com](mailto:brentrtp@gmail.com)

**SCWRT Website**

[www.sacramentocwrt.com](http://www.sacramentocwrt.com)

[Kim Knighton, Webmaster](mailto:Kim.Knighton@digitalthumbprint.com)

[webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com](mailto:webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com)

[nt.com](http://www.digitalthumbprint.com)

In September's *Battle Cry*, I indicated my interest in seeing our organization do more in the way of public service, whereby our efforts actually help the public. Late last month, I received an email from Erin Arthur, a history teacher at Oak Ridge High School. She went on the internet, discovered our web-site, and randomly picked a name to call with the hope of getting some help. We talked and she shared her needs for the classroom.

She and other history teachers discussed their needs vis-a-vis help with the Civil War. I told her we could put her in touch with re-enactor organizations, or we could give her a previously prepared presentation. She was looking for help with her present efforts on the American Civil War, perhaps some re-enactors or something else that would aid her teaching efforts.

I told Erin that I had several presentations, and then emailed one to her for her review. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, for an 8:30 a.m. class, I gave her class a one hour presentation on "Abraham Lincoln, the early years." She and the class responded well and appreciated it.

I would like to see more of this kind of thing from our club. Several years ago we discussed putting copies of our presentations on our web site. Paul Ruud and I made copies of several presentations and have made them available on our website.

Please join me next Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> to hear from one of our own, Paul Ruud, give a talk entitled, "The Capture of New Orleans."

**Bob Hanley, President**



## BOOK REVIEWS



**Searching for George Gordon Meade: The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg.** By Tom Huntington. Illustrated, maps, notes, bibliography, index, 406 pp., 2013, Stackpole Books, [www.stackpolebooks.com](http://www.stackpolebooks.com), \$32.95.

What a strange but appropriate title for a study of George Gordon Meade! Why has the victor of the Battle of Gettysburg, one of the most significant victories in military history, been forgotten?

Wellington was held in great esteem during his lifetime for his victory at Waterloo. But Meade has been slighted by history. For example, he appeared only in a footnote in Michael Shaara's Gettysburg novel *The Killer Angels*. The selection of the subtitle *The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg* is right on target.

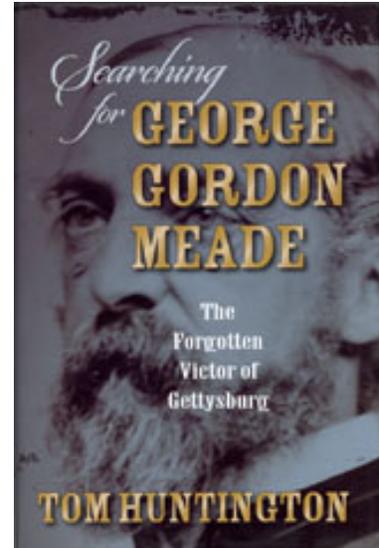
Tom Huntington's book is the first major biography of Meade since Freeman Cleaves' *Meade of Gettysburg* (1960). Richard Sauers wrote a sketchy study of Meade in 2002, as did Ethen Rafuse the following year.

Throughout his study, Huntington demonstrates, sadly, how Meade's successes and memory have been neglected. Meade, after all, succeeded where others failed — he met Lee and his vaunted Army of Northern Virginia on the battlefield and defeated them.

In his preface, the author terms his book a “participatory biography,” and explains, “I wanted to tell the narrative of Meade's life but I wanted to visit the places Meade knew and the battlefields where he fought so I could find out what's there today ... I wanted to mix past and present....”

Huntington's book has an innovative format, effectively weaving together biography, military history, travelogue and social history. He creatively transports the reader from past to present while visiting those places connected with Meade's life.

During his travels, Huntington learned new and fascinating information concerning Meade while also learning how forgotten Meade has become. What emerges from his efforts is a refreshingly readable and well-researched book.



Huntington traces Meade's career by showing how he served in the Mexican War, designed and constructed lighthouses, and then proved himself capable at brigade, division and corps commands before progressing to army command.

Unfortunately, historians view Meade's career in light of the taint created by the nefarious, insubordinate and politically effective Dan Sickles and by the Ulysses S. Grant/Phil Sheridan cabal that, as Civil War artist Alfred Waud observed, “[intended] to grab all laurels no matter at what cost to justice.”

Huntington rights those injustices in his well-constructed and balanced account of Meade's career. Meade, the victor of Gettysburg and commander of the Army of the Potomac through Appomattox, is fairly presented, warts and all. He emerges as a greatly underrated general.

*Searching for George Gordon Meade* should be required reading by all those interested in Civil War history. Meade's reputation and treatment by historians need re-evaluation. Huntington's unique

format provides a step toward the rehabilitation of Meade to his proper in Civil War historiography. While not the definitive re-evaluation Meade deserves, this book, with its distinctive approach, is highly recommended.

**Reviewer: Michael Russert**

**Michael Russert, a member of the North Shore Round Table of Long Island and the Company of Military Historians, has a MALS plus 60 hours in American Studies.**

Source: July 2013 Civil War News Book Review;  
<http://www.civilwarnews.com/reviews/2013br/july/meade-huntington-b0713-09.html>



**Justifying A Decision:  
Virginia, July 1863  
George G. Meade to Henry W. Halleck**

*Meade remained sensitive to criticism of his pursuit of Lee's army after Gettysburg. On July 28 Halleck wrote Meade, praising him for handling his troops during the battle "as well, if not better, than any general has handled his army during the war," and expressing continued confidence in his leadership. Halleck also told Meade that he "should not have been surprised or vexed at the President's disappointment at the escape of Lee's army," adding that Lincoln "felt no little impatience" at Lee's "unexpected escape." Meade replied from his headquarters at Warrenton in northern Virginia.*

---

UNOFFICIAL.]

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
July 31, 1863.

Major-General HALLECK,

General-in-Chief

My Dear General: I thank you most sincerely and heartily for your kind and generous letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> instant, received last evening. It would be wrong in me to deny that I feared there existed in the minds of both the President and yourself an idea that I failed to do what another would and could have done in the withdrawal of Lee's army. The expression you have been pleased to use in your letter, to wit, "a feeling of disappointment," is one that I cheerfully accept and readily admit was as keenly felt by myself as any one. But permit me, dear general, to call your attention to the distinction between disappointment and dissatisfaction. The one was a natural feeling, in view of the momentous consequences that would have resulted from a successful attack, but does not necessarily convey with it any censure. I could not view the use of latter expression in any other light than as intending to convey an expression of opinion on the part of the President that I had failed to do what I might and should have done. Now, let me say, in the frankness which characterizes your letter, that perhaps the President was right; if such was the case, it was my duty to give him an opportunity to replace me by one better fitted for the command of the army. It was, I assure you, with such feelings that I applied to be relieved. It was not from any personal considerations, for I have tried in this whole war to forget all personal consideration, and have always maintained they should not for an instant influence any one's actions.

Of course you will understand that I do not agree that the President was right, and I feel sure when the true state of the case comes to be known, that however natural and great may be the feeling of disappointment, no blame will be attached to any one.

Had I attacked Lee the day I proposed to do so, and in the ignorance that then existed of his position, I have every reason to believe the attack would have been unsuccessful, and would have resulted disastrously. This opinion is founded on the judgment of numerous distinguished officers, after inspecting Lee's vacated works and position. Among these officers I could name Generals Sedgwick, Wright, Slocum, Hays, Sykes, and others.

The idea that Lee abandoned his lines early in the day that he withdrew, I have positive intelligence is not correct, and that not a man was withdrawn till after

dark. I mention these facts to remove the impression, which newspaper correspondents have given the public, that it was only necessary to advance to secure an easy victory. I had great responsibility thrown on me. On one side were the known and important fruits of victory, and, on the other, the equally important and terrible consequences of a defeat. I considered my position at Williamsport very different from that at Gettysburg. When I left Frederick, it was with the firm determination to attack and fight Lee, without regard to time or place, as soon as I could come in contact with him; but after defeating him, and requiring him to abandon his schemes of invasion, I did not think myself justified in making a blind attack simply to prevent his escape, and running all the risks attending such a venture. Now, as I said before, in this, perhaps, I erred in judgment, for I take this occasion to say to you, and through you to the President, that I have no pretensions to any superior capacity for the post he has assigned me to: that all I can do is to exert my utmost efforts, and do the best I can; but that the moment those who have a right to judge my actions think, or feel satisfied, either that I am wanting or that another would do better, that moment I earnestly desire to be relieved, not on my own account, but on account of the country and the cause.

You must excuse so much egotism, but your kind letter in a measure renders it necessary. I feel, general, very proud of your good opinion, and assure you I shall endeavor in the future to continue to merit it.

Reciprocating the kind feeling you have expressed, I remain, general, most truly and respectfully, yours,

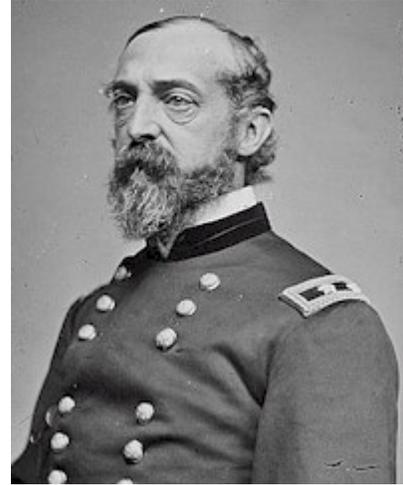
GEO. G. MEADE,

Major-General.

*Reprinted from The Civil War; The Third Year Told by Those Who Lived It. Edited by Brooks D. Simpson. Pages 420-422.*



## George Gordon Meade (1815-1872)



The victor of Gettysburg, George G. Meade does not rank with the great captains of the Civil War in part because of his eclipse in the last year of the conflict by the presence of Grant with his army, and a journalistic conspiracy of silence. Born of American parents in Cadiz, Spain, December 31, 1815-where his father had run into financial and legal difficulties as a result of the Napoleonic Wars-he was appointed to West Point from Pennsylvania. Graduating in 1835, he served a year in the artillery before resigning to become a civil engineer. After some difficulty in finding employment he reentered the army in 1842 and earned a brevet in Mexico...

Serving on a survey of the Great Lakes at the outbreak of the Civil War, he received a volunteer brigadier's star in the first summer of the war and was assigned to the division of Pennsylvania Reserves. After training and service near Washington and in northern Virginia, the command joined the Army of the Potomac on the Peninsula. During the Seven Days he fought at Beaver Dam Creek and Gaines' Mill before falling wounded at Glendale. He led his brigade at 2nd Bull Run, following his recovery, and the division at South Mountain and Antietam. At the latter he succeeded the wounded Hooker in command of the 1st Corps and received his second star before Fredericksburg. In that action his division broke through the Confederate right but was thrown back after his supports failed to arrive. Transferred to the direction of the 5th Corps, he briefly commanded the Center Grand Division after the Mud March until that cumbersome organization was disbanded. At Chancellorsville he led his corps well but was held back by Hooker's timidity.

With the invasion of Pennsylvania, Meade was chosen to relieve Hooker in army command only three days before Gettysburg. Originally planning to fight farther to the rear along Pipe Creek, he dispatched General Winfield S. Hancock to Gettysburg-following the death of General John F. Reynolds-to determine if it would be an acceptable battlefield. Accepting that officer's opinion, he ordered a continued concentration there. During the next two days he masterfully shifted his troops from one threatened sector to another. He received the, thanks of Congress and an appointment as a brigadier in the regulars. However, he soon came in for criticism for allowing Lee to escape to Virginia without another battle.

His handling of the Bristoe and Mine Run campaigns was not shining. In the spring of 1864 newly appointed General-in-Chief U.S. Grant set up his headquarters with Meade's army. This cumbersome arrangement worked out surprisingly well. However, since Meade was known for his temper and had come into conflict with a number of correspondents, there was an agreement not to mention him in dispatches except in reference to setbacks. He fought through the Overland and Petersburg campaigns, earning Grant's respect and being considered for command in the Shenandoah.

At Grant's request he was advanced to major general in the regular army. He served in the Appomattox Campaign but felt slighted by the reports which seemed to give all the credit to Grant and Sheridan. Mustered out of the volunteer service, he continued in the regular army, performing Reconstruction duty in the South. In 1866, he became commissioner of Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, a post he held until his death. He died in Philadelphia November 6, 1872 as a result of old war wounds complicated by pneumonia.

Source: "Who Was Who In The Civil War" by Stewart Sifakis and "Historical Times Encyclopedia of the Civil War" Edited by Patricia L. Faust.

Source: <http://www.civilwarhome.com/meadebio.htm>



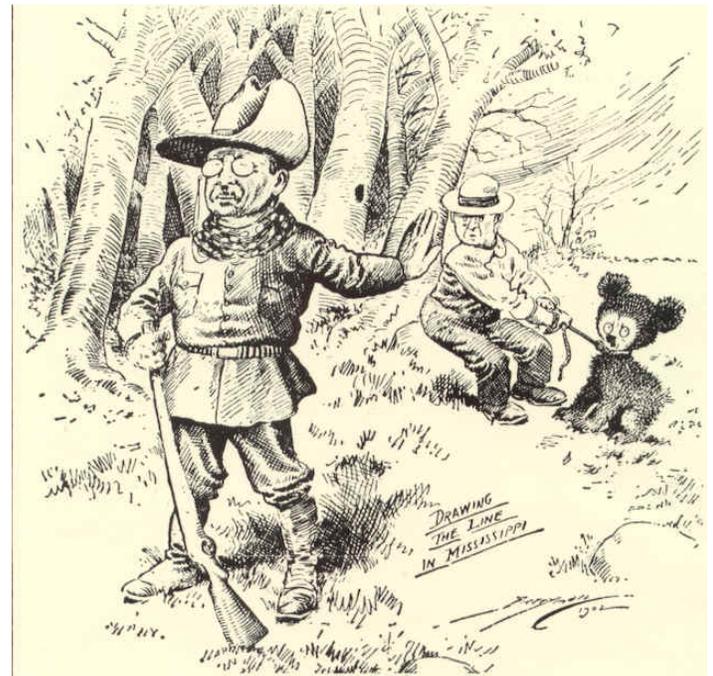
## DID YOU KNOW?

Holt Collier was born a slave in Mississippi in 1846 (the year varies in several accounts). His experiences included being a Confederate cavalry scout (when he

accompanied his master and joined the Confederate army at 12), involvement in wild-west gunfights, and hunting trips to Mexico and Alaska. But Collier was best known as a bear hunter.

When President Theodore Roosevelt went to Mississippi in 1902 to hunt bear, Collier was selected to guide that party. Collier assured the President that he would bag a bear, "if I have to tie one up and bring it to you." Well, he practically did. Collier found a bear, but the President was elsewhere during the hunt. Collier tied it to a tree, brought Roosevelt to it, and everyone waited for the shot to be fired.

Although considered a conservationist, Roosevelt had recently been criticized for his cruelty in killing big game animals for sport. Roosevelt declined to shoot the tied-up bear. Among the reporters in the hunting party was cartoonist Clifford Berryman who satirized the scene for the Washington Post. A toy maker saw the cartoon and hit upon the idea of turning the bear into a stuffed toy.



Source: <http://civilwarstudies.org/trivia.shtm#08>

