

OUR CAMP JOURNAL



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"We are but few in number but formidable." -Pvt. James Shelton, 7th Md. Co. B

February 2024

JUBAL EARLY'S RAID ON WASHINGTON

By Bill Hart

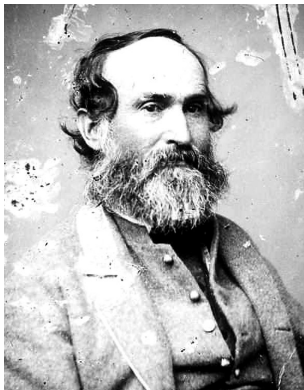
Musing away a winter afternoon. This time about the tag line for the Battle of Monocacy: "The Battle that Saved Washington".

An accurate reflection of what happened. Union troops blocked Early's approach from Frederick, to Washington for a day and delayed the rebels in their march to Washington. The July 9th Battle gave Union defenders of Washington a

valuable day to concentrate troops on the northern approaches and better organize the city's defense. It also provided time for two divisions of the Union 6th Corps to arrive from Petersburg to reinforce the city's garrison and prevent the rebels from breaking through its defenses. Thus, "The Battle that Saved Washing-

ton". It was not one of the biggest battles of the Civil War but it was significant.

But how about the troops on Maryland Heights? Early left Winchester, Virginia with his force on July 3rd and arrived at



Gen. Jubal Early, CSA

Harper's Ferry on the 4th. He quickly pushed the Federals out of the town but the retreating Union garrison destroyed the bridges across the Potomac on their withdrawal and joined Federals on the already fortified Maryland

Heights. Not wanting to leave troops in his rear, Early spent until July 7th attempting to take the heights before giving up the effort. He moved his force eight miles north to Shepherdstown, West Virginia to ford the river there. He camped at Middletown, Maryland on the night of the 8th before moving on Frederick and then on south to meet the Federals at the Monocacy.

The action on Maryland Heights rather sounds like the "The Extended Skirmish that Saved Washington". Federal troops on the heights delayed the rebels for four days – not just one day. The delay additionally

provided time for two brigades of regulars from the 3rd Division of the VI Corps, 3,500 seasoned soldiers, to arrive at Monocacy Junction on the 8th and reinforce the 2,300 mostly 100-days men with little combat experience giving General Lew Wallace 5,800 men to oppose Early's 14,000 and delay the rebels by one day at the Battle of Monocacy.

In looking into material to support my thoughts I found that back in 1960 historian Charles Snell voiced much the same thought in a paper on Harpers Ferry. It seems difficult to come up with

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The Union Army-built Stone Fort on Maryland Heights .
NPS



Upcoming Campaigns

EARLY REGISTRATION NOTICE!

Spring Skirmish at the Daniel Lady Farm

May 18-19, 2024
Starting at 8:30AM

At the historic Daniel Lady Farm:
1008 Hanover Street Gettysburg, PA
17325

Early Reenactor Registration - \$15
Available for 8 more days!

Increases to \$20 on January 31st

WALK-ON FEE WILL BE \$40

Register on line at:

<https://danielladyfarm.com/events>

The 7th Maryland Annual Meeting date, time and location will be announced soon.

Remember-Honor-Teach; Remembering Those Who Served:

Culpeper National Cemetery

By Pvt. Jeff Joyce

Today we remember Private John Sneidman or Schnaitman. Born Johannes Schnaitman on May 26, 1822, in Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany, John arrived in New York in August 1853. In September 1854 he married Rosana Herz, who had sailed from Bremen, Germany, aboard the same ship as John.

John and Rosana settled in Talbot County, Maryland, where their son John was born in August 1855. Tragically, Rosana died in childbirth in August 1859, leaving John to raise their son. John was working as a farmer when the Civil War erupted and agreed to serve as a substitute for Francis Willis. John may have received 15 acres of land from the parents of Francis Willis in exchange for serving in their son's place. He was mustered into Company D, 4th Maryland Volunteer Infantry, in Bal-



John Schnaitman, Jr., with wife Augusta

timore on February 13, 1863, for a period of nine months.

John was described as 5' 6" in height, with blue eyes and red hair. At the time the 4th Maryland was stationed on Maryland Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry. Following the Battle of Gettysburg the 4th Maryland and the Army of the Potomac pursued the Confederates

as they retreated across the Potomac River into Virginia. By August 1863 the 4th Maryland was near Rappahannock Station along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, where John died of bilious fever on August 6, 1863. Bilious fever was often used to describe several condi-

tions, including typhoid, malaria or hepatitis. John was buried in a temporary cemetery and after the Civil War moved to Culpeper National Cemetery, where he now rests in Section A1. John's orphaned son was indentured to a farmer until he turned 21 in 1876. He also received a pension from the War Department as a result of his father's death.

John Schnaitman became a carpenter and married twice (1885 and 1905), fathering 13 children before passing away in 1921.

Note: Biographical information on John Sneidman courtesy of his descendant Cheri Johnston.



The 7th Maryland's First Winter Camp

By Pvt. Jeff Joyce

During the Civil War the 7th Maryland experienced three winter encampments. After guarding the Potomac River fords and C&O Canal in the autumn of 1862 the regiment moved in December to Maryland Heights, overlooking Harpers Ferry. Its camp was located near the so-called Naval Battery 300 feet above the Potomac. Constructed in May 1862, the Naval Battery was the first Union fortification on Maryland Heights. Some of its guns, including two 9-inch naval Dahlgren rifles, were transferred from the Washington Navy Yard with a detachment of 300 sailors and marines. By the time the 7th Maryland arrived the Naval Battery was used primarily as an ordnance depot.

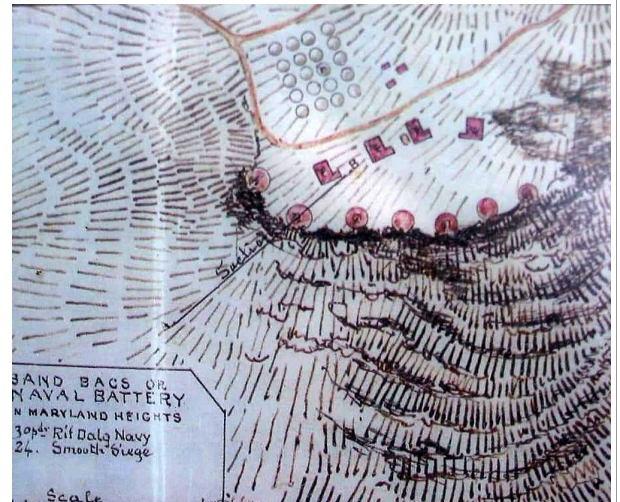
During the months spent in winter camp the 7th Maryland endured cold weather, boredom and homesickness. Private James Dorrance of Company A related a losing battle with winter weather in a January 22, 1863, letter to his sister Emma: "It is very muddy here and icy last night. I started to go to the sutler tent i slipt and slided for about 15 yards thought I would not stop untill I got to the bottom but I stopt at last."

Common pastimes included reading, writing letters and playing cards and games like checkers and chess. Milton Bradley of Springfield, Massachusetts, created his first game in 1860 ("Checkered Game of Life") and during the Civil War marketed small travel games that could be sent to soldiers for \$1. Snowball fights were also common. One epic snowball fight in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in February 1863 involved thousands of soldiers from Georgia and the Carolinas.

Unfortunately, the 7th Maryland also faced the threat of disease in winter camp. A number became ill and at least one 7th Marylander per-

ished during the winter. Private Henry Dove of Company B died of smallpox in January 1863 while in a Hagerstown hospital. He was buried at Antietam National Cemetery near another member of the 7th Maryland, Private John Shepard of Company G. Private Shepard died near Clear Springs, Maryland, in November 1862 from an accidental gunshot wound.

The 7th Maryland remained near Harpers Ferry until June 1863, when it retreated to Frederick, Maryland, in response to the Confederate victory at Winchester, Virginia. This was the opening of the Gettysburg Campaign and would witness the 7th Maryland's first opportunity to see combat.



Top left; The marker of Pvt. Henry Dove, who died of smallpox, buried at Antietam National Cemetery.

Above; A sketch of a naval battery and winter camp at Harpers Ferry.

Left; Building a winter hut in 1861.

Manner of Rolling the Cloak.

From Congdon's Cavalry Compendium ~ 1864 ~ pages 99-100

This method of rolling the coat basically has you create a large rectangle with the bulk, sleeves, excess cape, etc toward the outside. This way, when rolled, the coat will easily bend to the shape of the pommel. This method will also work with civilian and infantry pattern coats as well as coat without capes.



Step 4; The lower extremity of the cloak is turned up about ten inches;



Step 1, Above; The cloak being entirely unfolded, the sleeves are laid flat and extended parallel to the two front edges of the cloak;



Step 5; the skirts are likewise turned towards each other, so that they may touch the fold of the sleeves, and that, being folded a second time upon themselves, they may give to the cloak the form of a rectangle;



Step 8, Above; The part of the cloak which is rolled is then introduced into the sort of pocket formed by the part which was turned back.



Step 2; each one is then turned up and folded near the elbow, so as to give a length of three feet six inches from one elbow to the other, the middle of the cloak remaining uncovered



Step 6; the lower extremity of the cloak is then turned up about seven inches,



Note:— The overcoat or cloak, when rolled, should be about thirty inches long, and about five inches thick.

Evolutions performed by trooper John Clark, 1st Maine Cavalry



Step 3; The cape is then turned down over the sleeves, in such a manner that the front edges may exactly cover those of the cloak.



Step 7; and it is rolled as tightly as possible, commencing at the collar and pressing the knee upon it as it is rolled, to hold it.

President Lincoln's Cottage: The Powerful D.C. Museum You Might Not Have Heard Of



By Craig Stoltz
Garden & Gun Magazine

President Lincoln's Cottage in Northwest Washington, D.C. By Briann Rimm, courtesy of President Lincoln's Cottage.

About three miles from the White House, along snaking roads older than the capital itself, on a hilltop overlooking the city of Washington, D.C. in a rambling cottage with gingerbread trim, you'll find the bedroom where

Abraham Lincoln composed the Emancipation Proclamation. There's not much to the room, actually: The floors are hard pine, the door includes mullions and inset panels that demonstrate fine hand-craftsmanship, and tall scalloped baseboards rim the room. The windows feature wooden louvers of a nineteenth-century design, used to mute the sun that illuminates the room most of the year.

There is no furniture in the bedroom, except for a desk. It's a simple thing of dark walnut, its unadorned stowaway writing surface displayed in the open position. Lincoln wrote bits and phrases of the Proclamation on small pieces of paper and kept them in his hat. He would then sit at the desk in the cottage and stitch them into drafts. They are now kept in the Library of Congress.

President Lincoln's Cottage, while relatively obscure, is among the most consequential presidential sites in the nation's capital. It's where Lincoln and his wife, Mary, spent nearly a quarter

of his presidency, from May to November of 1862, 1863, and 1864. It's where they escaped downtown Washington's stinking, malarial summers. The Lincolns retreated to the cottage in grief after the death, by typhoid fever, of their eleven-year-old son Willie. They were at the cottage on April 13, 1865, the day before they went to see *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater. The cottage was never intended to be a

presidential retreat. It was built in 1842, in Gothic Revival style, by banker George W. Riggs. The federal government bought it from Riggs in 1851—using booty paid by Mexico City to spare itself from attack during the Mexican War—to build a home for disabled soldiers.

By the time the Lincolns moved in, 132 wounded veterans lived in the Soldiers' Home, in newly constructed buildings not far from the cottage. On summer nights Lincoln would chat with the men, many of them missing limbs, who reported what it was like to fight the war he presided over. On the other side of the cottage lay the Soldiers' Home National Cemetery, the nation's first military burial ground, where the Civil War dead were put to rest in rows of gravestones that ripple along the rises and hollows. Lincoln heard taps being played daily.

Lincoln might not have spent so much time at the cottage if it hadn't been for the death of Willie in February 1862, likely from contaminated water at the White House. He was the second of the Lincolns' children to die. Lincoln was

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An illustrated lithograph of the Soldiers' Home from 1863. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

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*Civil War Re-enactors;
America's Living Historians.*

President Lincoln's Cottage

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stricken, Mary inconsolable. She described the White House as a "tomb."

"When we are in sorrow," she wrote, "quiet is very necessary to us." And so she and the president decamped for the cottage. Carriage-loads of supplies and equipment were hauled there so the nation's work could continue.

The tour of the cottage, a National Monument and a National Historic Landmark, is low-key and low-tech. A docent guides visitors through the rooms, telling stories and pointing out details, like recently discovered decorative painting on the walls that has been painstakingly revived. A highlight is the furnished salon where Lincoln entertained, often with annoyance, the many office-seekers and blowhards who managed to

track him down for an audience.

But a display on the first floor of the visitors' center may be what you remember most. *Reflections on Grief and Child Loss* is a tribute to all families who, like the Lincolns, have lost a child. In the center of the room stands a white sculpture of a willow tree, its limbs heavy with hundreds of individual leaves bearing parents' messages to their dead children.

"We miss you when the snow falls, when the deer and bunnies play, and every moment in between," reads the note to Coley James Hobbie. As it happens, the note was written by Cottage CEO Callie Hawkins, who had worked for the site for years in 2018 when Coley was due, on February 12, Lincoln's birthday. He was stillborn the next day.

EARLY'S RAID ON WASHINGTON

(Continued from page 1)

an idea about this war that someone else has not already considered.

The Monocacy Battlefield and Maryland Heights are both sites here in Maryland (just across the river for you loyal Virginians), accessible and not too distant for most. Places we can visit and visualize what took place.

Those men on Maryland Heights should be recognized for their role in "saving Washington".

(A point not generally noted by the standard Civil War historians, in relation to this campaign [Early's raid on Washington], is that by successfully defending their position, the Federal troops at Harpers Ferry there delayed Early four days in his

march on Washington. In other words, if the Union forces had evacuated the Harpers ferry position on July 4, as Early apparently expected them to do, the Confederate army would have easily reached Frederick, Mary-

land, on July 5 and could have been in the vicinity of Washington on July 6, instead, as was actually the case, of reaching that point on the 10th. From: Snell, Charles W., "Harpers Ferry Repels an Attack and Becomes the Major Base of Operations for Sheridan's Army, July 4, 1864 to July 27, 1865". January 21, 1960, p. 33.)



View of Maryland Heights
from Harper's Ferry, West
Virginia.

Library of Congress