



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

December 1969

Vol. 13 No. 3

105th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1969

SPEAKER: SILENT

SUBJECT: MOVIE: "THE GENERAL" w/BUSTER KEATON

PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB, DODGE COURT

PRELIMINARIES: 6PM DINNER: 7PM

THE GENERAL

A real treat is in store for the Round Table at its December meeting. The movie, "The General" starring Buster Keaton, will be shown. This film is one of the old silent flickers and the old timers in the Round Table will be excused if they become a bit struck with nostalgia at the thought of seeing it.

The movie was shot in 1926, and released throughout the country in 1927. In March of 1926, W.H. Barnes, assistant director for Buster Keaton Productions, contacted the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce indicating that they planned to shoot a movie about the Andrews Raid during the Civil War. They hoped to shoot it on the actual locale between Big Shanty, Georgia, and Ringgold, and use the engine "The General" that had figured in the actual chase.

The "General" was then owned by the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway (now a part of the L & N) and the railroad agreed to let Keaton use it and shoot the film along their railroad in Georgia. The NC & StL removed the old engine from the Chattanooga Union Station where it had been on display since 1893, put it in operating condition, and on a trial run, it did 60 miles per hour.

Several ancient railroad cars were rigged up for use by Keaton, who also had built models at his studio in California for shipment to Chattanooga. On April 9, 1926, word circulated in Chattanooga that Keaton and a part of his production staff was due in town to set up shooting schedules.

Up to that point, Keaton's organization had stated that the comedian was going to step out of his usual role and play a serious part. "The film is going to be as historically accurate as it can possibly be made," they said. Keaton's studio leased a small logging road in Eastern Tennessee for use in portions of the shooting. Keaton, studio personnel and equipment began to arrive in Chattanooga. During an interview on arrival Keaton said: "I'm a comedian and I think I'd better stick to the craft I know best. Our film, 'The General' will be shot as a comedy."

Confederates throughout the South rose in protest. Among them was a relative of Conductor Fuller, who had so gallantly chased and caught the engine that day in 1862. A conference among Grand Army of the Republic members and various Confederate veterans brought a vigorous protest to the Nashville headquarters of the NC & StL Railway, demanding that the railroad withdraw permission to use the engine if Keaton was to film the story of the Great Locomotive Chase as a comedy. Pressure became so intense that the NC & StL withdrew permission to use the engine. Keaton packed up and returned to

California without exposing even a foot of film. In June 1926, an official of the NC & StL received a letter which read in part: "It is with regret that we find ourselves compelled to give up the idea of making our picture in the South. We have been fortunate in being able to secure two engines almost identical with the "General" here and have decided to make our picture on the Coast. . ."

Shooting got under way in mid-summer of 1926 at Cottage Grove, Oregon, in an area along the Row River. Substituting for the "General" was No. 4, a 4-4-0 type owned by the old Oregon & Southeastern Railroad. Except for smaller drivers and a slightly different stack, it looked a great deal like the "General". The locomotive that played the part of the "Texas" was No. 1 of the Mt. Hood Railroad. During the shooting of a burning bridge sequence, this engine fell to the river below, where its rusting hulk is said to be today.

"The General" opened at Loew's Grand Theater in Atlanta on February 17, 1927, and played to capacity audiences during its run in Atlanta. There were threats of a boycott in some Southern cities, including Atlanta, but it was a hit anyway. Keaton, who was a very funny man indeed, died February 1, 1966, age 70, in his Hollywood home.

THE FILM IN CLEVELAND

The first Cleveland showing of the film took place the week of Sunday, February 20, 1927, at the Allen Theater. That same week film fans had their choice of seeing: At the STILLMAN theater was John Barrymore in "Don Juan"; the PALACE was showing Charles Ray and Marie Prevost in "Getting Gertie's Garter"; nearby at the STATE a real scorcher, "Taxi Dancer" with Joan Crawford; down the avenue at the HIPPODROME, a shootem-up with Hoot Gibson, called "The Texas Streak"; and at the CIRCLE theater was Cleveland's own Adolph Menjou and Ricardo Cortez in "Sorrow of Satan"; and finally out in the suburbs of Superior & St. Clair and 105th Street at Loew's LIBERTY or Loew's DOAN theaters you could watch Lillian Gish in the "Scarlet Letter."

For those of you who can't quite recall W. Ward Marsh's review in the CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, sit back, relax and refresh your memory.

It's Monday morning, February 21, 1927, and your drinking your second cup of coffee as you read Marsh's headline on page 15:

KEATON, A REBEL, HAS FUN IN SOUTH

"The funny side of the Civil War comes late. The World War has offered its mirth first, considering the age of each on the pages of history. America suffered, as probably you know, frightfully from the debauch of the 60's, and it has taken a few generations to forget some of the grief and sorrow and try to find its funny side.

If America had sustained such frightful losses during '17 & '18 I dare say we wouldn't have found the World War's humor yet, but we are moving faster these days, and it is altogether possible the speed of youth and later inventions would have erased enough of the tears to permit a laugh to spring out of the sorrow we, as a whole, never had.

....Keaton in his 'General' pursues the northerners spies into their own territory after they have stolen an engine and kidnaped his sweetheart, played by Marian Mack. He is nearly captured a half dozen times, but he manages to rescue the girl and drive his 'General' back to camp, burn a bridge and foil an attack.

That's all there is to the story. Considerable horse-play of a pretty familiar variety finds its way into the text. The chase to the north is quite exciting, but it is largely repeated when the hero escapes to the south. If you think you will laugh when a water tank floods passing engineers and passengers, the 'General' is for you.

It struck me as being too repetitious and too long, but don't be governed wholly by my opinion unless you know that your likes and mine coincide because I'm going to recommend it--not, because I was, immensely charmed by it, but because I know that the majority will find excitement, nicely maintained suspense, and good gags; the minority will laugh infrequently."

MY GOOD GOD, LOOK AT THAT TIME, GET GOING OR YOU'LL BE LATE FOR WORK!

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

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THE DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON
by
JOHN GROSS BARNARD

When, after the disaster at Bull Run, it became apparent that the war was to be a struggle of long duration, the necessity of the thorough fortifying of Washington ceased to be doubtful. The situation was indeed such as to admit of no elaborate plans, scarcely of the adequate study of the ground necessary to a judicious location of a line so extensive. The first exigency was to fortify the position on the heights of Arlington, the most obvious manner of doing which was to connect Forts Corcoran and Albany by intermediate works, within musketry or canister range of each other, and thus form, with Fort Runyon, a chain or a "couronne," covering at the same time the bridges and the heights. The ground, furrowed by numerous ravines, proved sufficiently favorable, and the large lunettes, with stockaded gorges, Forts Craig, Tillinghast, Cass, Woodbury, and DeKalb (subsequently called Fort Strong), were speedily laid out and begun. The location of these works, as also their design and construction, were principally due to Majors Woodbury and Alexander. Fort Corcoran being on a "step" or small plateau of inferior level to that of the heights, it was necessary to continue the line, by Fort DeKalb toward the river, along the higher level. As it requires many days to obtain, in regularly-profiled field forts, so much cover as will make them partially defensible, a temporary expedient for improvising defense was found in making a wide "slashing" through the forest in advance of the line of these intended works, and a marginal slashing around its edge. Half-sunk batteries for field-guns were prepared between the sites of Forts DeKalb and Woodbury and near that of Fort Craig.³ From the heights north of the Potomac, between Georgetown and the distributing reservoir, which overlooked and commanded the ground in advance of the defensive line, a formidable flanking fire was obtained by the erection of "Battery Cameron" for two rifled 42-pounders.

The wooded ridge which lies north of and parallel to the lower course of Four-mile Run, offered a favorable position from which the city, the Long Bridge, and the plateau in advance of it could be overlooked and cannonaded, and from which it was important to exclude the enemy so long as our defensive line was thus limited. Access to it was made difficult by felling the forest with which it was covered (about 200 acres) and the construction upon it of the large lunette (Fort Scott) was begun as soon as the site could be fixed. The subsequent extension of the line to embrace Alexandria threw this work and Fort Albany into the rear, but it retained, nevertheless, a considerable importance, since, taken in connection with Forts Richardson, Craig, and others, it completed a defensive line for Washington independent of the

- 1 - This article is taken from General Barnard's Report on the Defenses of Washington, being No. 20 of the Professional Papers of the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, 1871.
- 2 - Barnard was a Major General by brevet and Colonel, Corps of Engineers.
- 3-- With the experience our troops and engineers acquired 2-3 years later, this whole position would in 24 hrs have been formidably intrenched by a continuous line of rifle-pits. But we had not then the men who could be trusted to hold such a line.

extension to Alexandria.

While these operations were going on General Richardson, whose division held position along the Columbia Turnpike, had occupied and pointed out the importance of the eminence in advance of Fort Albany commanding the plateau along which that road passes and flanking the Arlington lines. The small inclosed polygonal work, "Fort Richardson," was begun thereon about September 1, 1861.

The defense of Alexandria and its connection with that of Washington was a subject of anxious study. The exigency demanding immediate measures, the first idea naturally was, availing ourselves of Fort Ellsworth as one point of the defensive system, to connect it with Fort Scott by intermediate works on Mount Ida and adjacent heights. A protracted study of the topography for several miles in advance showed that such a line would be indefensible. Not only would the works themselves be commanded by heights in advance, but the troops which should support them would be restricted to a narrow space, in which they would be overlooked and harassed by the enemy's distant fire. The occupation, therefore, of the heights a mile in advance of Fort Ellsworth, upon which Theological Seminary is situated, seemed absolutely necessary, and examination showed their topography to be favorable to a defensive line, as points of which the sites of Forts Worth and Ward were selected and the work begun about the first of September, and the line thence continued simultaneously by Fort Reynolds to connect with Forts Richardson and Craig. Somewhat later Fort Barnard, intermediate between Reynolds and Richardson, and partially filling the gap, was begun. It commanded the valley of Four-Mile Run and flanked a deep tributary ravine lying across the approaches of Forts Reynolds and Ward.

The heights south of Hunting Creek, overlooking Alexandria and more elevated than Fort Ellsworth, were for some time a subject of anxiety. The fortification of the Seminary Heights, which commanded them, diminished materially the danger of their temporary seizure by the enemy. As soon, however (about the middle of September), as a sufficient force could be detached to occupy the position and protect the construction, the large fort, called Lyon, was begun, Major (Brevet Major General) Newton, then attached as an engineer officer to the staff of General Franklin, selecting the site and planning the work. This extensive field-work occupied a month or two in construction, during which time the position was made somewhat more defensible by rifle-trenches across the plateau in advance.

While strengthening as rapidly as possible our most assailable and, at first, exceedingly weak position on the south shore of the Potomac, it was, though perhaps less urgent, still necessary to provide some auxiliary defenses to the city itself against approaches along the northern shores. In the summer and autumn the Potomac is easily fordable at points not distant from Washington. The army which had been victorious at Manassas, and whose advance posts were soon visible at Munson's Hill, might, it was thought, improve the critical period which followed, ere our rapidly-arriving volunteer regiments could be organized into a formidable force, and while that which had fought that battle, disorganized by defeat, was dwindling away by expiration of three months' term of service, to cross the river and assail us, where the results of success, even if involving greater risks, would have been the most decisive.

To meet the emergency, works were necessarily thrown up without that deliberate study of the topography in which the establishment of such defensive line should, if practicable, be based. The first directions given to our labors were to secure the roads, not merely as the beaten highways of travel from the country to the city, but as, in general, occupying the best ground for an enemy's approach. Thus the site of Fort Pennsylvania (subsequently called Fort Reno) was early in August selected on the heights of Tennallytown, commanding the three roads already described, which unite at that place. This position, strongly held and aided by Fort Gaines soon after located and begun, made it comparatively easy to exclude hostile approach by the sector of country between the Potomac and Rock Creek. Fort Stevens, commanding the Seventh Street road, and, in connection with it, Forts Totten and Slocum, were almost simultaneously begun, as also Fort Lincoln, commanding the Baltimore Turnpike and Baltimore Railroad. As speedily as possible thereafter the intervening works, Forts DeRussy, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Slemmer, and Thayer, were interpolated.

The fixing of the left of the line on the Potomac was less obvious. The topography indicated its continuance from Tennallytown along the brow of the heights overlooking the valley of Powder-Mill Run, at a point of which, indeed, Fort Gaines was actually being built. This would have brought the left near and behind the Chain

Bridge. It was deemed indispensable not only that this bridge should be within our line, but so far within as to be protected from artillery fire from hostile batteries. It was also imperative to protect the "receiving reservoir" of the Washington Aqueduct, upon which the city depended for most of its supply of water. Hence the final establishment of the left on the heights, close to the river, beyond the reservoir and valley of Powder-Mill Branch. It was deemed necessary to give the position, thus isolated, considerable strength, and the site being unfavorable to the rapid creation of a strong position by a single large work, three smaller ones were erected, which, a year later, were united into one, and called Fort Sumner.

The first idea as to defensive works beyond the Anacostia were to fortify the debouches from the bridges and the heights overlooking the Navy Yard. With that object Fort Stanton was begun early in September. A further examination of the remarkable ridge between the Anacostia and Oxen Run showed clearly that, to protect the Navy Yard and Arsenal from cannonade, it was necessary to occupy an extent of six miles from Fort Greble to Fort Meigs. Forts Greble and Carroll were begun in the latter part of September and Fort Mahan near Bennings' Bridge, about the same time. The latter work commanded the road leading along the margin of Anacostia from Bladensburg and served as an advanced tet-de-pont to the bridge just named. Fort Meigs, occupying the extreme point of the ridge from which artillery fire might be brought to bear upon the Capital or Navy Yard, was begun somewhat later in the season, as were also Forts DuPont, Davis, Baker, Wagner, Ricketts, and Snyder. These were all well advanced to completion before the close of the year. At an early date, defensive measures had been taken at the Chain Bridge, consisting of a barricade immediately over the first pier from the Virginia side, with a movable staircase, by which the defenders could retreat over the flat below, leaving the bridge open to the fire of two mountain howitzers, placed immediately at its Maryland end, a battery on the bluff above ("Martin Scott") of one 8-inch sea-coast howitzer and two 35-pounders. As even this last battery was commanded by heights on the Virginia side, it was deemed proper to erect another called Vermont at a higher point, which should command the Virginia heights, and at the same time sweep the approaches of the enemy along the Maryland shore of the Potomac.

But the occupation of the Virginia shore at the Chain Bridge was essential to the future operations of our army in Virginia, to the prestige of our arms, and incidentally important to the defense of Washington. It was only delayed until our force was sufficient to authorize its accomplishment. General W.F. Smith's Division crossed the bridge on the night of September 24, and Forts Ethan Allen and Marcy were immediately begun and speedily finished.

Comprised in the foregoing categories there are twenty-three forts south of the Potomac, fourteen and three batteries between the Potomac and Anacostia and eleven forts beyond the Anacostia, making forty-eight forts in all. These works varied in size, from Forts Runyon, Lyon and Marcy, of which the perimeters were 1,500, 939, and 736 yards, to Forts Bennett, Haggerty, and Saratoga, with perimeters of 146, 128, and 154 yards. The greater portion of them were enclosed works of earth, though many, as Forts Craig, Tillinghast, Scott, south of the Potomac, and Forts Saratoga and Gaines on the north were lunettes, with stockaded gorges. The armament was mainly made up of 24 and 32 pounders, on sea coast carriages, with a limited proportion of 24-pounder siege guns, rifled Parrott guns, and guns on field carriages of light caliber. Magazines were provided for 100 rounds of ammunition, and some few of the more important works (Fort Lyon, Worth and Ward) had a considerable extent of bomb-proof cover, in which about one-third of the garrisons might comfortably sleep and nearly all take temporary shelter.

Such were the defenses of Washington at the beginning of the year 1862. But public opinion was at this period undergoing another fluctuation. The fortifications, lightly regarded before the Manassas campaign, were after that disaster eagerly demanded and their progressive advancement toward defensibility watched with anxiety. When, under General McClellan's high organizing abilities, a large, perfectly-appointed, and tolerably well-disciplined army grew into existence, and when the brilliant success of Dupont at Port Royal, and of Thomas and Grant in the West, had encouraged the belief that a "sharp and decisive" campaign would terminate the war, they once more fell into disrepute. The act of Congress appropriating money for completing the

defenses of Washington¹, provided that no part of the sum should be applied to any work "hereafter to be commenced." From the description which has been given, it will be easily recognized that, whatever assistance the works then existing might be able to afford to an army defending Washington, they were far from constituting, especially on the north of the Potomac, a thoroughly-fortified line. Nor could they, so loose were their connections, effectually repel raids. Detached earthworks, with wide intervals and no connecting lines or obstacles, could only constitute "points d' appui" for an army giving battle to an invader--not a fortified place which a garrison could defend against greatly superior force. Such as they were however, there can be no doubt of their important influence in protecting Washington, and in saving us from further calamities, after the failure of General McClellan's Campaign against Richmond, and the retreat of General Pope upon Washington.

The peril in which the Capital was placed in the months of August and September, 1862, by the events just alluded to, revealed the inadequacy of existing defenses and demonstrated the necessity of further development. The writer, who at this period had been assigned to the command of the place, and with it had resumed the engineering charge, was, under such circumstances, far more vividly impressed with the deficiencies and defects of the existing defenses than he could be when a few months earlier he had relinquished the charge of a work which had been regarded by Congress as already carried further than necessary. Notwithstanding the recent legislation, the most energetic means were taken to increase the strength of the line, whether by the construction of new works or by the enlargement and improvement of old ones. Many of the latter, occupying sites of which the commanding character had prompted an early and hastily-executed occupation, were entirely too small. Such were Fort Stevens, Fort Slocum, Fort Ward. At other localities the proper occupation of the site required more or less extensive auxiliary constructions. Such were the sites of Forts Lyon, Sumner, Reno, Lincoln, Meigs, and others. Numerous gaps existed requiring the interpolation of new works. Ravines or depressions of surface, unseen from the works, intersected the line at various points or lay along its front, to control which numerous auxiliary batteries were necessary. Finally it was evident that, even with all such improvements, the defenses would yet remain only a system of "point d' appui" to a line of battle, unless they were connected by works which would cover the troops occupying the intermediate ground and offer some obstacle to the passage of the enemy. Besides the foregoing demands for new construction or further development, there was a necessity for repairing and even rebuilding much of the interior structure of the original works, and for providing nearly all of them with so much bomb-proof shelter as would protect their garrisons against a concentrated fire of artillery. Finally, a great change in the character and arrangement of the armament was urgently needed. The demand for field-guns for our armies had stripped our arsenals of them and compelled the substitution in these forts of large numbers of 24 and 32-pounders on barbette carriages. Such guns made a very improper armament. Not only were they too heavy and unmanageable, but so exposed that at close quarters they would be nearly unserviceable. To replace most of these as rapidly as possible by light guns on field carriages placed in embrasure, was deemed imperative, in doing which another expedient to enhance the efficiency of the artillery fire suggested itself. Along the extended belt of country on which the line was located were numerous points, either in the works themselves or within the lines, which overlooked the external approaches, and from which a flanking fire from heavy rifled guns to an extent of three or four miles could be obtained. Battery Cameron, near Georgetown, had already been built to answer such a purpose in relation to the Arlington lines. It was now proposed to mount rifled 100-pounders at intervals of two or threemiles for the same object. An enemy attacking or approaching any part of the lines would not only have to contend with the artillery before him (which he might indeed, hope to silence),

1 - Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for completing the defenses of Washington: Provided, that all arrearages of debts incurred for the objects of this act shall be first paid out of this sum: And provided further, that no part of the sum hereby appropriated shall be expended in any work hereafter to be commenced.

but would be taken in flank by a distant fire of heavy projectiles, with which his own artillery could not contend.

Another object, quite independent of the original purposes of the defenses, suggested itself at this period as important, namely, the better defense of the river against naval approach, by the construction of water batteries.

The above-projected developments would, if carried out, involve an amount of labor and expenditure far exceeding what had originally been bestowed upon the works and they would necessarily require considerable time. With the sanction of the Sect of War, the late E.M. Stanton, who gave the most cordial and unqualified support to the efforts of the engineers, everything that it was practicable to undertake was begun at once, the Secretary assuming the responsibility of applying thereto moneys available for general purposes of the kind. It was obvious, however, that the expenditure would continue indefinitely and ultimately amount to a very large sum. In face of the recent formal prohibition of Congress to begin new works, it seemed desirable, in order to justify the Secretary in applying means at his command, or in calling upon Congress for further appropriations, that some other sanction than the irresponsible will of the chief engineer of the defenses should be obtained, not only for the course taken, but also for the judiciousness of the plans proposed for its execution. A commission consisting of Brevet Brigadier General J.G. Totten, Chief Engineer, United States Army; Brigadier General M.C. Meigs, Quartermaster General, United States Army, formerly of the United States Engineers; Brigadier General W.F. Barry, chief of artillery; Brigadier General J.G. Barnard, Chief Engineer Defenses of Washington; Brigadier General G.W. Cullum, United States Engineers, chief of staff to the General-in-Chief, was appointed by the Secretary of War, October 25, 1862, "to examine and report upon a plan of the present forts and sufficiency of the present system of defenses for the city." The commission devoted two months to the study and personal examination of the system. As no more authoritative exposition can be given, I shall quote from their report at some length:

"The system of works constituting what are called the defenses of Washington maybe divided into four groups:

FIRST. Those south of the Potomac, commencing with Fort Lyon below Alexandria, and terminating with Fort DeKalb opposite Georgetown.

SECOND. Those of the Chain Bridge.

THIRD. Those north of the Potomac, between that river and the Anacostia, commencing with Fort Sumner and terminating with Fort Lincoln.

FOURTH. Those south of the Eastern Branch, commencing with Fort Mahan, and terminating with Fort Greble, nearly opposite Alexandria.

The perimeter thus occupied, not counting the interval from Fort Greble to Fort Lyon, is about 33 miles, or including that, 37 miles.

In the first group are 23 field forts. In the second group two forts (Ethan Allen and Marcy) and three batteries for field guns. In the third are 18 forts, 4 batteries, permanently armed with heavy guns, besides about 14 batteries for field guns, some of which are of heavy profile, with stockaded gorges and magazines. In the fourth group are eleven forts, besides the armed battery connected with Fort Carroll. There are therefore in the whole system as it now exists (December, 1862), 53 forts and 22 batteries.

The total armament actually mounted in the different works, at the date of this report, is 643 guns and 75 mortars.

The total infantry garrisons required for their defense, computed at 2 men per yard of front perimeter, and 1 man per yard of rear perimeter, is about 25,000.

The total number of artillerymen required (to furnish three reliefs for each gun) is about 9,000. It is seldom necessary to keep the infantry supports attached to the works.

The artillerymen, whose training requires much time having learned the disposition of the armament, and computed the distances of the ground over which attacks may be looked for, and the ranges and service of their guns, should not be changed; they should remain permanently in the forts.

The 25,000 infantry should be encamped in such positions as may be most convenient to enable them, in case of alarm, to garrison the several works;

and a force of 3,000 cavalry should be available for outpost duty, to give notice of the approach of an enemy.

Whenever, an enemy is within striking distance of the Capital, able by a rapid march to attempt a coup-de-main, which might result in the temporary occupation of the city, the dispersion of the Government, and the destruction of the archives, all of which could be accomplished by a single day's possession, a covering army of not less than 25,000 men should be held in position ready to march to meet the attacking column.

Against more serious attacks from the main body of the enemy, the Capital must depend upon the concentration of its entire armies in Virginia or Maryland. They should precede or follow any movement of the enemy seriously threatening the Capital."

The various operations recommended by the commission, sanctioned by the Secretary of War, were prosecuted with great vigor during the early part of the year 1863. The new works recommended were entirely completed during that year, and ready indeed to render efficient service by the time the season of active field operations commenced. That on the spur behind Forts Cass and Woodbury--Fort Whipple--and that at the Red House, Fort C.F. Smith, became the most perfect and beautiful specimens of what may be called "semi-permanent" field works. So also was Fort Foote, designed as a water battery in conjunction with Battery Rodgers.

The operations of 1864 (during the latter half of the year) under charge of Lt. Colonel B.S. Alexander, whose aid during their whole progress had been of great value to the chief engineer, were confined mainly to the repairing, strengthening, and perfecting existing works. An exception to the above statement is to be found in the beginning of a large fort, styled Fort McPherson (but never completed), behind Fort Craig, to fill the gap in the second line, between Forts Whipple and Albany, and of three small works over the Anacostia, between Forts Mahan and Meigs.

Thus, from a few isolated works covering bridges or commanding a few especially important points, was developed a connected system of fortification by which every prominent point, at intervals of 800 to 1,000 yards, was occupied by an inclosed field-fort, every important approach or depression of ground, unseen from the forts, swept by a battery for field-guns and the whole connected by rifle-trenches which were in fact lines of infantry parapet, furnishing emplacement for two ranks of men and affording covered communication along the line, while roads were opened wherever necessary, so that troops and artillery could be moved rapidly from one point of the immense periphery to another, or under cover, from point to point along the line.

The woods which prevailed along many parts of the line were cleared for a mile or two in front of the works the counterscarps of which were surrounded by abattis. Bomb-proofs were provided in nearly all of the forts; all guns not solely intended for distant fire, placed in embrasure and well traversed; secure and well-ventilated magazines ample to contain 100 rounds per gun, constructed; the original crude structures, built after design given in text-books for "field fortifications," replaced by others, on plans experience developed, or which the increased powers of modern artillery made necessary. All commanding points on which an enemy would be likely to concentrate artillery to overpower that of one or more of our forts or batteries were subjected not only to the fires, direct and cross, of many points along the line, but also from heavy rifled guns from distant points unattainable by the enemy's field guns. With all these developments the lines certainly approximated to the maximum degree of strength which can be attained from unrevetted earth-works. When in July, 1864, Early appeared before Washington, all the artillery regiments which had constituted the garrisons of the works and who were experienced in the use of the artillery, had been withdrawn and their places mainly filled by a few regiments of "one hundred days men", just mustered into the service. The advantage, under these circumstances, of established lines of infantry parapet, and prepared emplacements for field guns, can hardly be overestimated. Bodies of hastily organized men, such as teamsters, quartermasters' men, citizen volunteers, etc., sent out to the lines, could hardly go amiss. Under other circumstances it would have been almost impossible speedily to have got them into any proper position and to have them kept in it. With equal facility the movable batteries of field guns found, without a moments' delay, their appropriate places where, covered by the enemy's fire, they occupied the very best positions which the topography afforded.

At the termination of the war in April, 1865, the "defenses of Washington" consisted of 68 enclosed forts and batteries having an aggregate perimeter of 22,800 yards (13 miles) and emplacements for 1,120 guns, 807 of which and 98 mortars were actually mounted; of 93 unarmed batteries for field guns having 401 emplacements; and of 35,711 yards (20 miles) of rifle trenches, and 3 block houses. Thirty-two miles of military roads, besides the existing roads of the District and the avenues of Washington, served as the means of communication from the interior to the defensive lines, and from point to point thereof. The entire circuit, including the distance across the Potomac from Fort Greble to Fort Lyon (four miles), was thirty-seven miles.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above selection was taken from WASHINGTON DURING WAR TIME, A series of papers showing the Military, Political, and Social Phases During 1861 to 1865. Official Souvenir of the 36th Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. Collected and Edited by Marcus Benjamin. The National Tribune Company, Washington, D.C.

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FORT STEVENS, WHERE LINCOLN WAS UNDER FIRE
by
William Van Zandt Cox

Three times during the Civil War Washington was in grave peril and three times it was saved to the Union. The first was at the beginning of hostilities when the militia of the District of Columbia came to the rescue of the small body of marines and artillery, before the arrival in the Capital of the troops from Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, and other Northern States. The second was immediately after the battle of Bull Run, when it could have been captured by the Confederates had they not been more demoralized by victory than the Federals by defeat. The third was in July, 1864, when General Early made his campaign against Washington.

The important battle at Monocacy, Maryland, on July 9, 1864, was the first day's fight to save the Nation's Capital, and General Early's army was victorious. So unexpected and so rapid were the Confederate general's movements that he was in sight of the dome of the Capitol before his cleverly conceived plans were fully realized. When the roar of Early's guns was heard and the telegraph announced that he had defeated Lew Wallace at Monocacy Bridge, the heart of the North quivered with emotion as it contemplated the defenselessness of Washington, stripped of men and guns for the campaign against Richmond.

This daring campaign against Washington and its skillful execution caused a rude awakening in the North, impatiently waiting for Grant to take Richmond. Both Washington and Baltimore were in a state of panic, while gold went up to the highest point. The capture of Washington meant diplomatic complications of a most serious nature, with foreign powers awaiting only for a plausible pretext for dismemberment. Never was a prize more tempting to the Confederates. Never was there a time when more was at stake for the Union.

"Wallace defeated at Monocacy after a stubborn fight," were the words contained in the message received at the War Department, but that stubborn fight was as valuable as a victory for the Union, for a day's time had been gained, so necessary for the safety of the Capital.

During those exciting days there was one calm man, and he was none other than President Lincoln. He was then living at the Soldier's Home, a mile and a quarter from Fort Stevens, and in addition to his herculean duties he daily visited the camps, forts, and hospitals. He seemed devoid of fear and his chief concern was at that time the capture of Early's army. His telegram to Governor Swann of Maryland is characteristic: "Let us be vigilant but keep cool."

General C.C. Augur was in command of the Department of Washington. General Alexander McD. McCook had charge of the northern line of troops and fortifications. The latter was ordered to establish a camp on Piney Branch creek, but the news from the front was so disquieting that he proceeded to Fort Stevens, five miles north of Pennsylvania Avenue on the Seventh Street pike, and took command of a line he had never before seen. Every man was utilized for defense. The hospitals were drawn on for convalescents, the Quartermaster's Department for employes, the National Guard of Ohio, the District of Columbia militia, the Veteran Reserves, and the few unassigned regular

detachments and unmounted cavalry, sailors, firemen, and citizens were in the trenches and on the picket line.

When General Grant realized the gravity of the situation, and that Hunter could render no assistance, he first thought of returning from Petersburg to Washington to take command in person. On reflection, however, he decided to send the Sixth Corps, commanded by General Horatio G. Wright.

The Twenty-fifth New York Cavalry which left City Point, Virginia, on July 7, seems to have been the first regiment to reach Washington from the James and went into camp about midnight of July 10, near Fort Stevens. On the same day the First and Second Divisions of the Sixth Corps left City Point for Washington. A few hours later General W.H. Emory, with a part of the Nineteenth Corps, just returned from New Orleans to join Grant, left Fortress Monroe for Washington without disembarking from their ocean transports.

What a picture!....Early with his fighting legions advancing on the Capital from the North, while fleets bearing the veterans of the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps were on their way from the James River and the Gulf of Mexico to save the Capital they loved so well. North and South looked on with bated breath and wondered which, in this race of armies, would reach Washington first.

On the morning of July 11, General Early left his camp near Rockville, McCausland taking the Georgetown pike; the infantry preceded and flanked by cavalry taking the Seventh Street pike. Major Frye, of Lowell's cavalry, met the enemy's cavalry skirmishers a short distance beyond the picket line near the old Stone Tavern before noon and forced them back by and on their own reserves. He, in turn, was driven back by the enemy, who fired a few shots from a battery of light artillery.

About 11 o'clock, the signal officer, at Fort Reno, observed clouds of dust and army wagons moving up the Seventh Street pike. About the same time a message from Captain Berry, Eighth Illinois Cavalry, said that the enemy with artillery, cavalry, and infantry was moving in the direction of Silver Spring. General McCook ordered the picket line to contest the ground and to retire slowly on approach of the enemy until within range of the guns of Forts Stevens, Slocum, and DeRussy.

Shortly after noon, riding in advance with Rodes, whose division, consisting of Given's and Cox's North Carolinians, Crook's Georgians, and Battle's Alabamians, in the van, General Early came, as he says, in full view of Fort Stevens, and found it feebly manned, as had been reported to him. Smith, of Imboden's Cavalry, according to Early drove a small body of Union cavalry before him into the works.

No time could be lost, and he ordered the tired and dusty veterans to move forward; but before his order could be executed, to his everlasting regret, he saw trained and disciplined troops move out of the works, deploy, and form a skirmish line. Undismayed and undaunted, the tireless Early and his brave men continued to advance, but with greater caution than before. It was too late! The hopes and ambitions of only an hour ago could never be realized. Washington was saved to the Union! The Sixth Corps had arrived! Never was there a more opportune movement, never was there a more welcome arrival. Down the historic James, up the historic Potomac, came the Sixth Corps. Mr Lincoln met them at the Seventh Street Wharf and well they cheered him! With what alacrity both officers and men marched to reinforce the brave defenders on the firing line! Dr. George Stevens, the historian of the Sixth Army Corps says:

"We marched up Seventh Street, meeting on our way many old friends, and hearing people who crowded on the sidewalks, exclaiming, 'It is the old Sixth Corps'---'These men are the men who took Mayre's Heights'---'The danger is over now.' Washington, an hour before, was in a panic; but as the people saw the veterans wearing the badge of the Greek cross marching through their streets, the excitement subsided and confidence prevailed.

Thus we made our way to the north of the city, the sound of cannonading in our front stimulating and hastening the steps of the men.

Families with a few of their choicest articles of household furniture loaded into wagons, were hastening to the city, reporting that their houses were burned, or that they had made their escape, leaving the greater part of their goods to the mercy of the Rebels. General Frank Wheaton in his report says:

'While on the march to Fort Stevens, was passed by General Wright, and received his verbal instructions to mass near Crystal Spring in the neighbor-

hood of Fort Stevens, where we arrived at 4 o'clock in the afternoon (At 4 PM, General Wright wired General Augur from Fort Stevens: The head of my column has nearly reached the front.)

At 5 P.M., the force outside of Fort Stevens, consisting of portions of the Veteran Reserve Corps, War Department clerks, and citizen volunteers, was driven in toward the fort by a portion of the enemy's forces under Early. At the same time I was ordered to move 500 men of my brigade out to recover the line held in the afternoon. This was successfully accomplished before 7 o'clock by the Ninety-eighth Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers, Col. J. F. Bailler; the One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers, Major Thomas McLaughlin; and the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers, Captain James McGregor, which deployed as skirmishers and drove the enemy's advance back to their main lines. The position was strengthened at dark by the Ninety-third Pennsylvania Volunteer Veterans, Lieutenant Colonel J.S. Long, and the Sixty-second New York Veteran Volunteers, Lieutenant Colonel T.B. Hamilton, and extended from a point opposite the center of the line between Forts Stevens and Reno to the west and a point opposite Fort Slocum on the east, a distance of about two miles. Skirmishing continued through the night.

In vain all the afternoon of July 11 Early tried to find a weak spot in the lines, but he was met everywhere by the fire of fort guns and musketry. The works he reported exceedingly strong, consisting of what appeared to be inclosed forts for heavy artillery, with a tier of lower works in front of each, pierced for an immense number of guns, wholly connected by curtains, with ditches in front and strengthened by palisades and abattis. The timber had been felled within cannon range all around and left on the ground, making a formidable obstacle, and every possible approach was raked by artillery. On the right was Rock Creek, running through a deep ravine, which had been rendered impassable by the felling of timber on each side, and beyond were the works on the Georgetown pike, which had been reported to be the strongest of all. On the left as far as the eye could reach the works appeared to be of the same impregnable character.

Early then held a consultation with his generals, Breckenridge, Rodes, Ramseur, and Gordon, pointing out the necessity of action before the fords and mountain passes were closed against them, and in concluding, he announced his purpose of making an assault at daylight. When on examining the works on the morning of July 12, General Early saw the parapets lined with troops, (It is said that General Meigs instructed his quartermaster's soldiers to make themselves as conspicuous as possible on the parapets) he says that he then determined to abandon the idea of capturing Washington.

A distinguished writer who was at Brightwood during the battle says:

"July 12 came bright and glorious. The First Brigade of our Second Division and our sharpshooters were on the picket in front of Fort Stevens, from the parapet of which could be seen the lines of Rebel skirmishers, from whose rifles the white puffs of smoke rose as they discharged their pieces at our pickets. The valley beyond presented a scene of surpassing loveliness, with the rich green meadows, its fields of waving corn, its orchards and its groves.

The principal force of the enemy seemed to be in front of Fort Stevens; there it was determined to give them battle.

About 5 o'clock in the afternoon General Wright ordered General Wheaton to drive back the Confederate skirmish line and occupy the wooded points near the road, which, being so near our intrenchments, gave the enemy advantage of position; thereupon, Colonel Bidwell was instructed to have the Third Brigade move outside of the fort and form, under cover of a ravine and woods (south-east of Battle Ground Cemetery) in two lines directly in the rear of the First Brigade, on the skirmish line. Colonel Bidwell was also directed to select three of his best regiments to assist in the assault, the remaining portion of the brigade to be held to support the general movement.

According to General Wheaton: The Seventh Maine, the Forty-third New York, and Forty-ninth New York were skillfully placed in position near the skirmish line under the direction of Colonel Bidwell without the enemy discovering the movement.

A preconcerted signal was made by a staff officer, from Fort Stevens, when these regiments were in position, at which time the batteries from Fort Stevens and Slocum

opened fire upon certain points, strongly held by the enemy. The assaulting regiments then dashed forward, surprising and hotly engaging the enemy, who was found to be much stronger than supposed. It became necessary to deploy immediately the three remaining regiments-- the 77th New York, the 22 New York, and the 61st Pennsylvania Volunteers--Bidwell's Brigade, on the right of those he had already in the action, and the picket reserve of 150 men from the 102nd Pennsylvania Volunteers, and a detachment of 80 men from the Vermont Brigade to support the skirmish line immediately on the right and left of the pike. The enemy's stubborn resistance showed that a farther advance than already made would require more troops, and two regiments were sent for. Before their arrival, however, (the 37th Massachusetts Volunteers and 2nd Rhode Island), an aide-de-camp from General Wright directed me not to attempt more than holding the position gained, as the object of the attack had been accomplished and the important points captured and held.

This whole attack was as gallant as it was successful, and the troops never evinced more energy or determination. The losses were very severe, the brave Colonel Bidwell losing many of his most valuable regimental commanders. The last shot was fired about 10 o'clock and the remainder of the night was occupied in strengthening the position, burying the dead, caring for the wounded, and relieving the skirmish line which had been two days in front constantly under fire--by troops of the 2nd Vermont Brigade. Dr. Stevens describes the attack in these words:

'The heavy ordnance in the fort sent volley after volley of thirty-two pound shells howling over the heads of our men into the midst of the Rebels, and through the (Carberry) house where so many of them had found shelter, and then at the command of 'Sedgwick's Man of Iron,' the brave fellows started eagerly forward. They reached and passed the skirmishers, and the white puffs of smoke and the sharp cracks of their rifles became more and more frequent; first the rattle of an active skirmish and then the continuous roar of a musketry battle.

In magnificent order and with light steps they ran forward up the ascent, through the orchard, through the little grove on the right, over the fence rail, up to the road making straight for the objective point, the frame house (Carberry) in front. The Rebels at first stood their ground, then gave way before the impetuous charge, and though forced to seek safety in flight, turned and poured their volleys into the ranks of the pursuers. Lieutenant-Colonel Johnson, commanding the 49th New York, a brave man, who had never shrunk from danger, and who had shared all the various fortunes of the Brigade since its organization, fell mortally wounded. Colonel Vischer of the 43rd New York, who had but lately succeeded the beloved Wilson, was killed. Major James P. Jones, commanding the 7th Maine, was also among the slain; and Major Crosby, commanding the 61st Pennsylvania, who had just recovered from a bad wound which he had received in the Wilderness, was taken to the hospital, where the surgeon removed his left arm from the shoulder. Colonel W.B. French, of the 77th New York, was injured. The commanding officer of every regiment in the Brigade was either killed or wounded.

The fight had lasted but a few minutes, when the stream of bleeding, mangled ones began to come to the rear. Men leaning upon the shoulders of comrades, or borne painfully on stretchers, the pallor of their countenances rendered more ghastly by the thick dust which settled upon them, were brought into the hospitals by scores, where the medical officers, ever active in administering relief to their companions, were hard at work binding up wounds, administering stimulants, coffee, and food, or resorting to the hard necessity of amputation.

At the summit of the ascent, the Confederates were strengthened by their second line of battle, and here they made a stout resistance; but even this position they were forced to abandon in haste; and as darkness closed in upon the scene our men were left as victors in possession of the ground, lately occupied by the Rebels, having driven their adversaries more than a mile.

The Vermont Brigade now came to the relief of the boys who had so gallantly won the field, and the Third Brigade returned at midnight to the bivouac it had left in the morning. But not all returned. Many of those brave men who went with such alacrity into the battle had fallen to rise no more, in the orchard, in the road, about the frame house, and upon the summit where the Rebels had made so determined a resistance, their forms were stretched upon the green sward and upon the dusty road, stiff and cold. Many more had come to the hospital severely injured, maimed for life, or mortally wounded.

The little brigade, numbering only a thousand men when it went into action, had lost two hundred and fifty of its number. We gathered our dead comrades from the field where they had fallen and gave them the rude burial of the soldier on the common near Fort Stevens. No officer of state, no lady of wealth, no citizen of Washington was there, but we laid them in their graves within sight of the Capitol, without coffins, with only their gory garments and their blankets around them. With the rude tenderness of soldiers, we covered them in the earth, and marked their names with our pencils on the little headboards of pine, and turned sadly away to other scenes.

On an eminence near the Confederate advance was John C. Breckinridge, the candidate receiving the votes of the seceding States for President, expecting to enter the Capital with the Army of Northern Virginia.

On the parapet of Fort Stevens, by the side of General Wright, amid the whizzing bullets, stood the successful candidate in that great political struggle, Abraham Lincoln, watching with the 'grave and pensive countenance,' the progress of the battle.

A few years ago, in company with the old commander of the Sixth Corps, I stood upon that same parapet. After contemplating the surroundings General Wright said:

'Here on the top of this parapet between this old embrasure and that, is the place where President Lincoln stood witnessing the fight; there, by his side, a surgeon was wounded by a minie ball.'

I entreated the President not to expose his life to the bullets of the enemy; but he seemed oblivious to his surroundings; finally, when I found that my entreaties failed to make any impression on him, I said, 'Mr. President, I know you are commander of the armies of the United States, but I am in command here, and as you are not safe where you are standing, I order you to come down.' Mr. Lincoln looked at me and smiled, and then, more in consideration of my earnestness than from inclination, stepped down and took position behind the parapet. Even then he would persist in standing up and exposing his tall form.'

That old parapet, identified by General Horatio G. Wright, stands today, and for history's sake should be preserved in memory of Lincoln as a tribute to the bravery of the American soldier--a united North and South.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above selection was taken from WASHINGTON DURING WAR TIME, A series of papers showing the Military, Political, and Social Phases During 1861 to 1865. Official Souvenir of the 36th Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. Collected and Edited by Marcus Benjamin. The National Tribune Company, Washington, D.C.

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THE PART TAKEN BY THE NAVAL FORCES IN THE DEFENSE OF WASHINGTON DURING THE CIVIL WAR

by

Richard Wainwright, Commander U.S. Navy
and Superintendent Naval Academy

The first order issued to the Naval Forces for the protection of Washington was dated January 5, 1861, signed by Isaac Toucey, Secretary of the Navy, and addressed to Colonel John Harris, Commandant, Marine Corps, directing that a force of Marines be sent to Fort Washington, down the Potomac, for the protection of public property. Forty men, commanded by Captain A.S. Taylor, U.S. Marine Corps, were sent in obedience to this order.

Under pressure from Commander J.A. Dahlgren, Commodore Franklin Buchanan, Commandant of the Washington Yard, on February 1, issued an order for the defense of the yard and prescribing the necessary organization and points for assembling. On April 22, Commodore Buchanan resigned and soon after joining the Confederate Navy. Commander Dahlgren now became commandant and all available means for defense were put in shape. On April 19, the PAWNEE, Commander Rowan arrived off the Washington Arsenal and on the following day the packet ANACOSTIA was armed and sent, under the command of Lieutenant Fillebrown, down the Potomac to Kettle Bottom Shoals, to prevent obstructions being placed in the river. The MOUNT VERNON having been seized by the army

at Alexandria, was armed for service. The Steamer POCAHONTAS, Commander J. P. Gillis, arrived from New York and was ordered to cruise down the river as far as the "White House." A number of other small river steamers and tugs were armed at this time. They were employed in patrolling the river, in preserving and placing the aids of navigation, and overhauling all boats on the river for arms, etc. Among these armed boats were the POWHATAN, Lieutenant Sproston commanding; the PHILADELPHIA, Lieutenant G.N. Morris and afterwards Lieutenant W.N. Jeffers, commanding; the Robert Leslie, Lieutenant J.H. Russell, commanding; and the BALTIMORE, Lieutenant W.C. West, commanding.

Early in May Commander J.H. Ward was assigned to the charge of the Potomac flotilla. He had suggested the idea to the Secretary of the Navy and brought several light draft boats from New York to form a part of the flotilla. The first Confederate battery on the Potomac was discovered at Aquia Creek on May 14 by Lieutenant Sproston, and was afterwards reported by several of the patrolling boats.

On May 24, all the steamers, lighters, and boats at the Navy Yard were used to convey the New York Regiment of Zouaves (Ellsworth's Fire Zouaves) from Giesboro Point to Alexandria. It was immediately after this landing that Colonel Ellsworth was murdered.

On May 31, Commander Ward with the THOMAS FREEBORN, the ANACOSTIA, and the RESOLUTE, of the Potomac Flotilla, attacked the batteries at Aquia Creek. On the following day, the bombardment ended without injury to either side. The shore batteries were silenced only to break out again, on the cessation of firing from the vessels permitting the men to leave their protection.

On June 23, Commander Ward applied for the aid of about two hundred soldiers to assist him in the attack upon some Confederate troops at Mathias Point. These troops could not be spared, and on June 27 with the aid of boat's crew from the PAWNEE, commanded by Lieutenant Chaplin, he landed the men from the FREEBORN and attacked the Confederate troops at Mathias Point, with the aid of the guns of the FREEBORN. The landing party was repulsed, and Captain Ward was killed while sighting the bow gun of his own vessel. Commander T.T. Craven was then ordered to command the Potomac Flotilla.

In the latter part of July, Lieutenant Parker, with one hundred and ten seamen and forty marines, was sent to Fort Ellsworth beyond Alexandria. They laid the platforms and mounted a naval battery of three 9-inch guns and five howitzers. This was a joint occupancy with the Army, Fort Ellsworth being at the time the fort nearest the Confederate lines, Fort Munson being their opposing fort. Lieutenant Parker was afterwards relieved, and Commander R. Wainwright was sent in command of a detachment of three hundred seamen and four officers to man this Fort. Afterwards a guard of thirty marines was added to the force, and manned a small water battery erected near the Fort. The entire force was withdrawn in November.

Commander Charles Wilkes was ordered to command the Potomac Flotilla in August, 1862. He was succeeded in September of the same year by Commodore Andrew A. Harwood, who was relieved in December, 1863, by Commander Foxhall A. Parker. After November, 1861, the work of the Navy in the defense of Washington was confined to patrolling the Potomac River. On several occasions, on the request of the General in command of the Army of the Potomac, the Commander of the flotilla was specially cautioned to prevent the passage of the Potomac River by the Confederate Army. They gradually obtained possession of the boats on the river. At times they were attacked by the Confederates from commanding positions on shore, but there were no other engagements on the river of sufficient importance to be noted.

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