



The XII Corps, the smallest in the Army of the Potomac, was distinguished as “*the corps that never lost a color or a gun.*” Officially organized on September 12, 1862, the XII’s first commander was 59-year-old Brigadier General Joseph Mansfield, who fell mortally wounded at Antietam merely five days later. Detroitier Alpheus S. Williams replaced Mansfield on the battlefield, but Henry Slocum, a West Pointer, took command of the corps a month later with Williams moving back to lead one of the XII’s divisions. Eventually John W. Geary became the head of its other division. The record of the XII Corps proved stellar throughout the remainder of the war. At Chancellorsville its steadfast defense blunted Confederate attacks sufficiently to prevent defeat from becoming a disaster as it lost 2755 men from its six brigades. Even greater service was performed at Gettysburg where it secured the Federal right and held Culp’s Hill from the Rebel assaults. Transferred to the Western Theater, the XII Corps helped out at Chickamauga and later stormed Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. The following spring the XII was consolidated with the XI Corps to the reconstituted XX Corps.

Slocum, Williams, and Geary were all noteworthy leaders from varied backgrounds, but certain threads tied their careers together. A New Yorker, Henry Warner Slocum graduated from West Point in the class of 1852. Following a stint in the Seminole Wars, he resigned to practice law in Syracuse, New York. Later returning to military service, he was severely wounded in the right thigh at First Bull Run. Although amicable by nature, Slocum at one point refused to serve under Joseph Hooker. “*My opinion of General Hooker,*” wrote Slocum, “*both as an officer and a gentleman is too well known....It would be degrading of me to accept any position under him.....*” Following the war, Slocum practiced law in Brooklyn, served three terms in the House of Representatives, and was a member of the Gettysburg Monument Commission. He died in Brooklyn at age 66 on April 14, 1894, of pneumonia and cirrhosis of the liver.

Although born in Connecticut, Alpheus Starkey Williams gained his reputation as an attorney and politician in Detroit. After graduating from Yale, Williams studied law and traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe. After opening a law office in Detroit, he served as a probate judge, a newspaper owner, and a postmaster. In between he led a Michigan regiment as a lieutenant colonel in the Mexican War. Although accumulating a fine record in the Civil War, he, too, could have difficulty with commanding officers and West Pointers. Of John Pope, he wrote: “*Suffice it to say that more insolence, superciliousness, ignorance, and pretentiousness were never combined in one man....I had a great disgust for him for his pomposity and swagger, though I was glad that we had one head to the army—even a cabbage head!*” After unsuccessfully seeking the office of governor, Williams was elected to Congress in 1874. He died in a Washington D.C. hotel at age 68 on December 21, 1878, of nausea and vomiting from the food he ate that day.

A Pennsylvanian by birth, John White Geary tested a number of professions—school teacher, store clerk, civil engineering, surveying—before settling on law. Following service in the Mexican War, Geary helped organize the postal service in California, served as the first mayor of San Francisco, and became governor of the Kansas Territory. During the Civil War he displayed resoluteness at Chancellorsville, steadfastness at Gettysburg, extraordinary valor at Lookout Mountain, and administrative skills during the Atlanta Campaign. At Cedar Mountain he was slightly wounded in the left foot and then severely in the left elbow as a minie ball caused considerable bleeding. Surgeons later removed a battered projectile and some bone splinters. At Chancellorsville a cannonball hit him in the chest, knocking him unconscious. For weeks he couldn’t speak above a whisper. Elected Governor of Pennsylvania, Geary died at 53, only three weeks after leaving office, while preparing breakfast for his infant son on January 18, 1873. Rumors persisted that he was poisoned by the chemicals he used to maintain the black color of his beard.

On **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27** MRRT member **John Moore** will present “*Admirable Attorneys....Command and Leadership of the Union XII Corps.*” The talk will center on Slocum, Geary, and Williams—three attorneys who turned a mediocre group of soldiers into a fine fighting unit. John’s key themes will be that leadership matters and that the Union



did a better job of allowing solid officers to rise to the top than did the Confederacy. John’s talks are always unique and informative, so plan on hearing another exemplary presentation.

* * * * *

A special thank you is extended to September speaker, **John Gibney**, for his excellent program “*James Longstreet.*” Afterward John fielded numerous questions concerning the controversial “Old War Horse.” Always great to have John back with the Michigan Regimental.

FALL FIELD TRIP: Forty-four ventured on the trip to Spring Hill/Franklin/Nashville on Saturday/Sunday, October 13-14. The weather was beautiful for both days as our guide, Tom Cartwright, toured us around the beautiful Tennessee countryside. Hopefully, photographs will be shown at the meeting. Next year, it’s Gettysburg!

* * * * *

YEARLY DUES: Notice from Treasurer Carroll Tietz! If you haven’t paid your 2006 membership dues, you will find a red dot beside your address on this mailing and this will be your last newsletter. If you find that you are behind in your payments, you can pay your membership fee for 2006 and 2007 in one check as 2007’s are due the first of January (\$15 regular/\$10 for seniors and students). For your convenience a self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Please make out your checks to either Carroll or Jerry Maxwell. Only checks are acceptable.

QUIZ: All questions pertain to Union and Confederate Corps.....

1. Which Federal general ordered the use of Corps badges? And, in which Division/Corps did these badges first appear?
2. Who did commanding General Joseph Hooker assign to develop the shapes for badges on the corps level? And, what colors did this man assign to the five divisions of any Federal corps?
3. Following Stonewall Jackson’s wounding at Chancellorsville, six different officers led his famous II Corps including those who led it temporarily. Name them:
4. Besides the XII Corps, which two Federal corps attacked Confederate forces in the Miller Cornfield at Antietam? And, name their respective commanders:
5. Which Federal commander of the I Corps was killed by a sharpshooter on the first day’s fighting at Gettysburg? And, who immediately replaced him?
6. At Gettysburg, James Longstreet’s I Corps suffered heavily among its division/brigade leadership. Name the four brigade leaders who were killed or mortally wounded:
7. Which Federal corps of the Army of the Potomac had two of its best commanders cashiered during the war? And, name these two generals:
8. Which Union corps was routed in the Wilderness on May 6, 1864, and lost its commander three days later to a Confederate sharpshooter at Spotsylvania? And which of its officers won a brigadier’s star at the “Bloody Angle” for innovating a rushing assault by column rather than the standard linear attack?
9. Which Federal corps adopted the distinctive badge consisting of a diamond surrounding a cartridge box with the numeral 40 and the motto “40 Rounds”? And, who was the first commander of the Federal XVII Corps that was later killed in the Atlanta Campaign?
10. Match the badges with the proper Corps number: A) II Corps - B) III Corps - C) V Corps - D) VI Corps



Participants remember the Battle of Franklin.....

Confederate General Daniel C. Govan: *“General Cleburne had just returned from a consultation with General Hood and the other generals, all of whom were opposed to attacking the main pike entering the town.... We were directed to advance at the head of columns, and as soon as we came under fire, to fix bayonets, charge, and go over the breastworks and break the enemy’s line at all hazards. General Cleburne seemed to be more despondent than I ever saw him. I was the last one to receive any instructions from him, and as I saluted and bade him good-bye I remarked, ‘Well General, there will not be many of us that will get back to Arkansas,’ and he replied, ‘Well, if we are to die, let us die like men.’ ”*

Confederate Louis S. Flatau, Cowan’s Battery: *“Thousands lay upon that field, dead and dying. You could see squads of these veterans who had fought together, and slept together, kneeling down around the body of some dying comrade, and their grief was so great that they wept like women.”*

C. E. Merrill, Confederate adjutant general: *“Col. W. S. Nelson, of the Twelfth Louisiana lay dying, torn to pieces by a discharge of grape and canister at close range.... Both legs were crushed by a cannon ball and his bowels torn by iron grape. Poor fellow! Such agony for several hours few men ever endured. His eyes, through exhaustion caused by pain, sank deep back into his head. ‘Give me forty grains of morphine!’ he called out all through the night. ‘Give me forty grains of morphine and let me die! Oh, can’t I die? My poor wife and child! My poor wife and child!’ ”*

Moscow Carter, Carter House resident: *“On trying to clear up I scraped together a half bushel of brains right around the house, and the whole place was dyed with blood. Nothing in the shape of horse, mule, jack, nor jenny was left in the neighborhood.... It was not until Christmas, 25 days afterwards, that I was enabled to borrow a yoke of oxen, and I spent the whole of that Christmas day hauling seventeen dead horses from this yard.”*

Confederate Captain Foster, 24th Texas Cavalry: *“Gen. Hood has betrayed us. This is not the kind of fighting he promised us.... when we started into Tennessee. The wails and cries of widows and orphans made at Franklin.... will heat up the fires of the bottomless pit to burn the soul of Gen. J.B. Hood for murdering their husbands and fathers. It can’t be called anything else but cold blooded murder.”*

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Phil Kearny and the 3rd Division of the III Corps
2. Daniel Butterfield and 1st Division (red), 2nd Division (white), 3rd Division (blue), 4th Division (green), 5th Division (orange)
3. Richard Ewell, Jubal Early, John Brown Gordon, A.P. Hill, Jeb Stuart, Robert Rodes
4. I Corps and II Corps led by Joseph Hooker and Edwin Sumner
5. John F. Reynolds and Abner Doubleday
6. Brigadier Generals Paul Semmes, William Barksdale, Richard Garnett, and Lewis Armistead
7. V Corps and Fitz John Porter and Gouverneur K. Warren
8. VI Corps under John Sedgwick and Emory Upton
9. XV Corps and James McPherson
10. A) II Corps - B) III Corps - C) V Corps - D) VI Corps

Remember to mark your calendars—**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27**—for **John Moore’s** presentation of *“Admirable Attorneys.... Command and Leadership of the Union XII Corps.”* The meeting place, as usual, is the Farmington Public Library at Grand River and Farmington Road. Starting time is 6:30 P.M. Come join us for the last meeting of the year. Also try our website: <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/>.