

Clermont as Military Witness

Joseph W.A. Whitehorne, 24 June, 2011

Clermont, along with many other Upper Valley places, witnessed frequent passing military events. Starting with the French and Indian wars, small bodies of troops and larger logistical trains used the road that became Route 7 in the course of their deployments. The War of 1812 saw local militia marching eastward to Snickers' (Castleman's) Ferry and on to positions along the Chesapeake Bay from Norfolk to Baltimore. Proximity to Snickers Gap not only assured more of such traffic but further guaranteed military activity throughout the Civil War.¹

The Berryville region saw its first major Civil War action after the September 1862 Battle of Antietam. General Robert E. Lee's Confederate forces withdrew across the Potomac at Shepherdstown and camped in the northern Valley while the Federals under General George B. McClellan remained in the area of the battlefield near Sharpsburg, Maryland. General McClellan finally ordered a southward move on 26 October. He left a force in Harpers Ferry to cover the Potomac crossings in case Lee should advance from his Valley camps against the Federal rear. McClellan planned to move his main force east of the Blue Ridge in the direction of Warrenton to try to cut off Lee from Richmond. Until the Federals reached the Manassas Gap Railroad at Piedmont (Delaplane) and Salem (Marshall) their supplies would have to come from Harpers Ferry.²

McClellan ordered Federal cavalry under Brigadier General Alfred Pleasanton to screen the Blue Ridge gaps to prevent Confederate interference with this flow. It preceded the infantry and tried to push Confederate scouts westward through the gaps. Lee's cavalry commander, Major General J.E.B. Stuart, countered these efforts by advancing through Snickers Gap into the Piedmont. By late on 3 October the opposing cavalries began a series of clashes at Philomont that rippled southward over the next week to near Chester Gap. The Confederate infantry used Stuart's screen to withdraw southward out of the Valley ahead of the slower moving Federals. As they shifted, J.E.B. Stuart on 10 November reorganized his cavalry. He placed Brigadier General William Jones in command of a brigade that included the 6th Virginia Cavalry with the Clarke County Company (D). Jones and his men stayed in the Valley to observe the Federals along the Potomac and to protect the region from raids. Stuart took his remaining three brigades with him to support Lee's army.³

Jones assigned Captain Elijah V. White's newly formed 35th Virginia Cavalry Battalion to guard the Snickers Gap area. It repulsed several weak Federal probes throughout November, but was overwhelmed by a large push on 28 November directed by Union Brigadier General Julius Stahel with his 1st Div, XI Corps, Army of the Potomac. Seven Federal cavalry regiments backed by a brigade of infantry pushed aside a small picket guard at Castleman's Ferry, overran White's camp and pursued his men through Webbtown, across Audley and Clermont, and through Berryville. The 12th

Virginia Cavalry, another of Jones' regiments, finally checked the pursuit at the Opequon. The Federals skirmished back through Berryville on 29 November and fought a final action against all of Jones' force the next day at Snicker's Gap. Their probe confirmed the departure of Lee's main army southward, shifting the focus to Fredericksburg and the Rappahannock until the Spring of 1863.⁴

The 1863 Gettysburg Campaign brought large numbers of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia across the area in June as they moved northward. When defeated southern forces withdrew from Pennsylvania, J.E.B. Stuart based some cavalry at Clermont in July to screen Snickers Gap and to keep Federals probing from east of the Blue Ridge from interfering with the withdrawal.⁵

The intensified operations of the summer of 1864 briefly led to a large Confederate presence in Clarke County at the end of Jubal Early's July Raid on Washington. Major General Gabriel C. Wharton's Division based itself at Webbtown and sent foragers throughout the area. The Federal pursuit from Washington was stopped at the Battle of Cool Spring near Snickers Gap on 19 July. This gave enough time for Confederate soldiers to assist in the harvest and move that bounty and quantities of livestock beyond Federal reach.⁶

The increased Federal presence thereafter led to a concurrent growth of guerrilla activity. On 15 August, 1864 some of Lieutenant Colonel John S. Mosby's men executed Federal foragers south of Clermont at Colonel Benjamin Morgan's House (Hill and Dale). Later, in the last days of the war, 9 April 1865, Mosby prepared an attack on Berryville while based in McCormick's Woods. He tried to lure the 1st NY Veteran Cavalry into an ambush there, but the Federals did not rise to the bait and Mosby withdrew, his last combat action of the war.⁷

These military events are interesting in themselves, however, Clermont's greater military story lies in the contributions and experiences of its owners and their families. Each generation has been called upon to serve and in so doing witnessed many of the events that defined and explained the path of American history. The first owner, John Vance, had sons and grandsons who served in the French and Indian War and the Revolution. However, later owners and their families, Snickers and M^cCormicks, would be even more prominently involved in significant events.

Edward Snickers was a friend of George Washington. The future president had made the original surveys of the Clermont land and was a frequent visitor to Snickers' lands on his western trips. The two men first came into professional military contact during the French and Indian War when Snickers was a civilian supply contractor and Washington commanded Virginia frontier defenses from his headquarters in Winchester. Snickers successfully procured transportation to supply troops at Wills

Creek and impressed Washington with his knowledgeable abilities. Incidentally, one of Snickers' contract teamsters was Daniel Morgan who became even more closely associated with the other two men during the Revolution.⁸

Edward Snickers resumed the role of civilian paymaster and commissary with the outbreak of the Revolution. In 1775 Virginia still claimed land up to the forks of the Ohio in what is now southwestern Pennsylvania. Accordingly, the state Council of Safety on 11 September ordered Captain John Neville of Winchester to take a company of militia to Pittsburg to garrison the abandoned fort there and incidentally support Virginia's claim. The Council named Snickers the contractor responsible for supplying Neville's men. For the next two years Snickers entered into a series of contracts for supplies, pay and transport to the Pittsburg garrison. He also undertook to pay pensions to the dependents of those of Morgan's riflemen held as prisoners of war in Quebec. Later he procured firearms, ammunition and clothing for Morgan's reconstituted force after the men were exchanged. While so engaged, George Washington in January 1777, offered him the newly created position of Wagon Master General, i.e., chief of transport, which Snickers wisely declined on account of age. This period of busy activity came to a halt with the intervention of the Continental Congress on supply matters and its 12 June 1777 appointment of Colonel William Aylett as deputy commissary general for all forces in Virginia and South.⁹

Supply in the preceding two years of the war was characterized by the absence of centralized military control and no long range planning. Congress tried to do too much itself and reacted to individual crises without considering the overall effects of its actions. It failed to supervise supply operations in part because it was already much too busy. Civilians like Snickers were hired to handle requirements as they arose and state authorities were the primary supply agents. Quartermasters and commissaries procured supplies and services on a commission basis, usually 2 ½ to 5 % above cost. There were few pressures to control prices, hence price inflation grew. This led to largely unfounded Congressional suspicions over corruption and Congress decided to impose controls and price ceilings that often proved unrealistic. By this time Snickers was engaged in completing eleven major contracts premised on the old percentage system. Congress enacted laws in June and July 1777 to supervise newly created, salaried staffs, to include Aylett, and emphasized specialization and accountability. The new laws established systematic procedures, forms and methods of operation. They abandoned the percentage commission system in favor of low-bid fixed costs contracts. Many incumbent agents, including Snickers, felt the new policies were unreasonable and accountability was too tight. When Snickers pressed to complete his outstanding contracts under the old system, Aylett refused his request and on 6 November 1777 he prompted an investigation of Snickers' accounts, implying fraud. Snickers, like the majority of his fellow contractors, resigned in the face of this zeal and the case faded away. He returned to active civil life in old Frederick County, serving on the local vestry and continuing as land agent for George Washington. His accounts ultimately were settled satisfactorily.¹⁰

While his father was dealing with the new nation's bureaucracy, William Snickers, born in 1759, received an appointment as a cadet in the Frederick County militia. He later joined a company led by Edward Snickers' former business partner, the Reverend James Mynn Thruston. He rose to command the company in a battalion Thruston formed at George Washington's request. Young Snickers saw action at various skirmishes in New Jersey but resigned and returned to Frederick County where he remained active in the militia along with Thruston who left the main army because of serious wounds. The two men later joined Daniel Morgan in June 1781 in an expedition to what is now Hardy County, West Virginia. There they quickly suppressed a supposedly Tory group in the Lost River area led by John Claypool that had resisted Virginia tax collectors. In 1790 William Snickers inherited Clermont from his father and eventually sold it to Dawson M^cCormick.¹¹

Five of family patriarch Dr. John M^cCormick's sons saw military service. James was at Great Meadows with George Washington in 1754, thus witnessing the opening of the French and Indian War. William was a Virginia Ranger on the 1758 Forbes expedition that cleared the French out of western Pennsylvania, essentially ending the war in the Mid-Atlantic colonies. George M^cCormick was an ensign in the same Virginia Ranger company. George witnessed the Indians' return of prisoners in the Ohio Country at Tuscaroras in October 1764 that concluded the so-called Pontiac's Rebellion. Ten years later George served as a quartermaster of Virginia troops under

Colonel Angus M^cDonald deployed from Pittsburg during Lord Dunmore's War. He moved his family to the Pittsburg area in 1775 and was commissioned a captain in the local militia under Colonel John Connolly.¹²

This local militia was reinforced with John Neville's company from Winchester late that year and Virginia organized the area as the District of West Augusta. It created three new counties (Yohogania, Ohio, and Monongalia) the next year and undertook to defend the Forks of the Ohio region against British and Indian sorties emanating from Detroit. On 1 March 1776 George M^cCormick was commissioned a captain in the 13th Virginia Regiment, Continental Line (West Augusta) and served as part of the Fort Pitt garrison. John Neville became a lieutenant colonel in the 12th Virginia. Their units served in the Pittsburg area until deployed eastward in 1777 to fight in defense of Philadelphia. They survived Valley Forge and the Battle of Monmouth. In the fall of 1778 George M^cCormick returned with the 13th Virginia to the Ohio Valley. In 1779 Virginia and Pennsylvania resolved their claims over the region and the Forks of the Ohio formally became exclusively Pennsylvanian. In 1785 John Neville led the surveys defining Pennsylvania's southwestern boundaries and became a regional leader in his new state. He later was a prominent Federal supporter during the 1796 Whiskey Rebellion. George M^cCormick accepted his military land grant and migrated to Mercer County, Ky. One of his younger brothers, Francis, served as a Lieutenant in the Frederick County Militia starting in 1779 while another, John, was a captain in the Berkeley County militia, in 1781. George's son, William M^cCormick, remained in

Virginia when his father migrated and served in the Fauquier County militia during the War of 1812.¹³

His experience in that war was similar to that of others with a connection to Clermont. When war was declared in June 1812 it soon became apparent that the greatest threat to Virginia would be from the sea. If the Tidewater county militias were not assisted they would have assumed an unsustainable defense burden. Accordingly, Governor James Barbour devised an equitable system involving all of the state's militias. He issued orders on 6 February 1813 to assure continuous manning of the Norfolk area defenses. Three regimental headquarters were created to be filled by militia companies rotating into them for 180 day tours from throughout the state. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, 4th Virginia Cavalry, a Norfolk lawyer, was named first commander of the entire force. The three regiments formed quickly and General Taylor mixed the county militia companies between regiments to reduce nepotism and to improve discipline.¹⁴

British activity led Gov. Barbour in March to create two additional regiments. The 4th Regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Beatty of Frederick County and garrisoned Ft. Norfolk. James Vance, grandson of one of Clermont's early owners, served in Captain Thomas Roberts' company in this regiment from April through October 1813. The company fought in the successful defense of Craney Island in June 1813. The 5th Regiment was commanded at first by Lieutenant Colonel Armistead

Mason of Loudoun County. Province McCormick, John M^cCormick's grandson, commanded a Frederick County company in this regiment. From April to October 1813 his company manned different defenses throughout the Norfolk area. His cousin, William M^cCormick, rose to corporal in Captain Enoch Jefferies' Company from Fauquier County. The company manned defenses at Lamberts Point, north of Norfolk from May through October 1813. It mobilized again briefly in 1814 in response to British attacks on Washington and Baltimore.¹⁵

Edward McCormick, Dawson's son, inherited Clermont in 1847, just two years after graduating from Princeton. He and several of his cousins cast their lot with the Confederacy in 1861-65. The thirty-six year old farmer joined Company D of the 1st Virginia Cavalry as a private on 25 May 1861. His age and business experience quickly singled him out for demanding, but less strenuous, duties. His commander ordered him to organize a quartermaster department at Harpers Ferry where the Virginia militia from the northern counties was gathering. When Virginia Major Thomas J. Jackson arrived to impose order out of administrative chaos, he directed M^cCormick to coordinate the "offerings of teams, wagons, horses, and forage" provided by local sympathizers. He had found his role. On 11 September 1861, when Edward's company was transferred to the 6th Virginia Cavalry, he was promoted to captain, assistant quartermaster and assigned to the expanding Confederate depot at Lynchburg.¹⁶

Lynchburg was part of a supply system established by Confederate Quartermaster General Abraham C. Meyers to stockpile supplies, materiel and livestock for the new army. He first set up depots in the Deep South, but after the spring secessions of the Middle South states, he added posts at Nashville, Lynchburg and Richmond to be closer to the expected fighting front. His idea was for the depots to gather and issue materials and food but, also to eventually establish milling and manufacturing facilities to assure a full, continuous supply.¹⁷

Depot quartermasters were authorized to purchase raw and finished goods found in their areas and then send them to the appropriate depots where they could be processed and issued. Complaints over purchasing and distribution led the Confederate Congress in April 1863 to centralize and reorganize quartermaster activities. The Confederacy was divided into 11 purchasing districts in each of which was a senior purchasing officer and a designated central collecting supply depot. A parallel program was created for the acquisition and care of horses and mules. Concurrently, problems of inflation led to passage of a tax-in-kind law. Persons with crops or material needed by the army provided the goods at an evaluation determined by the army in lieu of cash payments or vouchers. A new position, that of Post Quartermaster, was created to manage the tax-in-kind program.¹⁸

Lynchburg was designated a major manufacturing and collecting point and Edward McCormick was appointed post quartermaster. A large cartridge manufactory

was established. Additionally, substantial stockyards and ration storage facilities were built to house the tax-in-kind influx. This meant that the post quartermaster supervised and paid a large civilian work force among other duties. Strict accountability was kept with monthly reports to Richmond. Duties were expanded to include securing staple crops like tobacco and cotton for transfer to the Confederate Treasury Department for possible overseas sale. Lynchburg's designation as one of four horse infirmaries in the Confederacy increased the need for fodder and forage enormously. Conditions in Virginia were such that in November new laws authorized post quartermasters to impress goods at declared market prices if they could find no willing sellers. This new authority bred great resentment and made the post quartermasters unpopular. Their actions exposed them to lawsuits and challenges that in some cases extended well past the collapse of the Confederacy. Nevertheless, McCormick was good at his job and his depot functioned until the end of the war. It was to the Lynchburg Depot that Robert E. Lee turned in the final desperate days before Appomattox. Only Federal cavalry action against the railroads prevented him from receiving the 180,000 rations he requested.¹⁹

By then McCormick was enroute home to Clarke County on a pass approved by General Richard S. Ewell. On the way he exchanged his jaded horses for two mules in a government herd. The timing was such that McCormick later became involved in a lawsuit from the owners of the mules who had lost them in a tax-in-kind requisition. Since McCormick was absent from his unit when Confederate resistance collapsed, he sought and received on 19 April a parole from First Lieutenant Francis J. Lesage, 3rd West Virginia Cavalry, the local provost marshal in Berryville. He then began the

process of getting a pardon, taking the oath of allegiance on 5 June before Brevet Major General Romeyn B. Ayres, the Federal Shenandoah District Commander. His final pardon, signed by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Seward, came on 4 October.²⁰

His nephew, Province McCormick, Jr., sixteen years old in 1863, joined Edward McCormick's old unit, D Company, 6th Virginia Cavalry. Province briefly served as a volunteer courier on General Richard S. Ewell's staff before enlisting on 11 May, 1864. He stayed with his unit through Appomattox. His brother Hugh Holmes M^cCormick had enlisted in D Company the year before at age 17 and served throughout the war. The 6th Cavalry operated mostly in the Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley. Like their uncle, they returned to civil life in a greatly changed country, literally a generation away from the rise to global prominence that has become known as the American Century.²¹

An 1889 group photograph with Assistant Surgeon Albert M.D. M^cCormick and the officers of the cruiser USS Chicago shows the young doctor and his companions on the cusp of the birth of the modern steel navy and the rise of the U.S. as a world power. The Chicago along with the Atlanta, Boston, and Dolphin ("ABCD's") was one of the first modern ships built by the Navy to replace the decaying Civil War fleet. A stingy Congress had kept the old wooden ships way beyond their usefulness until events in the 1880's showed American weakness. Tension with Chile climaxed with the 1891 Incident at the True Blue Saloon in Valparaiso which confirmed that the U.S. Navy was weaker than that of Chile. The need to upgrade the fleet was obvious. Thus, after a

weak start fraught with corruption in the Chester Arthur administration, the administrations of Grover Cleveland saw the launching of the Chicago and the inauguration of an extensive fleet modernization building program.²²

Assistant Surgeon M^cCormick joined the Chicago in December 1889 shortly after she was commissioned. The new cruiser left Boston for the Mediterranean where she served as flag ship for the growing American fleet. The force returned to American waters in May 1890 and showed itself along the east coasts of North and South America. M^cCormick left the ship in New York City in December 1890. The Chicago sailed again for the Mediterranean under the command of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan shortly thereafter.²³

M^cCormick served ashore and on some of the other new steel ships, concurrently passing his boards for promotion. His next brush with his country's rise occurred in 1898 in the War with Spain. He was assigned as assistant surgeon to the cruiser USS Marblehead in the North Atlantic Squadron. Long simmering problems with Spain over the fate of Cuba led to a declaration of war on 21 April. The next day the U.S. Navy began a blockade of the island, while it tried to determine the location of the Spanish Atlantic Squadron making its way from Europe. The Marblehead along with the cruiser Nashville and some smaller vessels covered the port of Cienfuegos. There on 11 May small boats from the cruisers entered the harbor and cut the telegraph cables linking Cuba to the outside world. The party worked under intense artillery and small arms fire.

Fifty-three sailors and Marines received Medals of Honor for their heroism that day (4 KIA, 5 WIA) (300Sp.).²⁴

Meanwhile, the Spanish Atlantic Squadron found refuge in the harbor at Santiago. Marblehead briefly joined the blockade of that port. But, when the need for a coaling station to sustain the blockade became apparent, Marblehead along with the cruiser Yankee went to Guantanamo Bay to secure the necessary facilities. A battalion of Marines from Key West rendezvoused with the ships on 9 June and Marblehead's captain, Commander Bowman M^cCalla, supervised landings on the east side of the bay.²⁵

Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Huntington, USMC, led 647 Marines onto the beach unopposed. They quickly established a base camp and secured the area to be used as a coaling station. The Spaniards launched an attack on 11 June that sputtered on for three days and which was repulsed with the help of the cruisers' guns. Cuban rebels joined the Marines and guided them in a counterattack against the only local water supply, Cuzco Well. The 14 June assault was successful after a four hour gun fight in intense heat that ended Spanish opposition. Two Marines and the battalion surgeon, Dr. John Blair Gibbs, were killed in the course of the fighting. Assistant Surgeon Albert M.D. M^cCormick went ashore to replace Dr. Gibbs. The coaling station was held until 5 August when the shore party was recalled. Marblehead remained in Cuban waters for another month before leaving for the North Atlantic. Dr. M^cCormick

qualified as surgeon in November 1899. He later served in hospitals at Annapolis and on the west coast as well as on sea duty, rising to the rank of rear admiral before retiring in 1921.²⁶

The consequences of the U.S. entry to global power in which Dr. M^cCormick participated are reflected in the career of his nephew, Lloyd W. Williams. Williams graduated from Virginia Tech in 1907. After a business apprenticeship in Baltimore, he accepted a commission in the Marine Corps in 1910. He trained at Port Royal, now Parris Island, South Carolina and joined the fleet at Charleston. Within a year he deployed for the first time.²⁷

The U.S. was in the process of dominating the entire Caribbean to protect the Panama Canal then under construction. Any hint of instability that might invite foreign, third party, involvement was pre-empted by U.S. intervention. In 1912 the Cuban army proved incapable of suppressing a black political movement. Its leader, Evaristo Estanoz, opposed the severe racial discrimination then prevalent in his country. Clashes between the rebels and government troops near Guantanamo and in Oriente Province threatened American Investments.²⁸

Additionally, President Taft feared what he called the “possibility of a black republic” off America’s shores. On 23 May 1912 he ordered the USS Prairie with 500

Marines to reinforce Guantanamo while the cruiser Nashville went to Havana. Other Marines, including Lieutenant Williams on the cruiser Paducah, landed around Santiago where they protected mines and railroads owned by American investors. The Marines at Guantanamo began active operations against the rebels. Estanoz was killed on 27 June and the rebellion faded quickly. By 25 July the Marines were withdrawn. The friendly, predictable Cuban government remained in office, but none of the social ills causing the unrest were resolved.²⁹

The fleet had no sooner returned to its Key West and Charleston bases than unrest in Nicaragua required another intervention. The Nicaraguan dictator José S. Zelaya had been a source of instability and anti-American agitation starting in 1903 with the U.S. presence in Panama. American prayers seemed answered when a rebellion broke out against the dictator. But, his hand-picked successor, José Madriz, appeared to be gaining the victory over the rebels. As a result, Marines led by Major Smedley D. Butler landed at Bluefield in 1910 to prevent rebel defeat. Ostensibly to protect U.S. property, the deployment weakened Madriz's government and on 20 August it yielded power to the rebels. The country fell into disarray as different groups competed for leadership. By 1912 civil war seemed imminent. The government recognized by the U.S. requested help and the U.S. minister asked for Marines to protect American citizens and property.³⁰

One hundred men from the cruiser Annapolis landed on 4 August 1912 to guard the U.S. legation in Managua. They were soon reinforced by a larger force from Panama again led by Major Butler. Colonel Joseph S. Pendleton brought another large contingent from the U.S. including Lieutenant Williams' 51st company. Formed into a 1st Provisional Regiment, the combined force protected the railroad running from Managua across Leon Province to the port of Corinto. The Marines tried to remain neutral in the ongoing Nicaraguan civil war. However, the Taft administration ordered Colonel Pendleton and his naval superiors to support the recognized government and help defeat the rebels. The Marines consequently began combat operations to assure the security of the railroad. Sporadic fighting went on through September and climaxed in a three day battle ending on 6 October near Masaya. The rebellion collapsed thereafter and U.S. directed elections seemed to bring stability, allowing all but 100 of the 2,300 Marines to withdraw by 16 January 1913. This was the first time "U.S. forces had actually fought to suppress a revolution in the Caribbean area".³¹

Lieutenant Williams served aboard the battleship Mississippi for the rest of the year then received orders for overseas shore duty on Guam. After leave in Clarke County, he and his family left on 13 June 1913 to cross the country by rail to San Francisco. They arrived in Agaña, the island capital, in August and settled into garrison life. His letters home indicated that only the naval officer in command enjoyed government quarters. The five other naval and Marine officers rented houses in the town. The Williams's soon joined the rounds of social events to include card parties,

dinners and picnics to the beaches. In the fall of 1913 they spent six weeks in Yokohama, enjoying Japanese food and culture.³²

Throughout 1914 Williams spent most of his time working with a group of army officers sent from Manila to assess the island's defenses and to conduct surveys throughout Guam to update the few poor maps inherited from Spain. Williams described his work as strenuous, but interesting. He was impressed by the geological and botanical variety he encountered. He also cited the skills and leadership of his Chamorro team chiefs. In the course of the land and town surveys an army lawyer arrived in November to create a new law code for Guam. Williams explained in a 22 November letter to his father, "We are governed at present by Spanish law, with such modifications as each governor has cared to make." The lawyer discovered that an 1895 Spanish Royal decree had abolished private land holdings, so no one held clear land title, including the government. Williams' surveying would have been all for naught without a 1915 act of Congress correcting the situation.³³

This interesting, enjoyable atmosphere could not shield Guam from larger events. Williams mentions learning of U.S. landings at Vera Cruz, Mexico in a 24 May 1914 letter. In November he reported seeing Japanese warships cruising offshore. Shortly after the start of World War I Japan, Britain's naval ally, had declared war on Germany and quickly set out to gather up Germany's Pacific possessions. One of these, the Marianas Islands, of which Guam was a geological part, came under

Japanese control by the end of September 1914. A few small German naval units fled to the neutral U.S.-held Guam. The largest of these was the auxiliary cruiser Cormoron, the former Russian Rjisan, which sought shelter in November 1914. The German officers and their native crews were interned under the lightest conditions, the officers briefly becoming part of Agana's social scene. They became prisoners of war after the U.S. declared war in April 1917 and were escorted to a prison camp at Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia.³⁴

This Guam assignment ended in March 1915 when the Williams family returned to the U.S. After recovering from a bout of pleurisy, newly promoted Captain Williams rejoined the 51st Company at Charleston, SC. By June 1916 he and his company formed the Marine detachment on the battleship USS Vermont cruising in the Caribbean. They provided offshore support for Marines operating in Haiti. Concurrently, conditions deteriorated once again in Cuba. Rebellion broke out over a contested election and the Woodrow Wilson Administration decided to support the incumbent government led by Mario Garcia Menocal. Detachments of Marines landed in February 1917 to protect American property. In March six more Marine companies based in Haiti formed a provisional battalion and deployed to Cuba to protect facilities at Guantanamo. Additionally, Commodore Reginald R. Belknap sent the 43rd and 51st companies to Santiago at the request of the Oriente Province governor. Their presence secured the province for Menocal's government and freed his troops to crush the rebellion. Captain Williams with a small party from his 51st Company conducted extensive patrols, mapping the area and establishing a network of informants.³⁵

The declaration of War against Germany on 6 April ended the first phase of Marine involvement in Cuba and Williams and his 51st Company moved in mid-April to the Philadelphia Navy Yard. On 30 May the Secretary of War requested a Marine regiment to augment deploying U.S. Army forces. The 51st Company, in June, became part of the 2nd Battalion of the newly formed 5th Marine Regiment and prepared to deploy as part of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). The new command left for France on 14 June on board the transports Henderson, De Kalb and Hancock. The last elements reached St. Nazaire on 2 July. A few days earlier the regimental commander, Colonel Charles A. Doyen, received orders to attach his command for administrative purposes to the Army's 1st Division. The regiment's 1st Battalion and its 2nd Battalion with William's 51st Company moved to the Gondrecourt training area with billets in the villages of Naix-aux-Forges and Menaucourt. The 3rd Battalion remained for the time being in St. Nazaire performing provost and security duties. The men at Gondrecourt began training in the fundamentals of trench warfare and weaponry under the tutelage of allied veterans.³⁶

The Marines were surplus to the 1st Division's structure and often felt like a third wheel. The War Department remedied this by deciding that the Marine Corps would provide one of the brigades for the newly formed 2nd Division. The 5th Marines joined its new parent in September 1917 and moved to new billets around Bourmont in eastern Haute-Marne. The 2nd Battalion with Captain Lloyd Williams' 51st Company settled in

the village of Damblain. The regiment underwent some organizational changes then began to prepare for training at the front in a quiet sector under French control and supervision. In a 4 September letter Captain Williams reported he had visited the front and stayed in the trenches before coming back full of ideas about how better to train his company.³⁷

Elements of the 6th Marine Regiment, raised and trained at Quantico, began arriving by December. The two Marine regiments formed the 4th Marine Brigade in the 2nd Division. The new brigade went with the division in March 1918 to join the Xth French Corps in a quiet sector between Verdun and St. Mihiel. The 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines was the first 2nd Division unit to go into the line, starting on the night of 18 March, near Montgirmont. The success of the great German offensive launched concurrently further west soon curtailed training. The French high command assigned the 2nd Division responsibility for its full front while most French units were withdrawn and rushed westward to spots endangered by the German attack. Concurrently, General John J. Pershing, the AEF commander, permitted the release of American divisions wherever they were needed to help in the emergency. Soon, the 1st U.S. Division engaged the Germans in a hard fight at Cantigny. The French relieved the 2nd U.S. Division on 9 May and it moved to reserve positions near Vitry-le-François south of Chalons.³⁸

The combat situation remained critical and Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Allied generalissimo, designated the 2nd Division as part of his reserve. It drew new equipment and replacements at Bar-le-Duc then moved by rail to Pontoise, 18-22 May, just north of Paris. From there it marched to assembly areas around Chaumont-en-Vexin and began vigorous last minute training with plans to relieve the battered 1st Division within a few days. A renewed German offensive across the Chemin-des-Dames north of Soissons on 27 May led Marshall Foch to change his plans. He ordered the 2nd and 3rd U.S. Divisions to move into line along the Marne River to back up retreating French forces. Second Division units were alerted on 30 May to this change and starting at 0400 the next morning French trucks driven by Vietnamese soldiers began arriving to haul the infantry to the front. The artillery and machine gun battalions were expected to move by rail while the division trains were to road march on their own. The city of Meaux just northeast of Paris was designated their rendezvous point. The infantry convoys began leaving in serials. But not enough railway cars arrived, forcing the machine gun battalions also to road march, thus causing delays and shortages at the other end. The uncomfortable, intermittently rainy and dusty march was impeded and delayed by masses of refugees and columns of retreating French troops. There was so much confusion at Meaux that the division was directed to continue marching to a new rendezvous further north at May-en-Multien, closer to the front. There, the arriving infantry began relieving exhausted French units that were holding a back-up line between Montigny and Gandelu.³⁹

After four changes of orders from higher French headquarters, the 2nd Division finally moved to relieve French forces in the front line west of Chateau-Thierry. The machine gun battalions and supply trains caught up with the division on 2 June. The 4th Marine Brigade occupied positions on both sides of the town of Lucy-le-Bocage which first was at the center of the division line. The 3rd U.S. Infantry Brigade extended the line eastward to face the town of Vaux. The French 43rd Division fell back through the Marines, leaving only a screen of cavalry forward. The 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines was in a position two miles south of Marigny near Pyramid Farm. It advanced to form a line from Hill 142 to the northeast corner of the Bois de Veully. Lloyd Williams' 51st Company was on the battalion right facing Hill 142 just north of Champillon. It tied in its left on 2 June with Lieutenant Lemuel Shepherd's 55th Company at the Champillon-Bussiares Road.⁴⁰

On 3 June the 2nd Battalion remained thinly stretched along 2 ½ miles from Veully Wood across Les Mares Farm to a point on the road 1 kilometer north of Champillon. There was a 1,000 meter gap to the right of the 51st Company through which withdrawing French units poured. The 51st Company monitored the gap with patrols that kept contact with the 23rd Infantry of their Army sister, 3rd Brigade. A French major approached Captain L.E. Corbin, Williams' executive officer, and urged him to join the withdrawal before the Marines were overwhelmed. When Corbin refused, the Frenchman wrote him an order to do so on authority of the French corps commander. Again, Corbin refused and told Lloyd Williams of the exchange. The company commander responded "Retreat, Hell! We just got here!". He then notified Lieutenant

Colonel Frederic M. Wise, the battalion commander, of his decision to ignore the French command- "I have countermanded the order. Kindly see that the French do not shorten their artillery range.". What he meant by the last was he needed artillery fire forward of his present position and he was not moving rearward. By the night of 3 June, all but a few French cavalry had passed through the American lines and the 2nd Division found itself defending the front. There was light contact with German scouts on 4 June.⁴¹

The next day the French 167th Division took over the western part of the 2nd Division's line and the Marines shifted to hold the line between Triangle Farm to the point on the road north of Champillon. A division plan called for the Marines to advance northward on 6 June to seize Hill 142, then advance north and east to capture Torcy, Belleau and the woods near the latter.⁴²

Early on 6 June the 2nd Division went on the offensive, attacking from Champillon and Lucy-le-Bocage toward Belleau and Bouresches. The 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines moved from west of Champillon after the French had taken over from them. It held in reserve as the 1st Battalion at 0345 attacked Hill 142. The 1st reached its objective but was weakened greatly in the process. At about 0630 Captain Williams' 51st Company advanced to support the attackers and joined in a four day fight to hold the objective in which it suffered 50% casualties. After that costly success, the brigade shifted to attack northeastward into Belleau Wood. The 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, instead, advanced due east with 5 companies abreast, Captain Williams' on the right (south) flank. The

change in direction was caused by outdated maps and faulty intelligence and led to great confusion which gave the German defenders a temporary advantage. At about 0700 on the 11th Captain Williams was wounded and his company shattered.⁴³

Williams was evacuated to the regimental aid station at Lucy-le-Bocage while the Marines continued their epic struggle to secure Belleau Wood. The aid station came under German artillery fire with a mixture of high explosive and gas shells. Navy Medical Corps Lieutenant Orlando H. Petty heroically saw to the evacuation of his patients despite the loss of his gas mask. He personally carried the wounded Williams to a safer place. However, in the process, shell fragments wounded Williams again. The dying officer was sent to Field Hospital Number 23 in La Ferté-sous-Jouarre between Chateau-Thierry and Meaux where he died late on 11 June. Dr. Petty received the Medal of Honor for his valor. Williams was posthumously awarded the French Croix de Guerre and the U.S. Silver Star. Captain Williams was buried at La Ferté until his remains were disinterred and returned to the U.S.. He was reburied in Green Hill Cemetery, Berryville in July 1921.⁴⁴

His famous reaction to the French retreat order contributed directly to the determination of U.S. forces to stop the German advance. His letters home, although substantially self-censored, indicate he was an upbeat, innovative leader who had his company ready for its ordeal. His determination exemplifies Marine Corps professionalism and marks one of the great moments in Corps history. His death along

with that of many others in France also exemplifies the growing cost of America's rise to global influence.

The story of the American Century can be continued in the career of Williams' cousin Lynde D. McCormick, the son of Surgeon Albert M.D. McCormick. Young McCormick graduated from Annapolis in June 1915 and joined the fleet on board the Battleship USS Wyoming in the Caribbean. The Wyoming was cruising the eastern seaboard when the U.S. declared war on Germany in April 1917. She joined battleship Division 9 along with New York, Delaware, and Florida and sailed for the Royal Navy base at Scapa Flow in Scotland. The American force became the Sixth Battle Squadron of the British Grand Fleet. The new arrivals underwent intensive training to integrate with British signal and tactical procedures. By early 1918 they joined patrolling rotations in the North Sea aimed at containing the German High Seas Fleet in its home ports. The U.S. squadron had just ended one patrol in April 1918 when the Germans made their last combat sortie. The Armistice in November 1918 specified that the German fleet would be interned until its fate was determined by a final peace treaty. On 21 November, the entire British Grand Fleet, including its U.S. contingent, turned out at the Firth of Forth to escort the surrendering Germans to their anchorage at Scapa Flow. The ceremony was an unforgettable display of naval power.⁴⁵

When the U.S. fleet returned to American waters McCormick served as an aide and flag lieutenant in both the Atlantic and Pacific. He then spent nearly a year as

commander of a destroyer before joining the faculty of the Naval Academy. In June 1923 he began training as a submariner. He spent the next 8 years serving aboard submarines, eventually commanding a major boat in both Pacific and Caribbean waters. He returned for a second tour at Annapolis in 1931 where he was aide to the Academy superintendent. In 1934 he returned to duties in the surface fleet to include a year's command of the fleet oiler Neches. In 1937 he attended the Naval War College after which he spent a year on its staff.⁴⁶

In June 1939 he became operations officer of the U.S. Fleet Battleship Force based in California and deployed with it to Hawaii to become operations officer for the entire fleet. There, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, appointed him assistant war plans officer. In that capacity, McCormick witnessed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Kimmel's replacement, retained him along with the rest of Kimmel's staff. As such, he led the planning for U.S. victories at Coral Sea, Midway and Guadalcanal. On 30 June 1942 he suffered serious injury in a sea plane accident at Alameda, California while accompanying Admiral Nimitz to a conference. Despite his injuries, he remained on duty with Nimitz until February 1943.⁴⁷

He was reassigned that month to command the battleship South Dakota in the Atlantic. He returned to Scapa Flow with her to work with the British home fleet. It was covering convoys sailing to north Russia while containing the Tirpitz, a giant German

battleship holed up at Altenfiord in northern Norway. McCormick was reassigned in October 1943 to become the principal logistics planner in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. His duties included participation in the Quebec and Yalta Conferences. His skill was cited by Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ernest J. King as critical in meeting all the global needs of the Navy. McCormick's final wartime assignment was command of Battleship Division 3 in the Pacific. With it from his flagship New Mexico he provided fire support to the landings and subsequent combat on Okinawa.⁴⁸

Immediately after the war, the admiral served in several senior staff positions and was Commandant of the Twelfth Naval District based in San Francisco. In 1949 he became Vice Chief of Naval Operations in part because of his extensive experience in submarines and knowledge of logistics. In December 1950 he was promoted to full admiral. He briefly served as Chief of Naval Operations on the death of the incumbent, Admiral Forrest P. Sherman, but soon was reassigned in August 1951 to head NATO naval forces. Simultaneously, he was Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet and Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT) with headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. As the first person to hold the latter position in the recently formed alliance, he set about to weld a functioning force. Starting in 1952, he visited allied capitals to cajole contributions and support and presided over large exercises to get the various allied navies working cohesively. Following two years of hard work he was appointed president of the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island where he implemented courses that included NATO as well as U.S. officers. He died of heart failure there on

16 August 1956. The destroyer Lynde M^cCormick (1957-1991) was named in his honor. All three of his sons served in the Military. Navy commander Montrose G. M^cCormick died in a 1945 plane crash in Australia. Marine James L. was wounded on Okinawa. Lynde D. Jr. served in the navy throughout the war.⁴⁹

The lives of father and son, cousin and nephew, three men, span the American Century. Rear Admiral Albert M.D. M^cCormick began his career in the new steel navy and fought in the war that brought the U.S. onto the global stage. His nephew, Lloyd Williams, experienced the first effects of this change fighting in the Banana Wars of the Caribbean and dying in the Great War when the U.S. first asserted itself internationally. Admiral Lynde M^cCormick participated in this global growth and was witness to many of the major WWII events that propelled the U.S. into dominance. He eventually formed and led the Naval part of the alliance that waged a successful Cold War against Soviet aggression at the apogee of U.S. influence and power. Theirs marks the climax of the military experiences of Clermont's families which illustrate collectively the process of growth and change that created the nation we know today.

Endnotes

- ¹ Ross Netherton, Braddock's Campaign and the Potomac Route to the West (Falls Church, Va., Higher Education Publications, 1989), 15; Stanley M. Pargellis, Lord Loudoun in North America (np: Archon Books, 1968; repr. Yale, 1933), 32, 63-64. The documented movement of troops from Snickers Gap, eastward and westward, implies contact though commerce, corral and camp at Clermont.
- ² Frances W. Palfrey, The Antietam and Fredericksburg Campaigns (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 131.
- ³ H.B. McClellan, The Campaigns of Stuart's Cavalry (Edison, NJ: Blue and Gray Press, 1993), 169, 171, 186-187.
- ⁴ William N. McDonald, A History of the Laurel Brigade (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, repr. 1907 ed.), 105-107; Thomas D. Gold, History of Clarke County, Virginia and its Connection With the Civil War (Berryville, Va.: Author, 1914), 112; Laura V. Hale, Four Valiant Years in the Shenandoah Valley, 1861-1865 (Front Royal, Va.: Hathaway Publications, 1986), 200.
- ⁵ [Harriet M. Hammond] The Story of a Long Life: A Memoir of Elizabeth S. W. Taylor, "Aunt Bet" (Jamaica, NY: The Marion Press, 1900), 181; Wilbur S. Nye, Here Come the Rebels! (Dayton, OH: Morningside, 1984), 87.
- ⁶ Hale, ibid., 82. The use of soldier labor to gather the harvest in this emergency implies the absence of slave labor. This could mean that the formerly large slave population may already have self-emancipated, at least in part.
- ⁷ Gold, ibid., 132; Jeffrey D. Wert, Mosby's Rangers (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 195-196.
- ⁸ Ingrid J. Jones, "Edward Snickers, Yeoman", Proceedings of the Clark County Historical Association 17 (1971-1975): 16, 34.
- ⁹ Jones, ibid., 35, 38; Erna Risch, Supplying Washington's Army (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1981), 71; Leland D. Baldwin, Pittsburgh, the Story of a City (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1938), 91; John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., The Writings of George Washington (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-44), 7:31.
- ¹⁰ Risch, ibid., 36-37; E. Wayne Carp To Starve the Army at Pleasure: Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775-1783, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 23, 35, 42, 43.

¹¹ Jones, ibid., 20, 44-45.

¹² United States National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter "NARA") Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War "George McCormick", "William McCormick"; Nellie Norkus "Virginia's Role in the Capture of Fort Duquesne" Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine 45 (1962): 296.

¹³ Baldwin, ibid., 90-91; NARA, ibid., "George McCormick"; William A. Ross, Pennsylvania's Boundaries (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1966), 32-35.

¹⁴ Stuart Butler, A Guide to Virginia Militia Units in the War of 1812 (Athens, Ga.: Iberian Publishing Co., 1988), 18.

¹⁵ ibid., 87-89.

¹⁶ Hammond, ibid., 114 (quote); Robert J. Driver 1st Virginia Cavalry (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1991), 2, 23, 205; Robert E. L. Krick Staff Officers in Gray: A Biographical Register of the Staff Officers in the Army of Northern Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 32, 207.

¹⁷ Richard D. Goff Confederate Supply (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1969), 16.

¹⁸ ibid., 69, 75, 86; Edward Hagerman The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare: Ideas, Organization and Field Command (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 127, 130.

¹⁹ Goff, ibid., 128, 170, 234. Undoubtedly the labor force also included slaves.

²⁰ Clermont Archives, Berryville Va., A.2006.1. Search "Civil War"

²¹ Driver, ibid., 205; NARA, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Virginia Microfilm 324, rolls 9 and 62; NARA, Compiled Service Records of Confederate General and Staff Officers... Microfilm 331, roll 170.

²² Allan Nevins Grover Cleveland, A Study in Courage (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1932), 217; E.B. Potter and Chester W. Nimitz, eds. Sea Power: A Naval History Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), 344; Photo NH54151 available at www.navsource.org/archives/04/chicago

²³ www.navsource.org, ibid..

²⁴ Ivan Musicant Empire by Default: Spanish American War and the Dawn of the New Century (New York: Henry Holt, 1989), 305, 315; United States Congress Medal of Honor Recipients and Their Official Citations (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980, repr 1994), 601-618 passim.

²⁵ Musicant, ibid., 347; David F. Trask The War With Spain in 1898 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1981), 140.

²⁶ Musicant, ibid., Trask, ibid., Benjamin R. Beede, ed., The War of 1898 and U.S. Interventions, 1898-1934: An Encyclopedia (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1994), 209.

²⁷ Clermont Archives, Berryville, Va., James Nilo, unpublished typescript in Lloyd Williams file.

²⁸ Lester D. Langley The Americas in the Modern Age (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 84-85.

²⁹ Clyde H. Metcalf A History of the United States Marine Corps (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), 325 (quote); Ivan Musicant The Banana Wars: A History of United States Intervention in Latin America From the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1990), 68-69.

³⁰ Metcalf, ibid., 416; Lester D. Langley The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934 Rev. ed. (Wilmington, De.: Scholarly Resources, Inc. 2002, repr 1985 ed.), 64-65.

³¹ Beede, ibid., (quote), 377; Langley, Banana Wars , 68-69; Musicant, Banana Wars 152-155.

³² Clermont Archives, Berryville, Va., Lloyd Williams Letters- June, September, October, November, 1913.

³³ ibid., May, November (quote) 1914.

³⁴ ibid., May, November, 1914; Harper's Pictorial Library of the World War (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1920), 4: 189.

³⁵ Metcalf, ibid., 333, 334; Musicant, Banana Wars, 77-78; Clermont Archives, Berryville, Va., Lloyd Williams Letters, February, April , May, 1917.

³⁶ Metcalf, ibid., 336, 453, 473.

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- ³⁷ Clermont Archives, Berryville, Va., Lloyd Williams letter 4 September, 1917; Metcalf, ibid., 474.
- ³⁸ Metcalf, ibid., 475-477; Simmons, Edwin H. The United State Marines: A History 4th ed. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 96-97.
- ³⁹ Metcalf, ibid., 479-480.
- ⁴⁰ Robert B. Asprey At Belleau Wood (Denton, Tx., University of North Texas Press, 1996), 71, 118.
- ⁴¹ Asprey, ibid., 119; James W. Hammond, Jr. "Marines Take Belleau Wood" Command 30 (September-October 1994): 40; Logan Feland "Retreat Hell!" Marine Corps Gazette (June 1921): 289. Like any good quote, Williams' remark had many claimants, but most researches now agree that he was the author.
- ⁴² Asprey, ibid., 137.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 158.
- ⁴⁴ U.S. Congress, ibid., "Petty", 524; Winchester Star (15 July 1921): 1; James Nilo, unpublished typescript, Clermont Archives, Berryville, Va.
- ⁴⁵ Harpers, ibid., 4: 387; Paul G. Halpern A Naval History of World War I (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 404-405, 420, 449.
- ⁴⁶ Anna and Evelyn Rothe, eds., Current Biography 1952, Who's News and Why (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1953), 367.
- ⁴⁷ E.B. Potter Nimitz (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1976), 109-110.
- ⁴⁸ Joel J. Sokolsky Seapower in the Nuclear Age: The United States Navy and NATO 1949-80 (Annapolis, Md., Naval Institute Press, 1991), 17-29.
- ⁴⁹ Potter and Nimitz, ibid., 852; Robert O. Wefold, "DDG8", "Tin Can Sailor Newspaper 24 (July-September 2000).

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Correspondence in re Captain George M^cCormick, 13 Va.with Donald Power Maxwell, MD, 18700 Wolf Creek Dr., Edmond, OK, 73003.(5 Great-grandson)