

# *“If Ever Men Stayed By Their Guns”*

## **Leadership in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Corps Artillery on the First Day of the Battle of Gettysburg**

**Bert Barnett**

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During the Battle of Gettysburg, the roar of cannon mingled with the rattle of small arms during each phase of the engagement. Prominent among the Union forces desperately holding ground on July 1 were the artillery batteries of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> corps of the Army of the Potomac. In the face of heavy enemy fire from both Confederate infantry and artillery, these units repeatedly demonstrated their effectiveness, when well led, against the pressures of mounting numbers. Although ultimately unsuccessful in their defensive stand outside the town, these batteries provided valuable covering fire for their retreating infantry elements, helping to delay the Confederates. What follows is a close-up look at the differing levels of leadership ability within the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> corps artillery, and how it shaped the outcome of the first day of battle, July 1, 1863.

After the debacle of the Union disaster at Chancellorsville in May 1863, the Army of the Potomac was reorganized, and the artillery command structure was streamlined. Henceforth, all batteries in each corps were placed directly under the control of a single corps artillery chief and no longer attached to divisional commanders. These corps artillery chiefs reported directly to their respective corps commanders, but were also responsive to the overall chief of artillery, Brigadier General Henry Jackson Hunt.<sup>1</sup>

Hunt, an 1839 graduate of the United States Military Academy, had served in the artillery during the Mexican War and was twice brevetted, gaining the rank of major. He later served on a board to revise artillery tactics, with W.F. Barry and W.H. French. These improvements were adopted in 1860, just in time to be published and widely used by gunners on both sides.<sup>2</sup>

Forty-three years old, Hunt was a thoroughgoing professional who did not suffer fools gladly. He saw the need for quality leadership in the artillery service. In his report after Chancellorsville, where there had been only five field officers of artillery in the army, Hunt wrote scathingly of the failure of the Union army to maintain or promote a sufficient number of officers. “It is not, therefore,” he noted, “to be wondered at that confusion and mismanagement ensued.” He continually pushed for improvements. Even following the victory at Gettysburg, Hunt did not relent on this point. He observed

Not only does the service suffer ... from the great deficiency of officers of rank, but a policy which closes the door of promotion to battery officers and places them and the army itself under a ban, and degrades them in comparison with other arms of service, induces discontent, and has caused many of our best officers to seek positions, wherever they can find them, which will remove them from this branch of the service. We have lost many such officers, and ... may lose many such more.<sup>3</sup>



**Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt**  
CWLM

These points had merit. Indeed, some good regular artillery officers, like John Gibbon, did leave the arm to further their careers in other branches. Competition for promotion was so fierce among others as to occasionally “induce discontent.” For example, in the late spring of 1863, Captain James A. Hall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine Battery attempted to lead a minor coup d’état within the Maine artillery, as Major Freeman McGilvery was about to be promoted to lieutenant colonel.<sup>4</sup>

Given this level of ruthless competition for position, it is almost surprising that a few officers did not turn their cannon upon one another. Although petty jealousies did occasionally impair the functional efficiency of some units, most commanders rose above their flaws and led their batteries on a more



**Col. Charles S. Wainwright**  
CWLM

inspired level. Superior leadership was the key, and Hunt was determined that *all* his batteries would have it.

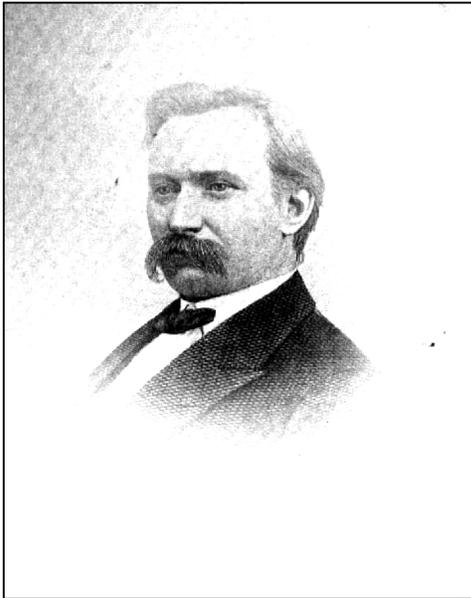
In the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, he retained the excellent Colonel Charles S. Wainwright as chief of artillery. A wealthy and class-conscious New York farmer, Wainwright had seen European training and militia service in his thirty-seven years, and was quite the perfectionist in his chosen branch of service. He was also a “McClellan man,” a moderate Democrat and no friend of the Abolitionists.<sup>5</sup>

In the winter of 1861, Wainwright saw early service on examining boards designed to remove incompetent officers. There he observed that being a good officer involved more than possessing a good background.

We had one other case before us, that of Captain Bunting ... a fine, military-looking man, evidently well-educated and of good social standing. ... He has been in command of a battery over four months, and most of the time of several, but did not know the first thing; ... indeed, he at last admitted he had never studied the tactics, so his was a very short and decided case. It was astonishing to me that such a man should have taken a position where he must become known, and then not even try to fill it respectably ...<sup>6</sup>

He quickly went from this to actual field command. On January 31, 1862, Wainwright was appointed chief of artillery for Brigadier General Joseph Hooker’s division. During the Battle of Williamsburg, May 5, 1862, his emotional appeal to the men of Battery D, 1<sup>st</sup> New York light artillery, saved the abandoned guns of a regular battery. The commander of Battery D, Captain Thomas Ward Osborn, a former law student, also impressed Wainwright on this day. The two men had a slight disagreement about another temporarily abandoned fieldpiece.

Osborn was slow (as I expected), but did capital service. He astonished me, when in the evening I told him to move to the rear, by replying in his drawling way, "Major, I shan't go until I get that gun out." The gun he spoke of was one that lay buried in the mud on the side of the road, just ... where at the time rebel shot and shell were falling so fast, that I told him he might leave it till morning. ... He did get that gun, though with the loss of a man; and I learned that there was a good deal more grit in him than I thought ...<sup>7</sup>



**Maj. Thomas W. Osborne**  
CWLM

The grit displayed by Osborn at Williamsburg was indicative of his leadership potential. It was this quality that helped him to rise quickly. However, with the exception of a newfound leadership role in the artillery, Osborn had little in common with Wainwright. Politically, he leaned more toward the Republican and Abolitionist positions. Osborn had no militia background, as prior to the loss at First Manassas he had "[taken] no interest in military affairs." Only after that debacle of Union arms had he considered entering a service he previously found "repulsive." He apparently grew comfortable with it over time, though, for on February 6, 1863, Osborn took command of a division of artillery in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps.<sup>8</sup>

Following Chancellorsville, however, he faced the more daunting challenge of rebuilding the shattered 11<sup>th</sup> Corps artillery. In a letter to his brother Spencer written June 11, he grumbled at the difficulties opposing him.

I am told I have been highly complimented in being assigned to this corps to reorganize its artillery, but to me it is an unpleasant job. I found the batteries in a most deplorable condition and in a state of complete demoralization. So far I have been ... taxing my ingenuity to determine how best to make the batteries serviceable again. ... I left the best artillery in the army when I left the Third Corps, and when I came here I took the worst. If we lie still two or three months, I can put it in good shape. If we move soon, I do not see how it can be done. The officers are willing, but ... [a]ll their military habits are excessively loose. I will do my best to bring these batteries up to a good standard of efficiency.<sup>9</sup>

Of the two corps artillery chiefs, the thirty-year-old Osborn plainly had the most preparatory work to do. Wainwright, for his part, understood the importance of continually improving a good organization, already acknowledged for its efficiency. On the last day of February 1863, he had recorded:

I received a sort of left-handed compliment the other day from General Hunt, in a note concerning the inspection held some ten days since. He says, "None of the batteries under your command are in *bad* order, the only corps in the army so reported. 5<sup>th</sup> Me, L, NY, & F, PA, are the best." I ... find the General was particularly pleased at there being regular recitations held in these three batteries.

He tells me but one other battery in the army has had them. I (sent) copies of the General's note to all the batteries ... stirring them up to new exertions.<sup>10</sup>

The concluding phrase in Wainwright's notation is instructive, for "stirring them up" is precisely what he continued to do, even as the Army of the Potomac began to advance northward. Even though the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps batteries were seen by some as superior in drill and tactics to others, occasionally a problem required the colonel's firm hand. Wainwright was particularly concerned about stragglers, and on June 15 complained

I have to keep on my battery officers all the time about their men straggling. They do not seem to know what it means. (Captain) Cooper said to me [once] that battery men never straggled. I pointed out a couple of his own two fields off, and asked what he called that. He said they would not straggle! – that he had never known any of his men to be absent when the battery got into camp at night. What a totally unmilitary, unexact people we are! Here was a good officer of two years' service, who really thought that straggling only meant lagging behind, and that if his men were present at evening roll call it mattered not where they went meantime. I ordered him to call these men in, and informed him he must keep each detachment on a line with their own pieces ... *It is going to be a hard job to bring them up to the mark I aim at* [emphasis added].<sup>11</sup>

Improvement, therefore, was always on Wainwright's mind. The batteries indeed benefited from a commander who "stirred them up" so. This parallel with Osborn, and Hunt, marked good leadership – and explained the latter's selection of both men. Thus, on the eve of battle, both corps's artillery brigades were in the hands of able, efficient, highly motivated commanders. They were as prepared as they could be for the coming struggle.

Wainwright's command contained five batteries. These were the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine, Captain James A. Hall commanding, armed with six three-inch Ordnance rifles. Two other batteries also had these light wrought-iron rifles: the 1<sup>st</sup> New York Light Artillery, Battery L, Captain Gilbert Reynolds commanding, with six; and the 1<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania, Battery B, Captain James H. Cooper commanding, with four. The 5<sup>th</sup> Maine, Captain Greenlief T. Stevens commanding, had six bronze twelve-pound Napoleons, as did the brigade's one regular battery, the 4<sup>th</sup> U.S., Battery B, commanded by Second Lieutenant James Stewart.

Osborn's brigade also contained one regular battery, G of the 4<sup>th</sup> U. S. Led by the nineteen-year-old Lieutenant Bayard Wilkeson, the battery contained six Napoleons. There were two 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio batteries of Napoleons in the brigade: the 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio Light Artillery, Battery I, commanded by Captain Hubert Dilger, with six guns; and the 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio Artillery, Battery K, commanded by Captain Louis Heckman, with four. Two batteries of Ordnance rifles completed the outfit: Captain Michael Wiedrich's I, 1<sup>st</sup> New York, had six, and the 13<sup>th</sup> New York Independent Battery, under the command of First Lieutenant William Wheeler, had four.<sup>12</sup>

This mixture of rifled and smoothbore guns provided the flexibility for many tasks, both offensive and defensive. Rifles were usually preferred for the former, smoothbores for the latter. Veteran artillerymen appreciated the accuracy of long-range rifled fire for distant accuracy, yet treasured the larger projectiles and gaping smoothbores for close-in work.

The men who formed the leadership cadre of these units were a varied mix. In addition to the professional soldiers encountered, an assortment of personalities and previous employments ranging from confectioners to clerks to printers and Harvard-educated lawyers was found among these cannoners. Their actions during trying circumstances often meant the difference between success and failure on the battlefield.

The lay of the terrain was also to have great consequence this day, offering both benefits and liabilities to the Federal artillerists as they 'fought, trot, and shot.' McPherson Ridge, which

actually consisted of two ridges in the area where it crossed the Cashtown pike, rose approximately 45 feet above the surrounding area. Running roughly northeast to southwest, it generally paralleled Herr Ridge, about 1,000 yards distant and about 40 feet higher. A third ridgeline, known as Seminary Ridge, named for the Lutheran Theological Seminary that stood on the ridge just south of the pike, was approximately 650 yards east of McPherson Ridge. Nearly the same elevation as McPherson Ridge, it extended southward for nearly two miles, with its northern head at the Cashtown pike. The ground to the west of this ridge was somewhat shallower, but steeper on the eastern slope of the ridge – descending some 60 to 70 feet from the summit to the level ground toward town. North of the pike, the ridge was known as Oak Ridge. It culminated to the north in the dominant natural feature of the first day's battlefield – Oak Hill. Rising just north of the Mummasburg road, Oak Hill, at a height of 130 feet, dominated the surrounding open fields to the south, east, and west.

In addition to the natural terrain features, there was a man-made one that added significantly to the difficulties ahead. An unfinished railroad bed extended from town to the northwest, just above the Cashtown pike. Cuts had been made in the western and eastern segments of the McPherson Ridge and at the southern end of Oak Ridge to level the track bed. Large stones had also been brought in, to be used as fill in the low spots.<sup>13</sup>

In the early morning of July 1, General John Buford's cavalry division, assisted by the six three-inch Ordnance rifles of Lieutenant John H. Calef's 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Artillery, held the approaches west of Gettysburg. Calef positioned his pieces on McPherson Ridge, between the Cashtown pike and the railroad cut. Shortly afterward, Buford expanded the battery front a great distance by moving the left section approximately 600 yards to the south, toward the Hagerstown road. This gave the appearance of more than one battery in the Federal line. However, it effectively reduced the ability to concentrate the fire of all six guns on one target, or to communicate orders easily between sections.<sup>14</sup>

As the Confederate troops advanced, the fire of Major William J. "Willie" Pegram's artillery battalion lent its weight to the assault. Numbering seventeen guns this July morning, the battalion was shortly afterward joined by the guns of Major D.G. McIntosh's battalion on its right. This almost doubled the number of guns Calef estimated were being brought against him. From the right of the Cashtown pike came the first Union artillery shot of the battle from three-inch Ordnance rifle serial number 233. Calef, discerning from the volume of return fire that his battery was severely outgunned, ordered all return fire to be slow and steady. Riding out to deliver this instruction to his distant left section, Calef encountered Buford, "calmly smoking his pipe," who observed, "Our men are in a pretty hot pocket, but, my boy, we must hold this position until the infantry come up."<sup>15</sup>

That was that. Calef would have to endure the Confederate pressure a while longer, until relieved by advance elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps artillery, who were even then moving up from the south. Until they arrived, however, the position would indeed prove a 'hot pocket.' The left section was shortly forced to withdraw to the Seminary. The battery men on the right, however, faced the greater test. The advancing skirmish line, moving ahead of the Confederate troops of Brigadier General Joseph Davis, made the most of the unfinished railroad cut to more safely advance against the exposed Federals. As a section of the horse battery stood nearby, one of its guns was called for to nullify this advantage. Calef reported

Lieutenant Roder took his right piece to the spot, and opened with canister, which had the effect of driving the enemy in great confusion. As he was bringing



*Lt. John H. Calef*  
GNMP

the piece into battery, the enemy, seeing it, rushed forward and exclaimed, "There is a piece - let's take it!" As soon as the piece was unlimbered, Corporal [Robert S.] Watrous, chief of piece, in bringing up a round of canister, was shot in the leg ... and dropped. Private [Thomas] Slattery ... took the round from his hands and carried it to the piece. The effect of that round probably saved the piece.<sup>16</sup>

With the Confederate skirmishers shooting and swarming closely about the four guns near the pike, Calef and his artillerists affected a hasty withdrawal from their exposed position. Just as they were leaving, the leading 1<sup>st</sup> Corps battery to arrive moved up to take their place: James A. Hall's 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine. A trader from Damariscotta, Maine, the twenty-seven-year-old captain was a hands-on sort of officer who displayed his leadership directly. At Fredericksburg, a well-placed Confederate shell passed between Hall and two mounted officers, exploding a caisson. Provoked, the captain calmly dismounted, and walked over to one of the freshly loaded guns. Momentarily assuming the role of a corporal, Hall personally sighted it, and produced a direct hit in the Confederate battery.<sup>17</sup>

As his guns now crested Seminary Ridge, he was instructed to move his unit "forward at a trot" and to meet with General John F. Reynolds, commanding the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps. Hall found him on the Chambersburg pike by the McPherson barn. When he reined up next to the general, he found himself also in the company of General James S. Wadsworth, commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps. An older man at fifty-five, he was a curious mixture of politician and general. Many regulars in the service doubted his military ability, including General John Gibbon, who "always suspected that his opinions upon military matters reflected those of his political associates in Washington, with many of whom he was intimate." Wainwright had earlier echoed that sentiment, observing, "Wadsworth is one of the nervous sort, who must be doing something all the time which will show. Quiet, unostentatious preparation he does not appreciate."<sup>18</sup>

That sort of nervous tendency had dire consequences for Hall and his battery this day. Reynolds, determined to hold Seminary Ridge, knew it was vulnerable. Within earshot of Hall, Wadsworth was directed to support him with infantry. Later, Hall recalled exactly what was said and to whom:

Gen. Reynolds, and Wadsworth, were both by my side ... and the former extremely anxious, saying to General Wadsworth in the exact following language, "General, move a strong infantry force to Hall's right for he is my defender until I can get the troops now coming up into line."

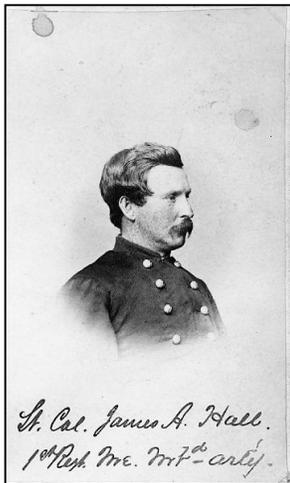
He then said to me, "I desire you to damage the Artillery to the greatest possible extent, and keep their fire from our infantry until they are deployed, when I will retire you somewhat, as you are too far advanced for the general line ... Wadsworth heard of this arrangement ... and later when the rebel infantry appeared upon my left ... instead of charging them, (after I had broken the charge with doubled canister) retired the entire support on my right."<sup>19</sup>

With his subordinates thus instructed, poor Reynolds dashed off to die nobly elsewhere. It remained the lot of Hall and Wadsworth to fight it out together on the ridgelines this day. In accordance with orders, Hall advanced his battery out to Calef's old position on western McPherson Ridge, apparently without being advised of the threat to his right from the railroad cut. In his report of the battle Hall observed that the first six shots fired from his battery forced the Confederates to place two of their pieces "under cover behind a barn" some 1,300 yards distant. Some minutes afterward, however, Confederate infantry appeared on the flank of the battery, no more than 50 or 60 yards away, and began shooting down the battery horses and

cannoneers. To meet this, Hall turned his center and right sections to the north and loaded with double canister. His left section remained focused on the Confederate artillery. His complete attention would soon shift entirely to his right, as

... [T]o my surprise I saw my support falling back without any order having been given me to retire. Feeling that if the position was too advanced for infantry it was equally so for artillery, I ordered the battery to retire by sections ...<sup>20</sup>

Given the overwhelming pressure of the Confederate advance, this proved a difficult task. Lieutenant William Ulmer, commanding the right section, was instructed to take it to East McPherson Ridge and suppress the Southerners in the cut. This he did, only to find the Confederates had already penetrated to that point. When Ulmer's guns arrived, Southern skirmishers using the cut for cover again raked the artillerists with musketry. Pouring a sweeping fire over the position, they disabled men, killing horses, and paralyzing the section. Hall observed,



**Capt. James A. Hall**  
CWLM

Seeing I was to get no aid from Lt. Ulmer, I determined to get the other four guns away if possible, and [went] to the limbers ... [and] ordered them to “reverse” where they were. ... [U]nder cover of the smoke I had the guns taken down the slope by hand to limber and limbered up, and started for Seminary Ridge ...

From where we limbered up to the point of going into the Cashtown road, it was hellish. The scattering of Rebels along the R. R. Cut that had been firing upon me ... rushed forward and fired as rapidly as they could.<sup>21</sup>

As Hall's infantry supports on the right collapsed, Davis' Mississippi brigade pressed the withdrawing battery heavily. Only able to pass one gun at a time through a low point at the stout fence near the pike, the unit narrowly avoided disaster. While getting the guns across the fence, Hall recalled, “[A]t the same time ... the enemy got so thick it was hard to tell which outnumbered, gray or blue.” During the fight his horse was wounded under him. In a

letter on July 11, Hall detailed more of those tense moments to the Maine adjutant general:

[W]e were obliged to drag two guns off by hand. *The boys fought like the D---l, never better.* You may judge when I tell you that many of our horses were not shot *but bayoneted* that it was a close and desperate struggle for our guns ... I have seen hard fighting before, and been badly smashed up, but I never saw a battery taken from the field and its guns saved in so bad a state as the Old Second came off that day [emphasis in original].<sup>22</sup>

The battery escaped with only three intact guns. Of the others, one had been hit by a solid shot and lost a wheel, and both of Ulmer's had lost all their horses. One of them had been recovered, and went to the rear hitched to a caisson. The last gun stood immobile between the railroad cut and the Cashtown pike, limbered up to dead horseflesh.<sup>23</sup>

Upon reaching the pike, Hall encountered the self-possessed Wadsworth. Hall remarked that it was “cowardly” for the infantry to have abandoned his battery as it had. Wadsworth replied, “Get your guns back to some point to cover the retiring of these troops.” Unabashedly, Hall retorted,

“[T]his General is that place right here in the road.” Vehemently disagreeing, Wadsworth insisted: “Oh no, go beyond the town for we cannot hold this line.” He also denied Hall’s request to retrieve his last gun, “snappishly” demanding that he “lose no time” in preparing to cover the retreat. Nonetheless, Hall sent a sergeant and five men after the piece, all of whom were either wounded or captured in the attempt. After withdrawing some distance, the shattered battery was called up again by Wadsworth. At this point, Wainwright intervened and forbade the unit to go back to the line, although Hall was permitted to retrieve his “lost” piece. With all its guns finally collected, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine Battery limped back to Cemetery Hill.<sup>24</sup>

Years later, Captain Hall commented again on the struggles of this day. Regarding the intense fight by the cut and how his men stood to their work, he noted:

It was one of those moments when fortune seems to come to men beyond expectation, and by dealing kindly with tried humanity permits mortals to accomplish results which they could not hope for.<sup>25</sup>

For the moment, Wainwright continued to oversee the disposition of his other batteries, and the fight along the western ridge continued.

Approaching Gettysburg from the south was Osborn’s artillery brigade, accompanying Major General Oliver Otis Howard’s 11<sup>th</sup> Corps. Upon his arrival in town, Howard examined the countryside and, “came to the conclusion that the only tenable position for my limited force” was the ridge southeast of Gettysburg. He quickly established his headquarters on the northern end of this ridge, at Cemetery Hill, for “the highest point at the cemetery commanded every eminence within range.” Howard planned to do two things. The first was to protect the town to the north. He would attempt to “seize and hold a prominent height on the right of the Casstown Road,” on the right flank of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps line, with two divisions, “each division to have a battery of artillery.” Howard also hoped to exploit the natural gifts of Cemetery Hill. As it rose more than 100 feet above the surrounding area, Howard wished to protect it with artillery. However, when informed that the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps was being hard pressed, he was forced to change plans. Instead of a careful positioning of forces, he immediately attempted to hurry forward General Carl Schurz’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, the closest he had, to go the mile and a half to the area north of town. Other units would follow. Reinforcing Cemetery Hill would wait.<sup>26</sup>

Schurz’s artillery accompaniment was possibly the sharpest in the corps: Captain Hubert Dilger’s Battery I, 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio Light Artillery. Twenty-seven years of age, Dilger was a professional artilleryman, although technically a “volunteer” in the Union army. Of German origin, he had graduated from the Karlsruhe Military Academy in Baden and served in the Grand Duke of Baden’s horse artillery. Following First Manassas, he obtained the duke’s leave to observe the war directly. At Chancellorsville, Dilger confronted Stonewall Jackson’s flank attack of May 2<sup>nd</sup> at first with his battery, and later with a single Napoleon. It was “an example of almost superhuman courage and energy” for which he would eventually receive the Medal of Honor.<sup>27</sup>

Dilger’s guns arrived on the field about 12:30 P.M. He initially placed one section on the highest ground between the Mummasburg and Carlisle roads. Almost immediately, however, Capt. R. C. M. Page’s battery of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Carter’s battalion, located near the base of Oak Hill, opened fire with all four of its Napoleons. This compelled Dilger to bring up the remainder of his battery and engage Page. One account from the nearby 157<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry recalled that the artillery’s first return shot might have been a tad hasty, as it

... flew over the Confederate battery. At this the Rebels were jubilant and yelled in derision. Captain Dilger now sighted the gun himself and fired it. The shot dismounted a Rebel gun and killed the horses. Captain Dilger tried a second shot, sighting and firing the gun. No effect being visible with the naked eye, [Dilger was asked], “What effect, Captain Dilger?” Captain, after looking

through his glass, replied, "I have spiked a gun for them, plugging it at the muzzle."<sup>28</sup>

This was independently confirmed later by a private of the 17<sup>th</sup> Connecticut, who recalled seeing a "rebel cannon which had been struck in its mouth by one of our shots and flattened out." Despite his accuracy, however, Dilger was forced to engage in an intense firefight, at distances of up to 1,400 yards. During this bombardment, the Confederates were reinforced to eight pieces, and advanced to within 800 or 1,000 yards. Under increasing pressure, the 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio eventually suppressed this fire, breaking five Confederate gun carriages in the process.<sup>29</sup>



**Capt. Hubert Dilger**  
**CWLM**

In response, the Confederates produced a rifled battery, under Captain William J. Reese, to support Page and deal with the accurate Union guns. Osborn directed the 13<sup>th</sup> New York to support Battery I, subject to Dilger's instructions. Captain William Wheeler, a twenty-six-year-old Ivy League-trained attorney with militia experience, pulled in on the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio, dropped trail, and began to shell the enemy guns. Under the protection of this covering fire, Dilger proceeded to place one section of his guns about 600 yards to the right, and the other two 400 yards to the north. This initial appearance included having to fill, under fire, an irrigation ditch five feet wide and four feet deep with fence rails to allow the guns to pass over. Constantly under fire, the Union batteries "changed position several times" throughout the afternoon. The gunners' work was made more hazardous than necessary by the possible presence of defective ammunition. Dilger later reported that he was "completely dissatisfied" with the reliability of the fuses used in the explosive rounds fired from both smoothbore and rifle batteries, "on the explosion of which, by the most careful preparation, you cannot depend." Technical failures of this sort played havoc with tactical flexibility on the battlefield, and a commander like Dilger,

used to an in-your-face style of artillery combat, felt the handicap keenly. He noted

The fuses for the 3-inch ammunition caused a great many explosions in our right before the mouth of the guns, and it becomes very dangerous for another battery to advance in the fire of his batteries, which kind of advancing of smoothbore batteries is of very great importance on the battlefield and should be done without danger.<sup>30</sup>

Dilger had the eye of a well-trained professional. Although the historical record indicates ordnance and fuse failures did occasionally occur in the Federal artillery, especially in regard to time fuses for rifled shells, one must also ask if Dilger's men skipped a step in loading. General Joseph Hooker, in his Special Orders Number 79 of March 21, 1863, observed, "In the batteries of light 12 pounders, it is very important that the fuze [sic] be kept screwed down tightly. ... If this is not done, a premature explosion may result. [W]hen practicable, the fuze should always be screwed down *just before firing*" [emphasis added]. Given the intensity of the counterbattery fire brought against Dilger in his exposed positions, it is possible that some of his cannoniers launched their shells without the recommended farewell squeeze that would have cost a precious few extra seconds at the limber.<sup>31</sup>

The tenor of the fighting intensified until Confederate infantry of General Jubal Early's division massed on Wheeler's "right flank ... supported by about four batteries" of Lieutenant

Colonel Hilary P. Jones's artillery battalion. Attempting to forestall a rout, the two batteries gave ground slowly. As they withdrew toward the Carlisle road, a well-placed shell hit and disabled one of Dilger's guns. Another struck the axle of one of Wheeler's pieces, totally dismounting it. The veteran gunners slung the 800-pound tube underneath a limber and carried it along with them until the rope broke, forcing its abandonment on the field. One wonders if the good captain recalled these moments when he later said of his Gettysburg experience, "Somehow or other I felt a joyous exaltation, a perfect indifference to circumstances through the whole of that three days' fight, and have seldom enjoyed three days more in my life."<sup>32</sup>

In contrast to the rapid shifting of positions done by Dilger and Wheeler, Captain Michael Wiedrich's Battery I, 1<sup>st</sup> New York, never moved from its original location on the first day, once Osborn ordered it to occupy East Cemetery Hill. Arriving at that spot, the men of the battery encountered General Howard, who asked them if they could "hold this position at all hazards." When they replied as "a chorus" in the affirmative, the general put them to use "shelling some masses of troops in the distance," presumably Richard Ewell's. Shortly afterward, however, Howard noted that for the most part, the shells of the battery seemed to "fall short" of the intended target. "Soon after," observed the general, "complaint came that they reached no farther than our own cavalry; however, I never heard that of our own men were killed or wounded by this fire."<sup>33</sup>

The battery men saw it differently. One of them later remembered

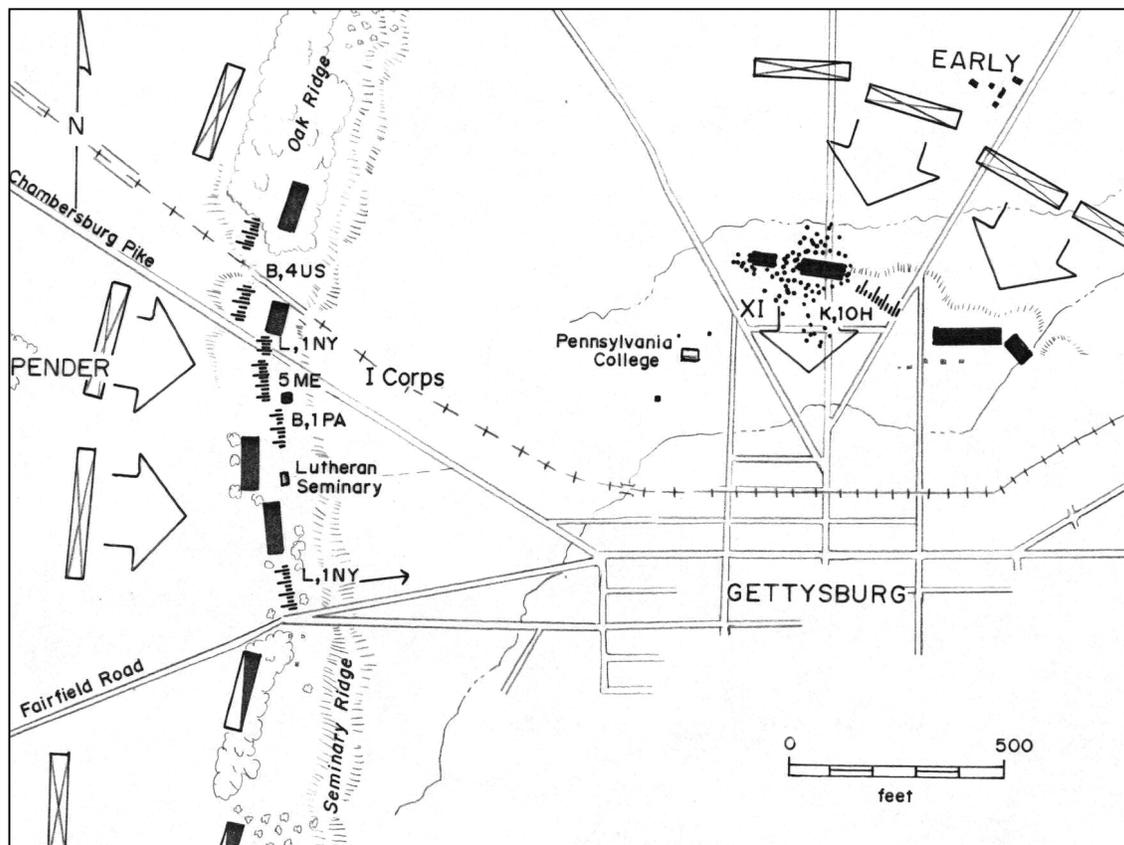
[A] man on horseback, who appeared to be a courier or a staff officer, rode up to the officers of the battery, and ordered them to cease firing, that the troops in the distance were our own men, and that the shells were doing much execution. The order came, "Cease firing," but was resumed after a few minutes. It looked very suspicious to the men of the battery, and a good deal of grumbling was done, for it was thought that the rider was a Rebel who came through the lines during the retreat of the Eleventh Corps through the town.<sup>34</sup>

The mistaken target was later determined to be the 17<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry, which understandably chose to retire through town "before much damage was done" by its friends on the hill. Later, the 17<sup>th</sup> would form "a new line in the rear of the batteries which had shelled us."<sup>35</sup>

After Hall's battery had retired, Wadsworth had temporarily impressed Calef's horse battery to again cover the position, but the Confederate counterbattery fire was increasing. Seeing the need to support Calef, Wainwright ordered up Battery L, 1<sup>st</sup> New York. Taking position near Battery A, both units were exposed to a severe crossfire from Confederate guns along Herr Ridge as well as on Oak Hill, that forced them to withdraw south of the Cashtown pike. During this movement, Battery L's commander, Captain Gilbert H. Reynolds, was struck in his left eye. Although badly wounded, the thirty-year-old former coachmaker, "refused for some time to leave the field." Command then passed to Lieutenant George Breck.<sup>36</sup>

The men of Cooper's Battery B, 1<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania, arriving on the field at midday, had also been busy throughout the afternoon. The battery was first posted in "an oatfield some 350 yards south of the Cashtown road" on East McPherson Ridge and for a short time engaged the Confederate guns of Pegram's artillery to the west, then turned north toward the guns of Carter's battalion. The cannoners had just begun working in earnest when an axle snapped on one of the guns, reducing the unit's firepower by a quarter. In spite of this, twenty-three-year-old "little Cooper" stood to the task at hand, as at Fredericksburg, where General Reynolds had recognized him as "the bravest man in the army" for holding Battery B in a critical spot under hot enemy fire. Wainwright, however, disliked vulnerable positions and ordered Cooper to a new location "in front of the professor's house" on Seminary Ridge.<sup>37</sup>

In an attempt to meet yet another of Wadsworth's seemingly insatiable demands for artillery support, Wainwright sent Lieutenant Benjamin Wilber's section of Battery L to a more covered



*The situation around 3 P.M.*

spot near an orchard, just south of the Cashtown pike, near the McPherson house. The other two sections were placed on eastern McPherson Ridge, near Cooper's old position. There they proved of dubious use, as "the infantry were falling back close upon the guns," which made their effective employment impossible. Additionally, with "no regular line of battle on this crest," Wainwright foresaw the need to remove these guns to prevent their capture. In his imperious view, "There was not the shadow of a chance of our holding this ridge, even had the Third Division commanders had any idea what to do with their men, *which they had not*" [emphasis added]. The four guns were ordered behind the stone wall on the left of the Seminary crest.<sup>38</sup>

The 5<sup>th</sup> Maine Battery, under the Harvard-educated Captain G.T. Stevens, had also arrived near the scene of the fighting somewhere around noon. First ordered to relieve Stewart's battery in its original location south of the seminary, the unit was later directed by General Abner Doubleday, now commanding the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, to support Cooper's guns, north of the seminary, at about 2 P.M. As the line began to fall back, the battymen took up new positions on the opposite side of the seminary, reinforcing the Pennsylvanians.<sup>39</sup>

On the north end of town, Dilger reprised his Chancellorsville performance. He sent back two sections of his and Wheeler's batteries and shortly thereafter retired the last rifled section, reporting, "I would not expose them too much at this short range, at which they commenced to become useless." Retiring by prolong, firing as it withdrew, the 13<sup>th</sup> New York Battery now began to make its way to a new position on Cemetery Hill. Dilger, with his two remaining Napoleons, prepared to cover the retreat on the Carlisle road. Firing at intervals north of the impromptu fence-rail bridge, this action inspired Captain Leonidas Jewett of the 61<sup>st</sup> Ohio, whose infantry supported the batteries, to write he "never saw a more orderly retreat."<sup>40</sup>

Having done all that he could to cover the retreat, Dilger pulled back into Gettysburg. He was relieved on the road by a section of Battery G, 4<sup>th</sup> U. S. Artillery. Observing the jam of broken vehicles and organizations down Carlisle Street, Dilger “took the first road to the left, marched around the town, and rejoined my command” on Cemetery Hill. Battery G, which had begun the day under a different commander, was pulling together its scattered elements.<sup>41</sup>



*Lt. Bayard Wilkeson and Battery G, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Artillery on Blocher's Knoll. B&L*

On the morning of July 1, First Lieutenant Bayard Wilkeson, of Battery G, was the youngest battery commander on the field. He did not have Dilger's background and training, but he demonstrated the same leadership and determination. When Brigadier General Francis Barlow advanced his division toward the knoll that would later bear his name, Battery G went with it. Two sections occupied the hill, while the third, under Lieutenant C.F. Merkle, was posted about one-half mile to the northwest of the almshouse, east of the Carlisle road. It was not a good location. Encroaching Confederates almost isolated the advanced section, forcing it to retire to the rear after nearly exhausting its limited ammunition supply.<sup>42</sup>

The two sections on the knoll were also exposed to fire from Jones's Confederate artillery battalion, located on a gentle rise of ground just over half a mile to the northeast. Wilkeson, mounted and moving about his gunners, received a traumatic near-amputation of his right leg from a solid shot. Improvising a tourniquet, he produced a pocketknife and personally severed his mangled limb. Then, for a time, he continued to direct the fire of the guns, having been carried between two of them by members of the battery. Osborn, who saw him shortly afterward, remembered, “He spoke to me and was cheerful and hopeful. I knew at a glance that the wound was fatal. ... He was very young, less than twenty years of age, and of remarkable promise.” He died some hours later. For his actions, and his example, the young officer was posthumously brevetted to the rank of lieutenant colonel.<sup>43</sup>

With the incapacitation of Wilkeson, command passed to a thirty-eight-year-old former Chicago bookkeeper, Lieutenant Eugene A. Bancroft. He opted to continue the fight, moving the

sections “a short distance” to a less hazardous location, just off the crest, to the left of the unit’s former position. The supporting infantry gave way, however, “compelling [him] to withdraw the guns.” Meeting Merkle’s section in the streets, the entire battery took time only to reload the limbers before retiring slowly through the town, firing down the streets at intervals.<sup>44</sup>

With the general withdrawal of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, Osborn ordered in Battery K, 1<sup>st</sup> Ohio, with the intent of checking the enemy’s advance. Commanded by Captain Lewis Heckman, a forty-ish German-born baker, the unit took position on the northern end of town, east of the Carlisle road. Fronting to the northeast, the battery went into position with the Confederates “already in range” and advancing. During the next half-hour, Heckman’s four Napoleons poured out 113 rounds of ammunition, mostly canister, in a futile attempt to hold back the gray tide of Early’s division. Although Confederate General Harry T. Hays considered this defensive fire to be “unusually galling” to his brigade, it was not enough to save the battery from his skirmishers. It was overrun and lost two guns to the advance of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. Following this performance, Osborn ordered Battery K to the rear, and did not call upon it again throughout the battle. In his report, Osborn took pains to explain what happened, noting that Heckman “was compelled to leave [the guns] in the hands of the enemy. I think no censure can be attached to the battery for [the loss]. The battery was so severely disabled otherwise that I was compelled to send it to the rear. . . .”<sup>45</sup>

The collapse of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps in its advanced positions marked the partial breakdown of Howard’s initial strategy. The corps had failed to connect with the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps line to delay the Confederates outside the town. Yet even as this portion of the preliminary defensive plan was abandoned, around 4 P.M., Howard’s most significant contribution to the day’s struggle had been made, and endorsed. General Winfield Scott Hancock, commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps, had been designated to act for General Meade until the commander himself could appear on the field. When Hancock arrived, he surveyed the situation and agreed that Cemetery Hill was the position to which to rally.<sup>46</sup>

Some of the advancing Confederates of Colonel Isaac Avery’s brigade now felt the impact of that decision. Flush with the ardor of just having captured two of Heckman’s pieces, they now found themselves under a “very effective” shellfire from Wiedrich’s battery that forced them to halt their advance and lie down. They would not come against it, or Cemetery Hill, this day.<sup>47</sup>

About the time the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps line began to crumble, to the west, the remaining four batteries of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps had been busily shifting positions and targets, attempting to support the defense of McPherson Ridge. Throughout the early afternoon, however, the guns of Stewart, Cooper, Reynolds, and Stevens had been forced to give ground in the face of mounting pressure. A German staff officer from Howard ordered Wainwright to hold “Cemetery Hill” to the last extremity. Because of his accent and delivery, Wainwright thought he said “Seminary Hill,” and he made preparations for a last-ditch stand near the Seminary. Located on the ridgeline, north and south of the seminary buildings, this line ultimately formed the artillery bulwark of the Federal defense, which posted twelve guns in a space barely five yards apart.<sup>48</sup>

Although Stewart’s Battery B had initially taken position approximately 200 yards south of the seminary, Wainwright moved it to the north to cover the Cashtown road and the railroad cut. From this area, it was well situated for the defense. The unit was divided into half-batteries of three guns each, with one, under Lieutenant James Davison, located on a high spot of ground between the pike and the cut. The right half-battery, under Stewart, rested some yards in advance of the left, on the northern side of the cut.<sup>49</sup>

Up to this day, James Stewart had spent twelve of his thirty-seven years in the army. General John Gibbon once described him as “the best 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant I ever saw in the service.” Born in Scotland and trained there as a printer, he immigrated to the United States in 1844. Seven years later he joined the battery as a private. He now held an officer’s commission, and command of the battery.<sup>50</sup>

Under the relentless pressure of the Confederate advances the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps infantry retreated from McPherson’s Ridge to Seminary Ridge. Wainwright’s batteries girded themselves for the

onslaught they knew was sure to come. The stage was set for a desperate delaying action, utilizing the artillery and the battered 1<sup>st</sup> Corps infantry.<sup>51</sup>

Two brigades of the division of Major General Dorsey Pender soon advanced “over the rising ground” toward the Federals “in fine style.” Wainwright observed, “The Cashtown road being our most important point, each one had aimed to take care of it.” As the Southerners closed the distance toward Seminary Ridge, “[A]ll the guns were blazing away at them as lively as possible.”<sup>52</sup>

An exception to this was Battery B, at the railroad cut. Stewart, with his divided force, held back until the enemy approached more closely. Davison “had his guns double-shotted with canister, but he withheld his fire until the enemy had reached ... about three hundred yards, when he opened. It was more than they could stand.”<sup>53</sup>

Nonetheless, the Confederates determined to press the attack. As their brigades again advanced, Davison changed “front forward on the left piece,” swinging his guns around and effectively enfilading the Southern lines with volleys of double canister from his three Napoleons. The other batteries added their weight of metal to this fight as well. Cooper, Stevens, and Wilber’s section all “poured out case shot, shell, and canister” into the Confederate infantry. General Alfred M. Scales, commanding the Confederate brigade assaulting the position, later stated:

We ... commenced the descent just opposite the theological seminary. Here the brigade encountered a most terrific fire of grape and shell on our flank, and ... on our front. Every discharge made sad havoc in our line, but still we pressed on at a double-quick until we reached the bottom, at a distance of about 75 yards from ... the college, in our front. Here I received a painful wound from a piece of shell, and was disabled. Our line had been broken up, and now only a squad here and there marked the place where regiments had rested.<sup>54</sup>



*Lt. James Davison, Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup>  
U. S. Artillery. Courtesy of  
Helen Berls.*

As much as Battery B’s effective flanking fire had contributed to the check to Scales’s brigade, it was not delivered without cost. Changing front to smite the Rebels proved very effective, but it also revealed the gunners’ unprotected flank to infantry fire. The musketry of the 38<sup>th</sup> North Carolina inflicted heavy casualties on the three crews, including Davison. As a result, Stewart’s unit had the highest overall casualty figure of any 1<sup>st</sup> Corps battery in the battle.<sup>55</sup>

Even though the balance had tipped against Scales, there were still Confederates aplenty to threaten the Seminary line. In response, Cooper cleared his front of friendly infantry, turned his guns slightly to the left and began to pour a deadly diet of double canister at portions of other commands that attempted to close the distance. A soldier of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin recalled, “Seminary Ridge blazed with a solid sheet of flame, and the missiles of death that swept its western slopes no human beings could endure.”<sup>56</sup>

The firepower of the artillery on Seminary Ridge precluded its successful seizure from the front. Indeed, a member of Cooper’s battery boasted that “of all these attacking forces a single color-bearer only, with a bravery to be admired, reached the rail barricade in front of us.” However, as the Confederates soon began to hammer away at the Seminary line from the flanks, its fall was forgone. Indeed, the two sections of Battery L that Wainwright had earlier withdrawn

back to Seminary Ridge had now retreated “to a position of security” further in the rear. Shortly thereafter, Wadsworth ordered Captain Stevens to withdraw his battery.<sup>57</sup>

When Wainwright appeared on the scene, he put a preemptory halt to the movement. “Remembering what I had supposed to be Howard’s order to hold Seminary Hill to the last, I had no notion of going off, and rode around to make sure that none of the guns moved.” However, he soon discovered most of his infantry supports were “filing through the railroad cutting,” making for the town. He noted, “Indeed, most of them had gone when I found it out.” Now acutely aware of the vulnerability of the position, he quickly changed his perspective:

I then at once ordered all to limber up and move out at a walk towards the town.  
... As I sat on the hill watching my pieces file past, and cautioning each one not to trot, there was not a doubt in my mind but that I should go to Richmond. Each minute I expected to hear the order to surrender for our infantry had all gone from around me, and there was nothing to stop the advancing line.<sup>58</sup>

Wainwright’s fears were well grounded. Considering that the infantry that usually protected them now clogged the very roads they needed to withdraw their pieces, the gunners had a very hard time safely extricating themselves from the onslaught of Confederate numbers. Lieutenant James A. Gardner of Cooper’s battery remembered that “at a most opportune time” Lieutenant Colonel Alfred B. McCalmont of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Pennsylvania informed Cooper that the infantry on the left of the line was gone, and that unless the battery was withdrawn immediately, it would be captured. Gardner recalled, “[W]e limbered to the rear, passed out on the north side of the seminary, narrowly escaping capture, the enemy being around both flanks.” As Cooper rode along the line, he spied Lieutenant Edward N. Whittier of the 5<sup>th</sup> Maine Battery and sang out, “Hell’s to pay, Ned.” Given the circumstances, it was an appropriate greeting.<sup>59</sup>

This situation clearly demonstrated the value of Wainwright’s drill and discipline. Under severe trial from Confederate muskets, with no way to return fire, the beleaguered artillerymen nevertheless loyally remained with their slowly moving pieces. Somewhat sardonically, Wainwright observed, “Perhaps, though it was as well for me that our infantry instead of making the fight took at once and in a body to the left, over the railroad [into the cut]. This cleared the road, and I shouted “Trot! Gallop!” as loud as I could. It did not take long for the whole eighteen pieces and six caissons to be in full gallop down the road. ...”<sup>60</sup>

The withdrawal under fire proved thorny for some units. One of Stevens’ guns of the 5<sup>th</sup> Maine Battery had difficulty descending Seminary Ridge, as a wheel came off and the axle dropped in the road. The captain, displaying notable presence of mind, immediately halted and dismounted. When the cannoneers raised the gun and replaced the wheel, Stevens quickly inserted the handle of a gunner’s tool to act as a linch-pin to hold the unit together until it reached Cemetery Hill.<sup>61</sup>

Stewart’s gunners, already in a precarious situation, faced the problem, under fire, of trying to transfer three limbered Napoleons across the railroad cut, which was full of large rocks. The crews successfully got two of the guns over, but the pintle hook broke on the third, leaving it in the cut. According to Stewart, at this point a group of Confederates appeared, shouting:

“Halt that piece!” We were all completely surprised, but one of the men was fully equal to the occasion, and shouted back, “Don’t you see that the piece is halted?” I had the leading pieces brought back upon the road and opened upon them, when they took to cover very quickly. In the meantime, the men were taking the prolonge off the trail and tying up the gun to the limber. When the pintle hook broke, I felt we would never be able to get the gun out of the cut, as it took us a long time [to move the limber and the gun and tie them together]. [D]uring all this time the enemy were firing upon us at not more than one hundred yards; and just as we got the gun out of the cut, the enemy made a dash,

this time getting within fifty or sixty yards, killing one driver ... and seriously wounding the wheel driver and two horses. But the two pieces kept firing at them all the time, and I will say right here that *if ever men stayed by their guns, it certainly was then* [emphasis added].<sup>62</sup>

Finally breaking free to the road, Stewart sent his three guns toward town and went back in search of the other half of his battery and Davison, who unbeknownst to Stewart had been severely wounded. Approaching the Thompson house, he encountered Confederates who demanded that he surrender. “[B]ut as I had not gone there for that purpose,” Stewart later recalled, “I wheeled my horse and started him off ...” Moments later he was stunned in the leg by a piece of spent shell. Briefly weakened, he subsequently caught up with the rest of his battery in front of the courthouse.<sup>63</sup>

While all Stewart’s guns were now safe (if not immediately serviceable), the same could not be said of Wilber’s section of Battery L. Upon being ordered to retire, the guns of the section were placed in the pike. There, they came under fire from a knot of rapidly advancing Rebel riflemen who dropped one of the limber horses. When that animal was cut from the traces and the gun about to move again, three other animals and Wilber’s horse were hit and rendered *hors’ de combat*, along with a driver. This left an isolated piece, about to be overrun, with no horsepower to speak of. The remaining battery men, conscious that they had fought the good fight, quickly evaluated the situation and determined to fight again another day. Their disabled gun, however, was captured. Later, General Hunt, recognizing that stubborn resistance to the enemy would on occasion incur a high cost, observed, “Guns can be lost with honor.” In this particular case, the loss of the gun represented no dishonor, as the crew had fought valiantly. Wainwright later reflected upon this as he noted the artillery “fire must have shaken the rebel lines badly or they would have been upon us.”<sup>64</sup>

As it was, they almost were. In addition to the infantry challenge to Wilber’s gun, the Confederates brought up some guns, possibly the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rockbridge Battery, to fire into the tail of the retreating Federal artillery from Seminary Ridge. This further “pulled the skirt off my coat,” as Wainwright noted, for the fire smashed up three of Stewart’s caissons. During the movement, it was observed how well the battery men went about their tasks in the heat of battle. An infantryman of the 84<sup>th</sup> New York remarked, “The artillerymen coolly stopped and in the face of the fierce fire jacked up the caisson and replaced the wheel ...” This fire also wounded Color Sergeant Daniel McDermott of the 7<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin, who was retreating in column behind the Union artillery. Other members of his unit placed the wounded color bearer and his flag atop an intact caisson, which the spirited fighter waved as the guns withdrew towards Cemetery Hill.<sup>65</sup>

Once the batteries of both corps began to coalesce on the hill, a defensive position began to form. It appears that General Hancock personally placed Stevens’s battery on a small knoll just southeast of the Baltimore pike, to guard against any Confederate advance down the Rock Creek Valley. Osborn and Wainwright roughly divided Cemetery Hill, with Osborn’s guns occupying the ground west of the Baltimore pike, looking northwest. To the right, on the heights of East Cemetery Hill, were the remaining guns of the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, facing to the north and east. For ease of command, Wiedrich’s battery, already positioned, was temporarily assigned to Wainwright.<sup>66</sup>

As the shadows began to lengthen on the evening of July 1, 1863, forty-one artillery pieces now crowned the heights south of Gettysburg. Manned by veteran gunners who had seen much this day, the guns had provided a wall of iron that helped to hold the advancing Confederates at bay. Although eventually forced to retreat, the “men behind the guns” had held out long enough to allow the shattered remnants of their respective corps time to rally.

Their service had not been purchased cheaply. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps, seven of twenty-eight guns were not serviceable by the end of the day. Losses were roughly equivalent in the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, with four of twenty-six out of commission, including Heckman’s lost pieces. Casualties among the cannoneers, by one estimate, were as much as 15 percent in some units.<sup>67</sup>

This reflected well on the quality of the men in these units and the officers who led them. On June 11, just before the campaign, Osborn had expressed dim hopes of rapidly resurrecting any “resemblance to light batteries” in the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps Artillery Brigade. Given the magnitude of the Chancellorsville disaster, he had claimed that it would take “two or three months” of focused effort, with the army at rest, for this work. Yet with one possible exception (Heckman), his batteries had performed well, given the general circumstances. Of his own commands’ behavior he noted, “Every battery did its whole duty; the officers proved themselves brave and efficient, and the men on the battlefield were most willing, brave, and gallant ...”<sup>68</sup> Osborn’s complete understanding of his own role as an officer and leader of men made such a performance possible. He later wrote

[In battle,] the force of will, which an officer must bring to bear upon himself in order not only to control his men but also to govern himself, is wonderful. He must by sheer force of will shut up every impulse of his nature, except that of controlling the officers and men. ... He must discard all care of his personal safety and even his own life. The most difficult person to control is always himself.<sup>69</sup>

The qualities Osborn described are often referred to collectively as *coolness under fire*. General Hunt had chosen wisely; these qualities were self-evident at the brigade level in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, and in most of the battery commanders. In October 1864, Wainwright recorded, “My highest ambition [upon entering the army] was to earn a solid name ... as a first-class officer in my own arm of the service.” He also noted, in the same passage, “The artillery is in fact an arm of the defense rather than of offense; its glory is in coolness and obstinacy ...”

This “coolness and obstinacy” reflected the activity of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> corps artillerists on Cemetery Hill on the evening of July 1, 1863. Having being driven from position after position throughout the day’s fight, vigilant cannoners put the finishing touches on lunettes dug around their guns, as they prepared for the combat they knew would renew in the morning.<sup>70</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1891) Series 1, 25(2):471. [Hereafter cited as *OR*; all citations are from Series 1.]

<sup>2</sup> Ezra J Warner, *Generals In Blue: The Lives of The Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 242; Edward G. Longacre, *The Man Behind The Guns* (South Brunswick and New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1977), 66-67.

<sup>3</sup> *Generals In Blue*, 242; *OR* 25(1):252-253; *OR* 27(1):242-243.

<sup>4</sup> There is a fascinating correspondence, detailing which officers were to be denounced and which promoted to captain, from Colonel (then Major) Freeman McGilvery, relating Captain James A. Hall’s plot to the Governor of Maine. See the Maine State Archives, Adjutant General’s Records, 2<sup>nd</sup> Maine Battery file, Box B-1, letter # 195. [Hereafter cited as *Maine Adjutant General’s Records*, 2<sup>nd</sup> *Maine Battery file*.] Copy in the Gettysburg National Military Park Library (GNMPL).

<sup>5</sup> Stewart Sifkas, *Who Was Who In The Union* (New York: Facts On File, 1988), 433.

<sup>6</sup> Allen Nevins, ed., *A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Charles S. Wainwright* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Who Was Who*, 433; *Diary of Battle*, 55.

<sup>8</sup> New York Monuments Commission, *New York at Gettysburg* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, Printers, 1902), 3:1194, 1203.

- <sup>9</sup> Herb S. Crumb and Katherine Dhalle, eds., *No Middle Ground: Thomas Ward Osborn's Letters from the Field* (Hamilton: Edmonston, 1993), 143.
- <sup>10</sup> Herb S. Crumb, ed., *The Eleventh Corps Artillery At Gettysburg – The Papers of Major Thomas Ward Osborn* (Hamilton: Edmonston, 1991), xi; *Diary of Battle*, 168.
- <sup>11</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 220.
- <sup>12</sup> OR 27(1):229-232; *Eleventh Corps Artillery*, 10.
- <sup>13</sup> Eric Campbell, "Battle Era Cultural Landscape Report," *General Management Plan* (Gettysburg: Gettysburg National Military Park, 1997), 5-10.
- <sup>14</sup> John H. Calef, "Gettysburg Notes," in *Record of the Military Service Institution of the United States*, (Governor's Island: Military Service Institution, 1907), 47-48. Photocopy in GNMPL.
- <sup>15</sup> OR 27(2):675-678; "Gettysburg Notes," 47-48, 54.
- <sup>16</sup> OR 27(1):1031.
- <sup>17</sup> Edmund J. Raus, *A Generation on the March – The Union Army at Gettysburg* (Lynchburg: H.E. Howard, 1987), 27; L. Van Loan Naiswald, *Grape and Canister: The Story of the Field Artillery in the Army of the Potomac, 1861 – 1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 253-254.
- <sup>18</sup> James A. Hall to John Bachelder, December 29, 1869, in David L. and Audrey J. Ladd, eds., *The Bachelder Papers* (Dayton: Morningside Press, 1995), (1):385; *Generals In Blue*, 532; John Gibbon, *Personal Recollections of the Civil War* (Youngstown: Morningside Press, 1978), 15; *Diary of Battle*, 166.
- <sup>19</sup> James A. Hall to John Bachelder, February 27, 1867, *Bachelder Papers*, (1):306.
- <sup>20</sup> OR 27(1):359.
- <sup>21</sup> James A. Hall to John Bachelder, December 29, 1869, *Bachelder Papers* (1):386-387.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid; Letter of James A. Hall to John L. Hadsdon, July 11, 1863, *Maine Adjutant General's Records*, 2<sup>nd</sup> *Maine Battery file*, GNMPL.
- <sup>23</sup> James A. Hall to John Bachelder, December 29, 1869, *Bachelder Papers*, (1):387.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid; OR 27(1):359-360.
- <sup>25</sup> *Maine At Gettysburg: Report of Maine Commissioners Prepared by The Executive Committee* (Gettysburg: Stan Clark Military Books, 1994), 19.
- <sup>26</sup> OR 27(1):702-704.
- <sup>27</sup> *A Generation on the March*, 102; Kenneth M. Kempf, "Dilger's Battery At Gettysburg," *Gettysburg Magazine*, vol. 4 (January, 1991), 50; Henry I. Kurtz, "Dilger's Battery the Best Artillery Unit In the Federal Army? Here's Its Record," *Civil War Times Illustrated* (November, 1962), 40-41.
- <sup>28</sup> John S. Applegate, *Reminiscences and Letters of George Arrowsmith of New Jersey* (Red Bank: John H. Cook, 1893), 212.
- <sup>29</sup> Edward Marcus, ed., *A New Canaan Private In The Civil War: Letters of Justus M. Silliman, 17<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Volunteers* (New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1984), 42; OR 27(1):754.
- <sup>30</sup> OR 27(1):754, 747; *A Generation on the March*, 91; OR 27(1):748, 754-755.
- <sup>31</sup> OR 27(1):893; Henry L. Abbott, *Siege Artillery In The Campaigns Against Richmond* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, Publisher, 1868), 112; OR 25(2):151-152.
- <sup>32</sup> OR 27(1):754, 753; *A Generation on the March*, 91-92.
- <sup>33</sup> OR 27(1):748, 703; *New York at Gettysburg*, 3:1247.
- <sup>34</sup> *New York at Gettysburg*, 3:1247.
- <sup>35</sup> H. P. Moyer, *History of the Seventeenth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry* (Lebanon: Sowers Printing Co., 1911), 50-51.
- <sup>36</sup> OR 27(1):356, 362; Charles S. Wainwright Journal, Huntington Library, San Marino, Ca. Copy in GNMPL; *A Generation on the March*, 88; *New York at Gettysburg*, 3:1257.
- <sup>37</sup> OR 27(1):364, 355, 356, 365; *A Generation on the March*, 140; Edward N. Whittier to John Bachelder, December, 1883, *Bachelder Papers*, (3):1939; John P. Nicholson, ed., *Pennsylvania At Gettysburg* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1914), 2:906.
- <sup>38</sup> OR 27(1):363, 356; *Diary of Battle*, 235.
- <sup>39</sup> *A Generation on the March*, 27; *Maine At Gettysburg*, 83-84.
- <sup>40</sup> OR 27(1):754; *New York at Gettysburg*, 3:1320; Arthur T. Lee to John Bachelder, February 16, 1888, *Bachelder Papers*, (3):1527
- <sup>41</sup> OR 27(1):754. Although Dilger quite clearly stated in his report that he avoided the town, others, like Maj. Benj. A. Willis of the 119<sup>th</sup> New York, reported they saw, "(A) section of Captain Dilger's renowned

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battery ... near the square in the town of Gettysburg.” This would have been Battery G, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S., which did fight through the town. Both batteries were armed with Napoleons. See *OR 27(1):742*.

<sup>42</sup> *A Generation on the March*, 165; *OR 27(1):757*.

<sup>43</sup> Harry Pfanz, *Gettysburg, the First Day* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 234; *A Generation on the March*, 165; *Eleventh Corps Artillery*, 10.

<sup>44</sup> *A Generation on the March*, 165; *OR 27(1):756-757*.

<sup>45</sup> *OR 27(1):755, 748*; *A Generation on the March*, 103; John Bachelder, Battlefield of Gettysburg Troop Position Map – Plate No. 11, 3 P.M., July 1 (GNMPL); *OR 27(2):478, 484*. Firing “113 rounds” during the half hour Heckman’s four guns were engaged broke down to a little over one round a minute per gun, a somewhat slow rate of fire when the enemy is already in range. *A Generation on the March*, 103, notes that Heckman was, “not considered an effective commander.”

<sup>46</sup> *OR 27(1):704*.

<sup>47</sup> Richard W. Iobst, *The Bloody Sixth: The Sixth North Carolina Regiment, Confederate States of America* (Gaithersburg: Butternut Press, 1987), 134; *OR 27(2):484*.

<sup>48</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 235; *OR 27(1):356*. Although in his diary Wainwright makes mention of a total of “18 pieces” on the ridgeline, it is worth remembering that one of Cooper’s guns was now out of action with a broken axle. See also *OR 27(1):365*.

<sup>49</sup> *OR 27(1):356*; James Stewart, “Battery ‘B’ Fourth United States Artillery At Gettysburg” in *Sketches of War History*, MOLLUS, Ohio, W. H. Chamberlin, ed., (Cincinnati: Robert Clark, 1896), 4:184-185.

<sup>50</sup> *A Generation on the March*, 163; *Recollections*, 13; Silas Felton, “The Iron Brigade Battery: An Irregular Regular Battery” in *Giants In Their Tall Black Hats*, Alan Nolan, ed., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 143, 147.

<sup>51</sup> *Maine At Gettysburg*, 85.

<sup>52</sup> “Battery B,” 185; *Diary of Battle*, 235.

<sup>53</sup> “Battery B,” 185.

<sup>54</sup> *Pennsylvania At Gettysburg*, 2:908-909; *OR 27(2):670*.

<sup>55</sup> “The Iron Brigade Battery,” 150; *OR 27(1):174*.

<sup>56</sup> *Pennsylvania At Gettysburg*, 2:909; Robert K. Beecham, *Gettysburg: The Pivotal Battle of The Civil War* (Chicago: A. C. McGlurg & Co., 1911), 80.

<sup>57</sup> *Pennsylvania At Gettysburg*, 2:909; *OR 27(1):363, 357*.

<sup>58</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 236.

<sup>59</sup> *Pennsylvania At Gettysburg*, 2:909; Edward N. Whittier to John Bachelder, December 1883, *Bachelder Papers*, (3):1939

<sup>60</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 236.

<sup>61</sup> *Maine At Gettysburg*, 86.

<sup>62</sup> “Battery B,” 187-189.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>64</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 237; *New York at Gettysburg*, 3:1254. The gun that was lost was gun number one, the first three-inch gun accepted by the War Department. It was noted because of its unique serial number. The gun was recaptured at the Mule Shoe salient at Spotsylvania in 1864. It was entrusted after the war to the care of the veterans of the battery, at Rochester, New York. It is presently in the hands of a private collector.

<sup>65</sup> *Diary of Battle*, 236-237; *OR 27(2):675*; Jennings Cropper Wise, *The Long Arm of Lee: The History of The Artillery of The Army of Northern Virginia* (New York: Oxford, 1959), 569; C.V. Tevis, *The History of The Fighting Fourteenth* (New York: Brooklyn Eagle Press, 1911), 86; *OR 27(1):281*.

<sup>66</sup> A.M. Gambone, *Hancock at Gettysburg...and beyond* (Baltimore: Butternut and Blue, 1997), 57; Harry Pfanz, *Gettysburg – Culp’s Hill and Cemetery Hill* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 54, see also note 29, 416; *OR 27(1):748*. Hancock possibly irritated more than Howard on Cemetery Hill that afternoon. In his *Diary*, p. 238, Wainwright specifically stated, “I posted Stevens...[on the knoll],” yet other evidence clearly indicates that Hancock did. Wainwright also noted that he instructed his battery commanders to “not take orders from any man with a star on his shoulders *who might choose to give them* (emphasis added).” While on its face this was a routine caution against infantry officers meddling into artillery affairs, its tone suggests a snide swipe at Hancock (or perhaps his earlier experience with Wadsworth).

<sup>67</sup> *OR 27(1):354-359, 747-755*; *Grape and Canister*, 361-362.

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<sup>68</sup> *Eleventh Corps Artillery*, 2, 1; *OR* 27(1):750.

<sup>69</sup> *Eleventh Corps Artillery*, 36.

<sup>70</sup> *Diary of Battle*, x, 239.