

very base of the Round Top across Plum Run. His left, the Legion, was near the J. Welkert house and buildings and his right was along the Wheatfield Road.(22) Wofford's men were unable to bring out the captured guns as most of the horses were dead and the stone walls prevented their hauling them out by hand. However, a Gettysburg Battlefield marker located on Cemetery Ridge north of the Pennsylvania monument states that three of the guns were pulled to the Emmitsburg Road and there recaptured by a Vermont regiment. It states that the battery had two men killed and two officers and twelve men wounded. We do not know which account is correct but I do not believe that the guns were drawn off but recaptured at the original location or very close to it.(?)

The Legion retired through the Wheatfield which now had become a deathfield filled with the dead and wounded men of both sides. It was by now about 7:00 PM with darkness fast approaching. There was no daylight saving time back then. Both sides were more than willing to let things quiet down, collect the wounded and attempt to get a little rest.

Second Lieutenant Charles Martin, ranking officer of Company F, Cobb's Legion, tells in a letter home to his sister how savage the fighting was. He says, "We had it hand to hand for some time.....sword crossed sword, and bayonet crossed bayonet. We were all mixed up together and thrusts were passed with terrible rapidity" Martin had a narrow escape when a Union soldier he had captured turned on him and knocked him unconscious with a "blow on the head with his musket." Fellow Confederates rushed forward to rescue Martin in furious fighting.

Numerous Federal soldiers account later of just how orderly and effective Wofford's advance was executed. Lt. Col. Alford B. Chapman of the 57th New York wrote, "When the whole line in front of me suddenly gave way, breaking through the ranks of my regiment in considerable disorder.I then moved to the rear in good order. The enemy following closely." A member of Zook's Brigade stated, "We fell back to the stone wall then turned and gave the enemy such a volley of lead as, for a time, disordered his advance. One or two of the boys lingered at the edge of the woods as the Rebels in battalion front came from the opposite woods into the opening. They were marching steadily, with colors flying as though on dress parade, and guns at right-shoulder-shift. They looked harmless, but the lingering boys did not care to make a closer acquaintance and hurried on to their regiment. It seemed miraculous that any one came out of that wood alive, so terrible was the fire when we entered it." A member of the 2nd New Hampshire wrote, "The constant crowding toward the center kept their ranks full and well closed up. Our fire made apparently little or no impression on them. They were reinforced from right and left with every step. When [they appeared] at point blank range they were a compact mass of humanity. Although [our] shooting was good, there was not enough of it."

More than a few years ago, when I was much younger, I walked the route, along with a guide and a few other hardy Civil War enthusiasts that the Legion and other units of Longstreet's Corps marched that hot day of July 2, 1863. This walk was made after a fine dinner the night before followed by a good night's sleep on a comfortable motel bed and a nourishing breakfast. I carried nothing but a camera, binoculars and a small note pad with no heavy rifle, knapsack, blanket, ammunition, food etc. I was also wearing soft soled, comfortable walking shoes and cool clothing. We marched the 5 1/2 mile or more route to the forming point then through the Peach Orchard, down through the Wheatfield, on across Plum Run to Little Round Top and then back up to the Emmitsburg Road where we were met by our air conditioned bus. We had no artillery smashing trees around us as we came out of the woods crossing the Emmitsburg Road and we certainly had no one trying their best to kill us as we advanced toward Round Top. We had no one firing at our backs as we went back up the slope toward the Peach Orchard. Our hike took about one half of a day and, when it ended, we could not believe how those men could have done what they did. They marched all of July 1, slept very little if any that night, and probably had little if any cooked food, were up before sunrise and did not get to stop until dark. This must have taken super human effort. Those who have been in battle know that men can do things not ordinarily expected of them at a time like that but the Civil War soldier surely was the greatest soldier ever!

The men of Bowdon's Company B, Cobb's Legion, Wofford's Brigade, had had one hard day but I'll bet they were one proud bunch the night of July 2 with the two captured Federal regimental flags being examined and admired by all before being sent to the rear for safekeeping.

Longstreet, outnumbered by almost 50%, reports his losses in killed, wounded and missing for the day at about 6,000 out of his 19,900 men engaged and Meade's at between 9 and 10,000 of his 28,000 engaged. The Union forces committed 20 brigades to fight Longstreet's 8 plus 3 from Anderson on his left.

There is no known written report of this battle, or of any other battle that we are aware of, by General Wofford after he assumed command of Cobb's Brigade. Bachelder does quote an oral statement from the general, however: "Wofford's brigade supported Barksdale's brigade and advanced with Barksdale, but when Barksdale changed directions to his left, Wofford uniting with the left units of Kershaw's brigade and a portion of Anderson's brigade, charged the Union troops in the wheatfield and forced them back to the ridge at Little Round Top."⁽²³⁾ Bachelder does not state how or when this statement was obtained, however; it is known that he was in contact after the war with most of the military leaders who fought at Gettysburg.

This was another day for the South that was a "Could Have Been". Longstreet received absolutely no reinforcements from General Lee. Ewell, on the northern end of the Confederate line with his Second Corps, failed even to get his men into battle order and contributed nothing to prevent Meade from shifting troops from that sector of his line to combat Longstreet. Stuart, who finally arrived at Gettysburg on the late afternoon of July 2, was not available to threaten on Hood's right and therefore forcing Meade to keep the VI Corps back to protect that flank and his rear instead of being used against Longstreet's attacking force. Also, Lee's failure to be with Longstreet before the attack began, possibly changing the attack order once he saw the true alignment of the Union Army and had heard Hood's report that there were no troops preventing him from going around the left flank of the enemy, was very unfortunate and his failure to prod Ewell and some of Hill's troops into action was a serious mistake. Thus the plan for a "General Engagement of the Day was dwarfed into the battle of the right at 3:00 o'clock, that on the left by a single division, and nearer the center at 9:00 o'clock by two brigades."⁽²⁾ Longstreet refers to Ewell, "finally makes an attack at Culp's Hill." Longstreet further states that if he had had Pickett's Division present at the moment Wofford advanced to the gorge at Round Top, we could have had it before Union troops arrived.⁽²⁴⁾

The night of the 2nd was spent with both sides moving around in the light of a full moon, removing and comforting the wounded and wondering what tomorrow would bring. All the Confederate wounded that could be gathered up were moved back to field hospitals around Marsh Creek, Wofford's hospital was across the creek from Crawford's-. The night was chilly and it is interesting to read stories of the old veterans in which more of them complained of getting cold at night rather than of the heat during the day.

Longstreet did not go to Lee's headquarters the night of the 2nd but sent a report to him of the day's action. He also reported that his third and remaining division, Pickett's, had now arrived.⁽²⁵⁾

General Lee was up at 3:00 AM, had a good breakfast, and before sunrise on July 3, rode over to Longstreet and advised him of the plan for the day which called for an assault upon the enemy's left center using McLaws' and Hood's Divisions and to be supported by Pickett's fresh troops. Longstreet quickly stated that this would not do as McLaws and Hood were holding a mile against several times their numbers and, should they be withdrawn, the enemy would move in and replace them and get into the army's rear toward the Potomac.⁽²⁶⁾ Also, these troops had lost about one-third of their numbers on the 2nd and were "fought out". He further cautioned General Lee that a column advancing as he proposed would have a mile to march under concentrated enemy artillery and a thousand yards under long-range musketry fire.⁽²⁶⁾ He added that he had already begun preparations to carry out his and Hood's plan to swing around to the Union left, getting in between Meade's Army and Washington, and forcing the Federals to abandon their present line. He said that he had had his scouts out all night and that they had discovered a way around the Federal left and getting in behind him just as Hood had suggested. Longstreet surely felt that any further attack on

the strongly entrenched Federal line was sure to fail. Lee listened politely but, as "Old Pete" finished, he stated that the plan was to attack the enemy's left center by the entire First Corps. He pointed toward Cemetery Ridge and said, "The enemy is there and I am going to strike him." (27) Longstreet said years later, "I was never so depressed as upon that day."

General Lee then consented for McLaws' and Hood's, now Law's, men, to remain in their present defensive positions but that they would actively demonstrate to distract the enemy once the planned assault began and to move to the attack once the enemy line was broken. He would use Pickett's fresh troops and those of Hill's Third Corps for the proposed assault.

After the Confederate Commander told Longstreet just which troops he would assign for the attack, "Old Pete" did some quick figuring and determined that there would be about 15,000 men involved. He did not think that this number would be nearly strong enough to take and hold the distant ridge. He felt that he had not resisted yesterday's assignment strongly enough and was determined that today he would make a stronger argument against the proposed attack while still showing the proper military respect to his superior whom he honored highly. He told General Lee, "General, I have been a soldier all my life. I have been with soldiers engaged in fights by couples, by squads, companies, regiments, divisions and armies, and should know as well as anyone what soldiers can do. It is my opinion that no 15,000 men ever arrayed for battle can take that position." Lee's reply to this was a firm order, "Summon Pickett and get his brigade in line and wait for the signal to attack." This was the last of Longstreet's "suggestions".

The two began their ride to the north to inspect the proposed attack area. As they approached the Peach Orchard they came upon General Wofford. "Old Bald Head" was in a good humor and proudly told General Lee of his brigade's fine record of yesterday telling the Confederate commander that his men had reached the crest of the ridge just north of Little Round Top and could have stayed there with support. General Lee complimented the Georgian and asked, if he could go there again. Wofford's enthusiasm quickly waned and he replied, "No, General, I think not." "Why not?" Lee wanted to know. Wofford replied, "Because, General, the enemy had all night to entrench and reinforce. I had been pursuing a broken enemy, and the situation is now very different." These words coming from a general who was always looking for a fight should have been cause of concern for General Lee. Longstreet said that he looked at his leader to see if Wofford's words had any effect. They had none at all.

Longstreet then ordered Alexander, his trusted First Corps artillery chief and a fellow Georgian, to line up all the guns that he could gather and for him to be ready to concentrate his fire on the enemy's artillery and troops in the proposed attack area. This incidentally was the only advantage of having the exterior line as guns from along the line could converge their fire inward onto a narrower segment of the opponent's line. Unfortunately this advantage was wasted and it was another mistake by the engineer, General Lee, who certainly recognized this advantage. He instead again left the tactical details of the battle to subordinates, this time to the ineffective head of the army's Chief of Artillery, General/Preacher William Pendleton. Alexander was left with an almost straight across bombardment of the Cemetery Ridge line. Many of Hill's and most of Ewell's guns would remain quiet and Pendleton actually removed, without Alexander's knowledge, some of the guns the Georgian intended to run forward to support Pickett once the advance stepped off. Making the charge along with Pickett's Division of Longstreet's Corps would be Heath's and Pettigrew's Divisions of Hill's Corps. Ewell was again expected to keep the forces on his front on the left busy while McLaws and Law would do likewise on the right. Longstreet was being asked to direct an attack on the center that he did not believe could be successful with two-thirds of the troops that he was to direct not belonging to his command. This fact alone clearly proves that there was no problem between Lee and Longstreet and that Lee still had the utmost confidence in the First Corps commander, surely more than he had in Generals Hill and Ewell.

The story of "Pickett's Charge" has been written about thousands of times. Suggested reading is *The Gettysburg Campaign-A Study in Command* by Edwin B. Coddington. In short, after Alexander's artillery bombardment, which was of little damage to the enemy, Pickett reported to Longstreet and asked, "General, shall I advance?" Longstreet could not answer. He only bowed, indicating his consent. (28)

Pickett's Virginia brigades, one of which was commanded by Cobb's Legion's first major, now Brig. Gen. Richard Garnett, and those of Hill's Corps, mostly brigades of North Carolina's finest, began the march across the almost mile that separated the two armies directed at a copse of trees along a stone wall behind which waited the defending Yankees. Garnett was sick with chills and fevers and in addition could hardly hobble about as he had been kicked on his knee by a horse and would have to ride on the advance making for a very good target. He was galloping up and down in front of his Virginians encouraging them to do their duty. As the advance began, Alexander walked along beside his friend's horse for as long as he could. He stated that Garnett was suffering from a chill and had the collar of an old blue overcoat high up around his neck on this hot July day. We have already written how he was shot from his horse only 20 yards from the stone wall and how his body was never identified or recovered. I have often wondered if because he was wearing the blue overcoat, maybe a captured one, he might possibly have been mistaken for some unfortunate Union soldier and was quickly buried along with hundreds of other unidentified Yankee soldiers and now occupies a grave in the National Cemetery at Gettysburg? We can imagine the concern in Cobb's Legion when they learned that their major was killed.

Some of the brave men reached the wall and for a very short time held a section of it. Some writers refer to this as "The High Tide of the Confederacy." The story is well known how they were beaten back with terrible losses and those who made it back to the Confederate lines were met by a distraught General Lee encouraging them to re-group and saying, "It is all my fault."

When the assault began, the Legion and others of Wofford's command were ordered to move up closer to the enemy and, once a break in the enemy line was developed by Pickett, to spring to the attack. The Legion and the brigade moved down about 600 yards toward the Wheatfield but not quite reaching it when they drew a heavy fire from their front. They were now a hundred yards or so forward of the other brigades of the division and in an exposed position. With the repulse of Pickett, Wofford's troops were ordered back to their defensive position of the morning. These positions were strengthened and aligned during the night and the Legion was posted on the western side of the Emmitsburg Road with the Peach Orchard to their right and to their front.

The danger now was that Meade would take advantage of the confusion among Lee's Army and would counterattack. He did order the advance of the V Corps but it did not amount to much as Meade, like his predecessors, was reluctant to challenge even a wounded "Bobby" Lee.

General Meade, the engineer, was successful at the Battle of Gettysburg because he fought it, except for Sickles' unauthorized forward movement, exactly according to the plan. Unfortunately for the South, the plan was that of General James Longstreet, CSA, one which was rejected by Meade's adversary and Longstreet's commander, General Robert E. Lee. That is: "Let us pick a good defensive position to our liking between the enemy and Washington and encourage the enemy to attack, no offensive tactics." It is sad that General Lee, the engineer, did not agree.

The day after walking the route, which the Legion marched and fought over on the second day, our group walked the "Pickett's Charge" path at as near to their pace as possible. We marched to the stone wall and then back across the mile to Seminary Hill at about the fastest pace that we could do. The only danger we faced was the automobile traffic on the Emmitsburg Road. Again, we were totally exhausted at the end of the march. Hats off to the Confederate soldiers at Gettysburg!

Company B's casualties were fairly light considering all the fighting in which they were involved. They list only one man, 1st Lt. J. C. Alman, as being killed and two men, Privates John T. Hearn and Giedon Powledge, captured, both having been wounded and left with the enemy when the Rebel Army withdrew. Lt. Alman was seriously wounded and also had to be left behind with the enemy when the Confederates withdrew. He died a few days later. The Lieutenant was the officer who had accompanied the Legion's first man to die, Pvt. William R. Smith, back to Georgia in late 1861. We do not have names of the members of Company B men who were wounded. The official casualty list of Wofford's Brigade shows 22

killed, 144 wounded and 112 missing. The official figure for Cobb's Legion shows two killed and 20 wounded. See the Appendix for details. Again, these figures appear to be on the light side as we know that there are two members of Cobb's Legion buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery in Savannah, Georgia who were moved there after the war. We also know that two other members of Cobb's Legion, Sgt. J. L. Born of Co. C and Sgt. A. C. Adair of Co D were killed. These four plus the one in Co. B are more than the total reportedly killed for the entire Legion. It is difficult to believe that none of the other four companies had no one killed.

One can imagine the concern in Bowdon when the people heard of the terrible conflict taking place in far off Pennsylvania. It was probably several days, maybe weeks, before the families knew if their loved ones were alive or dead. We have one account of a family of a Carroll County soldier serving in the 20th Georgia who was killed on July 2 and was notified of his death by letter received at Bowdon on July 22. At the same time, they were getting the bad news from Vicksburg where the 34th, 41st and 56th Georgia, each with companies of Bowdon and Carroll County men, were among those who surrendered there to General Grant..

Figures of the wounded left at Gettysburg by the Confederates show that Cobb's Legion left four men in the care of Surgeon R. H. Ramsuer of the 18th Georgia (Company B had three so there must have been considerably more) along with 46 more from Wofford's Brigade.(29) From McLaws' Division, a total of 576 wounded were left along with two chaplains, 10 medical officers and 70 nurses and cooks. To the Yankees' credit, the best care possible was given to the wounded prisoners. The Southerners, who were left as wounded prisoners, were probably more fortunate than those wounded Confederates who had to make the long trip back to Virginia either by walking through the rain and mud or by riding in springless wagons over the bumpy roads.

Saturday, the 4th of July, was spent in rest by both sides with very few "fire works". As if the results of the past three days at Gettysburg were not bad enough alone, it was not the only tragedy taking place in the South. Far to the southwest, General Grant was accepting the unconditional surrender of the besieged Confederates in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Pemberton's army in the west had been completely defeated and Lee's in Virginia had been badly treated. This was the low point of the war in the South.

Lee had no choice now except to withdraw his army and the orders for the retreat were issued by noon on the 4th. The wagon trains carrying the wounded and accompanied by about 5,000 captured Union prisoners were to start immediately by the Chambersburg and Fairfield Roads and the infantry by the latter road after nightfall. It had rained all day with over 2 ½ inches measured in nearby Harrisburg. The Third Corps was to lead followed by the First, including the Legion and Company B, with the Second Corps as rear guard. It was daylight on Sunday, the 5th, before Wofford and the Legion could move out. The Legion quietly moved out of their line along the Emmitsburg Road, back through Pitzer's Woods and fields to the Schoolhouse, then along the road running along Willoughby Run until they came to a fork where they took the left fork to the Black Horse Tavern. At the tavern, they did a column left onto the Fairfield or Hagerstown Road marching about 8 miles to Fairfield, PA, then climbing through Fairfield Gap in South Mountain into the Cumberland Valley. It rained another 1 ½ inches on the 5th while on the 22 miles or so to Hagerstown, Maryland which they marched through and entrenched on the right of the almost 15 mile defensive line. This thin line was set with Ewell's Corps on the left or north facing to the east, Hill in the center and Longstreet's divisions on the right or south and southeast of Williamsport and about 8-10 miles south of Hagerstown.. By the roads they took, this is probably over a 40-mile march and was on muddy roads the entire length, a terrible march all the way. I have no information on just how long the march took but it was slow due to the rain and the wagon train. As bad as it was on the men of Cobb's Legion it was much worse for all the thousand of wounded Rebels walking and the more seriously wounded who were riding in the springless wagons and also on the many thousand captured Federal soldiers, many who were "walking wounded", struggling along on the muddy roads through the rain with the 17 mile-long wagon train.

The enemy pursued but the heavy rain and resulting muddy, cut-up roads caused by all the Confederate traffic was in the favor of the South. Union Cavalry did some harm by getting among the Confederate wagons and destroying a number of them and killing horses and mules. This march was regarded as

probably the most difficult of the war for General Lee's men due to the heavy rain and muddy roads, coupled with the Yankee harassment and the letdown feeling of having been unsuccessful at Gettysburg

Because of the heavy rains, the Potomac had overflowed its banks and was ten feet above its normal level and was much too high to ford while the bridge at Falling Waters had been partially destroyed by the Yankees, forcing the Confederate troops to be entrenched on the north side of the river in Maryland to await attacks until the 13th. Here, Lee's entire army, minus some cavalry, was packed into an area of several miles with its back to the raging river. He was in his most critical position of the war with the exception of Appomattox.(30) Lee was perplexed. "Was the high water the hand of God?" "Was God on the side of the enemy?" He wrote to his wife, "You will learn before this reaches you that our success at Gettysburg was not as great as reported in the past, that we failed to drive the enemy from its position, and that our army withdrew to the Potomac. Had the river not unexpectedly risen, all would have well with us; but God in His all-wise providence, willed otherwise, and our communications have been interrupted..... I trust that a merciful God, our only hope and refuge, will not desert us in this our hour of need and will deliver us by His almighty hand..... We must, however, submit to His almighty will whatever that may be."

Fortunately, the enemy did not attack in force. Lincoln was again outraged that his generals would not realize that Lee's army had to be defeated and that they had to make the effort whenever the opportunity presented itself.

On the 10th of July, Wofford's Brigade, with the Legion, was holding a position on the Williamsport-Sharpburg Road near St. James Church. In his report, General Stuart states that he established a part of Wofford's Brigade, Cobb's and Phillip's Legions, at Downsville.(31) The Legion did not cross the Potomac until the 13th of July, 1863 on the repaired pontoon bridge at Falling Waters with the rain falling in blinding sheets and no bands playing. They were back in the South but were not yet out of danger as Meade's army had now also crossed the Potomac and was progressing down the eastern side of the Blue Ridge, occupying the gaps as it went. Wofford's Brigade along with the rest of McLaws' Division marched on through Martinsburg and Winchester, crossed the Shenandoah River and occupied Chester's Gap in the Blue Ridge. Gen. Wofford had plans to capture the Yankee Cavalry, that held the eastern part of the gap, by a hidden march to get behind them but the plan for capturing cavalry with infantry was not successful though, for a time, General Wofford thought the trap was well laid.(32) The march continued and by the 24th, the head of the column reached Culpepper Court House behind the Rappahannock. The Gettysburg Campaign had ended. General Lee asked to be removed from command and of course President Davis refused to even consider such a request.

Who won The Battle of Gettysburg? No one! There could be no winner of such a terrible affair, only losers. The Union held the field but suffered more casualties. Taking a page from one of my very old and favorite books on General Lee: "Such was Gettysburg, where the Confederacy reached high-water mark; where 25% of Meade's Army were killed or wounded; where after three days of fighting, the bodies of seven thousand Americans were left for burial and thirty-seven thousand others were missing or disabled; where Pennsylvania troops fought in sight of their homes. Where a Confederate band played polkas and waltzes when the cannonade was at its height; and Avery, commanding Hoke's North Carolina Brigade, mortally wounded, shoved death aside till he could draw a card from his pocket and write, 'tell father I die with my face toward the enemy.' Where Amistead at the Bloody Angle, raises his hat on his sword and exclaimed, 'Give them cold steel boys!' and fell with his hands on Cushing's guns. Gettysburg, whose deeds of valor gave birth to words immortal, 'Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty.....' "(33)

It was thought that Cobb's Legion and the army could now rest awhile behind the Rapidan; however, "Old Pete" had other ideas. The Legion and Company B did however get a good rest until early September when another journey would begin. They were re-outfitted, well fed and were once again in good fighting trim and spirits. The men found some time to write letters to their loved ones back in Bowdon, collect their mail and dream of home.

General Longstreet again proposed to President Davis and General Lee that he be allowed to take a part of his command by quick movement by rail to Tennessee and, along with all the other commands from all over the west that could be gathered there, strike General Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland before it could receive reinforcements since this time the South controlled the interior lines. At this time, the railroad passing the camps on the Rapidan River through Virginia to Bristol and Knoxville and on to Chattanooga was open and was in good working order. The trip would take only two days. Now General Lee and President Davis agreed and transportation was ordered for the divisions of Hood and McLaws which included the Legion. It was not until the 9th of September that the first train arrived at Orange Court House to begin loading the first troops.(34)

One can imagine the excitement among the Bowdon men (they were no longer boys, the boys had become men) as they learned that they were headed to Georgia and maybe would get to go home for awhile.



LOCATION OF THE 3RD MASSACHUSETTS LIGHT ARTILLERY
SIX GUN BATTERY
V ARMY CORPS
ENTRANCE TO THE J. WEIKERT'S LANE
BATTERY CAPTURED BY COBB'S LEGION, INFANTRY
1996 PICTURE