## MEADE ON SICKLES.

### How the Commander at Gettysburg Regarded the Corps Officer's Acts.

Philadelphia, Pa., Aug. 10.—The following letter, hitherto unpublished, written by General George G. Meade, commander of the army of the Potomac, in relation to his victory at Gettysburg, which, with comments by Colonel Benedict of Burlington, Vt., will be published to morrow, holds General Sickles responsible for crippling the army of the Potomac, gives the entirely new evidence of General Ewell (Confederate) in support of the wisdom of the sometimes misconstrued Pipe creek order, and explains why General Butterfield, General Hooker's chief of staff, happened to be retained temporarily by General Meade.

Headquarters Military Division of the Atlantic, Philadelphia, March 16, 1870.—Private G. G. Benedict, Burlington, Vt.—Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, as also the copies of the Free Press, with evidence and comments on the address of Colonel Grout before the officers' society and legislature of the State. I have carefully read your articles and feel personally under great obligations to you for the clear and conclusive manner in which you have vindicated the truth of history. I find nothing to correct in your statement except a fact you mention which is a misapprehension. I did not invite General Humphreys to be my chief of staff until after the battle, because I did not see him after assuming command until I met him on the field, and besides I relied on him as a mainstay in handling the Third corps and did not want to withdraw him from that position. I did ask General Williams to assume the duties in addition to those of adjutant general, but he declined. I asked General Warren, then my chief of engineers, to act temporarily as chief of staff, but he also declined taking on himself additional duties. Under these circumstances I asked General Butterfield to remain till I had time to make permanent arrangements. On the third day General Butterfield, having been disabled by being struck with a fragment of a spent shell, left the army, and a few days afterward General Humphreys accepted my invitation.

My defense against the charges and insinuations of General Sickles and Butterfield is to be found in my testimony before the committee on the conduct of the war. I have avoided any controversy with either of these officers, although both have allowed no opportunity to pass unimproved which permitted them to circulate their exparte statements and, as you justly say, to distort history for their purposes. Both perfectly understand what I meant by my antebattle order referring to Pipe Clay creek; also my instructions to Butterfield on the morning of the 2d, which he persists in calling an order for retreat, in the face of all my other acts and of the fact that I did not retreat when I could have done so with perfect ease at any moment. Longstreet's advice to Lee was sound military sense; it was the step I feared Lee would take, and to meet which was the object of my instructions to Butterfield, which he has so misrepresented.

Now, let me tell you another historical fact. Lieutenant General Ewell, in a conversation had with me shortly after the war, asked what would have been the effect if at 4 p. m. on the 1st he had occupied Culp's hill and established batteries. I told him that in my judgment, in the then condition of the Eleventh and First corps, with their morals affected by their withdrawal to Cemetery ridge with the loss of over half of their number in killed, wounded and missing (of the 6,000 prisoners we lost on the field nearly all came from these corps on the first day), his occupation of Culp's hill, with batteries commanding the whole of Cemetery ridge, would have produced the evacuation of that ridge and the withdrawal of the troops there by the Baltimore pike and Taneytown and Emmetsburg road. He then informed me that at 4 p. m. on the 1st he had his corps, 20,000 strong, in column of attack and on the point of moving on Culp's hill, which he saw was unoccupied, and commanded Cemetery ridge, when he received an order from General Lee directing him to assume the defensive and not to advance; that he sent to General Lee urging to be permitted to advance with his reserves, but the reply was a reiteration of the previous order. To my inquiry why Lee had restrained him, he said our troops coming up (Slocum's) were visible and Lee was under the impression the greater part of my army was on the ground and deemed it prudential to await the rest of his, as you quote from his report. But suppose Ewell, with 10,000 men, had occupied Culp's hill and our brave soldiers had been compelled to evacuate Cemetery ridge and withdraw on the roads referred to would the Pipe Clay Creek order have been so very much out of place? That order was to meet the very contingency here in question, to wit: A part of my army overwhelmed by superior numbers compelled to fall back and a line of battle formed to the rear of my most advanced position thus necessitated.

As to General Sickles having by his advance brought on an attack and thus compelled the battle which decided the war you have completely answered—and it is a very favorable theory with the partisans of this officer. But these gentlemen ignore the fact that of 18,000 men killed and wounded on the field during the whole battle more than two-thirds were lost on the second day and but for the timely advance of the Fifth corps and the prompt sending of a portion to Round Top, where they met the enemy almost on the crest and had a desperate fight to secure the position. I say but for these circumstances, over which Sickles had neither knowledge or control, the enemy would have secured Round Top, planted his artillery there commanding the whole battle field, and what the result would have been I leave you to judge. Now, when I wrote my report of the battle I honestly believed General Sickles did not know where I wished him to go, and that his error arose from a misapprehension of my orders, but I have recently learned from General Geary, who had the day before sent by Hancock to hold the left, and who in doing so had seen the great importance of Round Top and posted a brigade on it, that on the morning of the 2nd when he received my order that he would be relieved by the Third corps and on being relieved would rejoin his own corps (the Twelfth) on the right, after waiting for some time to be relieved he sent to General Sickles a staff officer with instructions to explain the position and its importance and to ask if troops could not be sent to relieve him; that General Sickles would send one of his staff to see the ground and to place troops there on their arrival. He received for reply that General Sickles would attend to it in due time. No officer or troops came, and, after waiting until his patience was exhausted, General Geary withdrew and joined his corps. Now, my first orders to General Sickles were to relieve the Twelfth corps division (Geary's) and occupy their position. Here is evidence that he knew the position occupied by Geary's division, or could have known, and yet failed to occupy it. Furthermore, when he came to my headquarters at about noon and said he did not know where to go I answered "why, you were to relieve the Twelfth corps." He said they had no position—they were massed awaiting events. Then it was I told him his right was to be Hancock's left and his left on Round Top, which I pointed out. Now, his right was three-quarters of a mile in front of Hancock's left and his left one quarter of a mile in front of the base of Round Top, leaving that key point unoccupied, which ought to have been occupied by Longstreet before we could get there with the Fifth corps.

Sickles' movement practically destroyed his own corps—the Third—caused a loss of 50 per cent in the Fifth corps, and very heavily damaged the Second corps, as said before, producing 66 per per cent of the loss of the whole battle, and with what result—driving us back to the position he was ordered to hold originally. These losses of the first and second day affected greatly the efficiency and morals of the army and prevented my having the audacity in the offense that I might otherwise have had. If this is an advantage—to be so crippled in battle without attaining any object—I must confess I cannot see it. Pardon my writing so much prolixity, but your generous defense and the clear view you have taken of the battle have led me to wander thus far. Very truly yours, GEORGE G. MEADE.

### A Battle With Bears.

Pioche Record.

We received word from the Mountain Meadows that Captain Sam, chief of the Indians at Pioche, had a very narrow escape from having his flesh get into the inside of several bears. Sam and his family, including his aunts and his uncles and his cousins, are down at Mountain Meadows on some sort of Indian jamboree. It appears that while old Sam was walking along, unarmed, and probably meditating upon the wickedness of his white brother, and not looking where he was going, he walked into the arms of an old she bear, who at once fondly and tightly pressed him in her motherly bosom. The embrace of the loving Mrs. Bruin being rather ardent, it aroused Sam from his meditative mood, and at first he most likely thought that it was Mrs. Sam, who, in an attack of paroxysm of love, was endeavoring to squeeze in his ribs, but on looking up and getting a glance at Mrs. Bruin's long nose, he discovered his error, and like a true knight, at once put his arm around Mrs Bruin and started in doing a little hugging on his own hook. They hugged and tugged and tusseled to determine which one was the best man. The bear growled and Sam howled. The noise attracted the attention of the friends of both parties. Another bear and two large cubs came to the aid of the old she bear, and started in chawing the old chief from the ground up. They downed the old man and were hurriedly making away with his flesh, when two of Sam's sons, Jim and George, hove in sight, and seeing that the old warrior was about soon to disappear, went to his rescue. They killed the four bears. The meet left remaining on Sam's bones is terribly lacerated. It he recovers, the next time the old warrior tackles a she bear in a hugging contest he will be liable to first look round and see that no grown cubs are lurking by. There is considerable human nature in bear cubs. They don't like for strange men to hug their mother.

### Hair Cut by Lightning.

During a violent thunder-storm which recently broke over a country town in France a curious incident happened. A young woman caught in the storm was hastening homeward, sheltering herself as best she could beneath an umbrella from the drenching rain. Suddenly she experienced a strange and alarming sensation, the shock being simultaneous with a very vivid flash of lightning. She felt "quite upset, greatly alarmed," but nevertheless proceeded on her way, and it was only on reaching her residence that she discovered what a narrow escape she had had. On removing her bonnet she found that her hair had been literally cut off, her head presenting, as the hair fell, the same appearance as though it had been shaved with a razor. The effect upon the girl's mind of the discovery was so great that she has been confined to her bed ever since the day of the storm. It is not the loss of her hair that affects her, but the recollection of the narrow escape she had has so entirely upset her nervous system that the medical men attending her express the opinion that it will be some weeks before she recovers from the shock.—London Standard.

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(Continued from last week.)

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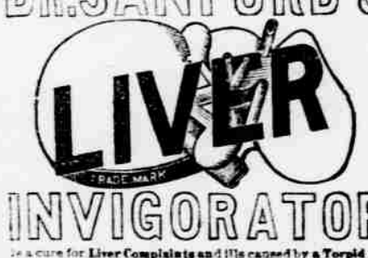


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