

Saint Mary's College of California

## Saint Mary's Digital Commons

---

Civil War Letters of Forrest Little

---

9-1-2007

### People places & events

Carl Guarneri

*Saint Mary's College of California*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/letters-of-forrest-little>



Part of the [Military History Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Guarneri, Carl, "People places & events" (2007). *Civil War Letters of Forrest Little*. 2.

<https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/letters-of-forrest-little/2>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by Saint Mary's Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Civil War Letters of Forrest Little by an authorized administrator of Saint Mary's Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@stmarys-ca.edu).

# The Civil War Letters of Forrest Little: People, Places and Events



Savage Station, VA, Headquarters of General McClellan (*Library of Congress*)

## **Banks, General Nathaniel P. (1816-1894)**

A prominent Massachusetts politician who became a Union general during the Civil War, Banks commanded troops in the Shenandoah Valley campaign in Virginia and later in the Department of the Gulf in Louisiana. Banks's unsuccessful Red River campaign in 1864 led to his replacement.

## **Beauregard, General Pierre G. T. (1818-1893)**

The Louisiana-born Confederate general who opened the Civil War by firing on Fort Sumter at Charleston, South Carolina, and whose forces were victorious at the First Battle of Bull Run. He led Confederate armies in the Western theater, most notably at the Battle of Shiloh (April 1862), and in June 1864 defended Petersburg, Virginia

against General Grant's assaults. Beauregard's influence in the Confederate war effort was hampered by his difficult personal relationship with Confederate president Jefferson Davis.

### **Brooks, General William T. (1821-1870)**

An Ohio-born Union soldier of Vermont lineage who graduated from West Point in 1841, Brooks served in the Seminole and Mexican Wars. He commanded the Vermont Brigade of the Army of the Potomac during the Peninsula campaign and was wounded in the Battle of Savage Station. Brooks later led Union troops at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg before resigning in July 1864 due to ill health.

### **Bull Run**

The creek on the northern Virginia site of the first major land battle of the Civil War, the Battle of Bull Run, also called the First Battle of Manassas, where on July 21, 1861 Confederate soldiers under Generals P.G.T. Beauregard and Joseph Johnston routed Union troops led by General Irwin McDowell, causing a panicked retreat to Washington.

### **Cameron, Secretary Simon (1799-1889)**

The Pennsylvania politician who served as secretary of war in the Lincoln administration until he resigned early in 1862 amid allegations of corruption.

### **Camp Advance**

Temporary Union encampment in Virginia across the Potomac River from Washington, one mile "in advance" of the Chain Bridge.

### **Camp Griffin**

Union camp clustered on and around Smoot's Hill near Lewinsville in northern Virginia, four miles from the Chain Bridge over the Potomac River. At the outset of the war, Federal troops had seized Virginia land across the Potomac in order to protect the capital. Later, the army set up Camp Griffin there. During the winter of 1861-1862, troops of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Vermont Infantry regiments were stationed at Camp Griffin. The encampment was later replaced by Fort Marcy, one of 48 forts built around Washington.

### **Camp Winfield Scott**

A large Union camp including General McClellan's headquarters that was established near Yorktown, Virginia, in April 1862 during the Peninsula campaign.

## **Chain Bridge**

An important bridge across the Potomac River at Little Falls that connected Washington with Virginia. An early bridge at that location was built of large linked-chain trusses, and the name stuck to its replacement, which was erected in 1852. The new bridge was a heavy wooden crossbeam structure framed by long arches. During the Civil War Chain Bridge was an important and heavily defended crossing for Union troops heading to camps in northern Virginia.

## **Clotilde, Princess (1843-1911)**

The daughter of King Victor Emmanuel II of Italy, Clotilde married Prince Napoleon in 1859 as a result of French diplomacy. Prince Napoleon was the cousin of Napoleon III and later a pretender to his throne. The couple visited the United States in 1861.

## **Crane, Lieutenant Cyrus**

Company F, 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Commissioned September 4, 1861 at age 25. Promoted to Captain, June 21, 1862; transferred to Co. K, January 24, 1863; discharged with wounds, March 13, 1863.

## **Fort Donelson**

A Confederate fort on the Cumberland River in Tennessee that was besieged and captured by General Ulysses Grant's Union troops on February 16, 1862. Although Confederate Generals Floyd and Pillow escaped with about 3,200 soldiers, General Simon Buckner surrendered the fort and the remaining 13,000 men to Grant. The fall of the fort, which temporarily secured Tennessee under Union control, boosted morale in the North and raised Grant's reputation among Union officials.

## **Fort Ethan Allen**

An earthwork fortification built on land in Alexandria County, in present-day Arlington, Virginia, by the Union Army in 1861 as part of the defense of Washington. The remains of the fort are now part of Fort Ethan Allen Park.

## **Grand Review**

On November 20, 1861, General McClellan conducted a grand review of the Army of the Potomac at Munson's Hill, Virginia, near present-day Bailey's Crossroads. The Vermont soldiers were among the more than 70,000 Union soldiers who assembled there. The troops passed in review before President Lincoln, General McClellan, various Union officials, and guests.

## **Keys, General Erasmus D. (1825-1915)**

A graduate of West Point in 1832, Keys held positions at West Point and on the western frontier until General Winfield Scott appointed him his military secretary in 1860. After the Battle of Bull Run, Keys was given command of a division, then in March 1862 he took charge of the Union 4th Corps, which included the Vermont Brigade. Keyes led the 4th Corps during the Peninsula campaign. He remained in Virginia in command of Union troops until July 1863.

### **King, Ed**

Private, Company F, 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted August 30, 1861; wounded in June 1863 and May 1864; deserted November 14, 1864, but returned on January 26, 1865 to serve to the end of the war.

### **Little family**

Henry L. Little (1818-?) and Amanda Little (1820-1884) were married at Crown Point, NY in 1841. Their children were Forrest, Ernest, Eva, and Gertrude.

### **McClellan, General George B. (1826-1885)**

Union commander of the Army of the Potomac, August 1861-November 1862; also general-in-chief of the Union army, November 1861-March 1862. A West Point graduate and Mexican War veteran, McClellan served at various posts during the 1850s, including participating in railroad surveys and observing the Crimean War. He resigned from the army in 1857 to become a railroad executive. In May 1861 he re-entered military service as the general commanding the Department of the Ohio and achieved minor victories in western Virginia that summer. After the Union debacle at Bull Run, McClellan was appointed commander of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan was meticulous at preparing fortifications, such as those surrounding Washington, and gifted at training soldiers and maintaining their morale. But his overcautious behavior during military campaigns, constant overestimating of the enemy's numbers, and reluctance to commit all his troops to battle proved his undoing. During the Peninsula Campaign in Virginia (March-July 1862), McClellan's slow progress toward Richmond exasperated President Lincoln, and after approaching the Confederate capital he took a defensive posture and ordered Union troops to retreat. After the Peninsula Campaign, McClellan lost some of his troops to the newly-created Army of Virginia under General John Pope. But when Pope was defeated at the second Battle of Bull Run, Lincoln turned to McClellan to lead the defense of Washington. At the bloody Battle of Antietam in Maryland on September 17, 1862, McClellan's troops fought Robert E. Lee's army to a draw and forced them to retreat southward. When McClellan failed to pursue Lee aggressively after Antietam, Lincoln removed him from command for the last time.

Increasingly public in his criticism of Lincoln's policies, including the emancipation of slaves, McClellan was nominated by the Democrats for president in 1864 but lost to Lincoln. He later served a term as governor of New Jersey.

### **Roanoke Island**

An island off the coast of North Carolina best known as the site of the first English colony in North America established in the 1580s. During the Civil War, the Battle of Roanoke Island took place on February 7-8, 1862 when Union General Ambrose Burnside landed his forces and captured the island's Confederate forts. The island remained under Union occupation for the remainder of the war.

### **Russell, Lorenzo**

Private, Company A, 6th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted October 4, 1861; discharged for disability, September 25, 1862.

### **"Secesh"**

Short for "secessionist" and was the name many northerners gave to residents and soldiers of the Confederate States.

### **Smalley, Colonel Henry A.**

A native of Burlington, Vermont, and a West Point graduate, Smalley was appointed to lead the 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry at age 27 on July 30, 1861 as it was being recruited. Smalley was sick for most of the Peninsula Campaign and unable to participate in some of its key battles. He resigned when his leave of absence was revoked on September 10, 1862, but later served in the 2nd U.S. Artillery.

### **Smith, General William F. ("Baldy") (1824-1903)**

A Vermont-born Civil War general, Smith graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1845 and served in the regular army as an engineer and instructor at West Point. In the summer of 1861 he persuaded General McClellan to have all Vermont volunteer troops brigaded together and command given to him. The Second through Sixth regiments were formed into the "Vermont Brigade," the first in the Civil War army to be composed from a single state. When Smith was assigned to lead the Second Division of the Army of the Potomac's Fourth Corps, command of the Vermont Brigade was turned over to General William T. Brooks. Smith led Union divisions during the Peninsula, Antietam, and Second Bull Run campaigns. He later distinguished himself in the Union defense of Chattanooga and in Grant's Virginia campaign.

### **Smith, John (reported as a deserter)**

Private, Company F, 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted August 23, 1861 at age 29, he was wounded at Savage Station, June 29, 1862 and taken as prisoner; later paroled; discharged because of wounds, October 31, 1862.

### **Smith, Sam**

Private, Company F, 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted September 6, 1861 at age 19, he deserted September 7, 1862; returned December 1, 1862; and was discharged for disability, February 8, 1863.

### **Soldiers' Home** (also called "Old Soldier's Home")

The first national old soldiers' home was established in northeast Washington, D.C. in 1851 using funds obtained from Mexico City during the recent war. The central building was a large stone structure intended for disabled and homeless veterans. During the Civil War it was also used to house and feed Union soldiers passing through the capital. On the extensive grounds were several cottages, one of which was the site of President Lincoln's summer home during the Civil War.

### **Stowell, Captain Edwin S.**

Captain, Company F, 5th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Commissioned on September 4, 1861, he was promoted to Major of 9th Vermont Volunteer Infantry at the close of the Peninsula Campaign. Stowell resigned from the army in May 1863.

### **Vorce, George K.**

Private, Company A, 7th Vermont Volunteer Infantry. Enlisted December 14, 1861 at age 28; deserted September 27, 1864.

### **Yorktown**

A colonial-era settlement on the York River in eastern Virginia, Yorktown was the site of the surrender of British General Charles Cornwallis to General George Washington in 1781 after the last major North American battle of the Revolutionary War. In April 1862 General George McClellan's Union army confronted Confederate General John Magruder's troops at Yorktown during the first major engagement of the Peninsula campaign. The siege of Yorktown ended when Magruder's army evacuated Yorktown on the night of May 3.

**Carl Guarneri, Saint Mary's College History department**