



“The Bullets Flew Like Hail”

Cutler’s Brigade at Gettysburg
From McPherson’s Ridge to Culp’s Hill

James L. McLean, Jr.

SB

Savas Beatie
California

©2023 James L. McLean

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Mingus, Scott L., Sr., author. | Wittenberg, Eric J., 1961- author.
Title: "If We are Striking for Pennsylvania": The Army of Northern Virginia and
Army of the Potomac March to Gettysburg / Scott L. Mingus, Sr., Eric J. Wittenberg.
Description: El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie [2022] | Includes bibliographical references
and index. | Summary: "Scott L. Mingus Sr. and Eric J. Wittenberg, the authors of more
than forty Civil War books, have once again teamed up to present a history of the
opening moves of the Gettysburg Campaign in the two-volume study "If We Are Striking
For Pennsylvania." This compelling study is one of the first to integrate the military,
media, political, social, economic, and civilian perspectives with rank-and-file accounts
from the soldiers of both armies as they inexorably march toward their destiny at Gettysburg.
This first installment covers June 3-22, 1863, while the second, spanning June 22-30,
completes the march and carries the armies to the eve of the Fighting." — Provided by publisher.
Identifiers: LCCN 2022016968 | ISBN 9781611215847 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781611215854 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Gettysburg Campaign, 1863. | United States. Army of the Potomac. |
Confederate States of America. Army. Department of Northern Virginia. | Soldiers—United
States—Anecdotes. | Soldiers—Confederate States of America—Anecdotes. |
United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Regimental histories.
Classification: LCC E475.51 .M558 2022 | DDC 973.7/349—dc23/eng/20220506
LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022016968>

First Savas Beatie Edition, First Printing



Savas Beatie

989 Governor Drive, Suite 102

El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

916-941-6896 / sales@savasbeatie.com / www.savasbeatie.com

All of our titles are available at special discount rates for bulk purchases in the United States.
Contact us for information.

Proudly published, printed, and warehoused in the United States of America.

To Judy and Drew, for their love, patience, and understanding.

To Courtney, Camden, Lincoln, and Weston,
For enriching our family's happiness.

To my family, both past and present.

AND

To the men of Cutler's Brigade,
Whose valor and accomplishments continue to be
Wrongfully ignored or misrepresented by historians.



Table of Contents

Foreword to the Savas Beatie Edition	vii
Preface to the First Edition	xv
Preface to the Second Edition	xviii
Chapter 1: A Profile of Lysander Cutler and His Brigade	1
Chapter 2: The March to Gettysburg	15
Chapter 3: The Union Cavalry and John Reynolds	27
Chapter 4: Cutler's Brigade Arrives	49
Chapter 5: Cutler's Brigade is Engaged	65
Chapter 6: The Stand of the 147th New York	79
Chapter 7: Fowler's Demi-Brigade and the Fight at the Middle Railroad Cut	97
Chapter 8: A Typical Casualty	119
Chapter 9: The Afternoon Fight	127
Chapter 10: Action on Culp's Hill	143
Epilogue: The Cost of Valor	161
Postscript: The Aftermath	165
Appendix 1: Resupplying Ammunition	171
Appendix 2: Prisoners of War	174
Appendix 3: Hospital Duty	180
Appendix 4: Staff Officers	185
Appendix 5: The Hershel W. Pierce Letter	188
Appendix 6: The Edgar D. Haviland Letter	190
Appendix 7: The Peirre Thompson Letter	192
Appendix 8: More on John Jochum	194
Appendix 9: "From the 76th Regiment"	198
Bibliography	203
Index	215

List of Maps

2-1: Fredericksburg to Gettysburg	19
Map 3-1: Gettysburg Roads and Terrain	31
Map 3-2: Mileage Along Chambersburg Pike	34
Map 3-3: Morning, July 1	45
Map 4-1: March to the Field	52
Map 4-2: Cutler's Troops Arrive	54
Map 4-3: Cutler Deploys	59
Map 5-1: Opening Volleys on the Right	64
Map 5-2: Cutler's Right Flank Collapses	72
Map 6-1: The 147th New York Stands Its Ground	84
Map 6-2: Hall's Battery Retreats	89
Map 6-3: The 147th New York Retreats	93
Map 7-1: The Iron Brigade Deploys	100
Map 7-2: The Iron Brigade Strikes Archer	102
Map 7-3: Fowler Notices the Enemy on His Flank	104
Map 7-4: Fowler and Dawes Advance on the Railroad Cut	107
Map 7-5: Fowler and Dawes Attack the Railroad Cut	114
Map 9-1: First Afternoon Position Held By Cutler	126
Map 9-2: Rodes's Division Appears	131
Map 9-3: Cutler Forms Along the Woods	133
Map 9-4: Rodes Attacks	135
Map 9-5: Iverson's Brigade is Repulsed	137
Map 9-6: The Final Confederate Push Against Seminary Ridge	139
Map 10-1: The Attack Against Greene and Wadsworth	147
Map 10-2: Greene's Flank is in Danger	153
Map 10-3: Fowler and Dawes to the Rescue	154

Photos have been placed throughout the text for the convenience of the reader.

Preface to the Savas Beatie Edition

In November 1963, at the age of twelve, I attended my first meeting of the Baltimore Civil War Round Table. Soon thereafter I became a member of the organization, and over the next fifteen years I delivered several talks to the group. Around 1978, I decided my next presentation to the renamed Round Table of American Military History would cover the performance of a single brigade during the Battle of Gettysburg. I intentionally avoided the obvious, well-known outfits like the Iron Brigade or Hood's Texans. At the same time, I needed to select a brigade for which I could find a reasonable amount of detail. My Civil War library at the time was quite small, but it contained a set of *New York at Gettysburg*. Scanning the pages of the three massive volumes, my attention was drawn to the accounts of the 76th, 95th, and 147th New York Volunteers as well as to the dedication material pertaining to the 14th New York State Militia (also known as the 14th Brooklyn or the 84th New York Volunteers). Those units, together with the 56th Pennsylvania and the 7th Indiana, comprised Lysander Cutler's brigade at Gettysburg.

My research began in earnest. My wife, Judy, and I made multiple trips to the MOLLUS Civil War Library and Museum in Philadelphia, the War College Library in Carlisle, and the Gettysburg National Military Park Library. Within those institutions, we found a great deal of information relating to Cutler's regiments. I

quickly realized it would be difficult to tell the story of Cutler's brigade at Gettysburg without mentioning the exploits of John Buford's cavalry during the morning of July 1, 1863. In February 1979, I purchased my first regimental history from Dave Zullo, owner of Olde Soldier Books. Compiled by C. V. Tevis and D. R. Marquis to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 14th Brooklyn's muster into United States service, *The History of the Fighting Fourteenth* provided a great deal of data on the regiment's role in the battle. The third Thursday of September 1979 I presented the culmination of my research to the Round Table. Although the talk was well received, I felt I needed to spend more time delving into the topic. I submitted an article, "The First Union Shot at Gettysburg," to the *Lincoln Herald*; it appeared in the Spring 1980 issue.

My interest in the Civil War and my desire to obtain unaffordable books on the subject led to the creation of Butternut and Blue. My wife and I started the book business in 1983; over the years we expanded it to include the reprinting of old volumes and the publication of original works. In 1987, my continued study of the brigade led to our company's release of 300 copies of *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg*. Sturdily bound in blue cloth, the print was set on a typewriter, and I drew the maps by hand. Over the next few years, the book sold out.

Much of my analysis of the brigade's performance was ignored by historians, who continued to snub the unit's contributions at the railroad cut and on Culp's Hill. I amassed a substantial amount of new information relating to the brigade, so I decided to issue a revised edition of the book.

The second iteration of *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg*, published in late December 1994, benefitted from additional source material, computerized typesetting, additional photographs, and professionally updated maps drawn by the late Blake Magner.

The second edition received complimentary comments. Historian Harry Pfanz graciously agreed to look at my manuscript prior to its publication and offered this assessment: "I have read and enjoyed the Cutler's brigade study very much. It is an excellent account. I don't know of anything relating to the first day to quite match it within its scope." A reviewer critiqued *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg* for the *Civil War News*. "Historical studies of this quality," he noted, "greatly enhance the understanding of the Civil War on the small unit level. To date, this volume is the definitive account of the battle for the railroad cut on July 1 and the part played by Lysander Cutler's fine brigade during its tenure at Gettysburg. It is one of the best studies of a small unit action of the Civil War." Also, a satisfied customer sent a letter praising the book. He wrote, "It is without doubt one of the most clear and concise books I have read on the Civil War. The way the maps explained each part of the action made it very clear indeed."

By the year 2000, the last copies of the second edition had been sold. *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg* has been out of print for more than 20 years. To my great surprise, in July 2020, Theodore P. Savas, from Savas Beatie, contacted me to express interest in reprinting the title. I agreed as long as I could correct some misspellings, a few grammar and punctuation errors, and revise some of the text. Ted agreed, and the task was made easier when I located the text of the second edition still in my computer.

I immediately went to work to deal with spelling, grammar, and punctuation miscues. In addition, a few directional errors received attention. At Ted's prompting, I changed the format of the footnotes to a more conventional style. Also, I reworked a number of the sentences in order to make the text flow more smoothly or to clarify the event being discussed. Finally, I added some analysis to a few footnotes to further emphasize points I made in the text.

Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg contained a few historical flaws. Colonel Ira Grover and his 7th Indiana guarded the 1st Corps wagon train and cattle herd during the morning of July 1. In the afternoon, Grover moved his regiment toward Gettysburg without waiting to be relieved. Based on commentary in a published diary, I mentioned that Grover was court-martialed for leaving the train unattended. During my subsequent research for a regimental history of the 14th Brooklyn, I located Grover's court-martial in the National Archives. The colonel did not receive a reprimand for his July 1 march to Gettysburg. Instead, Lysander Cutler preferred charges against Grover for disobeying marching orders on June 12 and July 18, 1863. Jim Heenehan, in an article in *The Gettysburg Magazine*, pointed out my error. The incorrect statement has been eliminated from the current edition.¹

Also, I erred in my alignment of two of Brigadier General James J. Archer's Confederate regiments. Research by later authors, particularly Marc and Beth Storch, convinced me that the placements I had for the 1st Tennessee and 13th Alabama should be reversed. Also, the 5th Alabama Battalion served as skirmishers and did not hold a spot in Archer's main battle line. Cartographer Mike Priest corrected the positions of the 13th Alabama and 1st Tennessee on the updated maps for this new edition.

1 Court-martial of Colonel Ira Grover, RG 153, Box 1510, NN-0072, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA]; Jim Heenehan, "Correcting the Error: The Court-Martial and Acquittal of Col. Ira Grover, 7th Indiana Infantry," *The Gettysburg Magazine*, Issue Number 45, (July 2011), pp. 71-83.

In Chapter 4, I used a quote by a soldier in the 147th New York to describe how the dreadful heat impacted the 1st Corps troops as they marched to Gettysburg. I mistakenly identified the Yankee as the regiment's chaplain, which was not quite true. The Confederates captured the New Yorker during the July 1 retreat through Gettysburg. During the night, the fellow wandered away from his captors and met a brave town lady. She slipped him a suit of clothes and led him to her home. After a wash and a shave, the New Yorker put on the civilian outfit and posed as a Methodist clergyman. The ruse worked, which enabled the soldier to rejoin his regiment after the battle. His comrades dubbed him "chaplain" because of his ingenious escape.

When I started my research on this project, historians referenced the timber south of the McPherson farm as McPherson's Woods. I used that name for the grove and kept it in this current edition. More recent writers refer to the area as Herbst's Woods.

I relied heavily on historian John Bachelder's correspondence with battle participants. I used typescript versions of the letters copied by the late Sam Hubbard from those housed at the Gettysburg National Military Park Library. At the time of my research, the three volumes of Bachelder correspondence, edited by David and Aubrey Ladd and recently reissued by Savas Beatie LLC, had not been published.

Another statement in *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg* needs clarification. On June 30, 1863, Confederate Brig. Gen. James J. Pettigrew marched three of his regiments to Gettysburg in order to gather supplies. Based on William Fox's history of the battle in volume 1 of *New York at Gettysburg*, I stated that Pettigrew halted his men near the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Pennsylvania historian Samuel Bates, in his 1875 recounting of the campaign, likewise placed Pettigrew on Seminary Ridge. Sarah Broadhead, who lived on Chambersburg Street near the west edge of town, made the following June 30 diary entry: "This morning the Rebels came to the top of the hill [Seminary Ridge] overlooking the town," she recorded, ". . . and looked over at our place. We had a good view of them from our house." Also, Michael Jacobs, a professor of mathematics and chemistry at Pennsylvania (now Gettysburg) College, observed the approach of the Southern troops. The professor started to accumulate notes concerning what he saw and heard during the eventful days before, during, and after the battle. Jacobs compiled his notes into a history of the campaign that was published in October 1863. According to Jacobs, Pettigrew's men advanced "as far as the crest of the Seminary hill, one-half of a mile northwest of Gettysburg, throwing about two dozen infantry pickets as far as Mr. Shead's house [also on Chambersburg Street]. Several officers on horseback were

seen reconnoitering with their field glasses, and engaged in conversation with the people residing near the road on the hill.”²

Since the release of the second Butternut and Blue edition, a 1905 newspaper article surfaced describing Dr. John O’Neal’s ordeal on June 30, 1863. The Gettysburg physician claimed he ran into Pettigrew’s column at Herr’s Tavern. The doctor inferred that the Confederates never made it past Willoughby Run. In fact, he avowed that Union cavalry intervened between the Southerners and the town. Historians Harry Pfanz and Allen Guelzo used the article to conclude that Pettigrew’s men never moved east beyond the stream.

I disagree. I believe Pettigrew and at least some of his men made it to Seminary Ridge. The contemporary accounts by Sarah Broadhead and Michael Jacobs during those stressful days seems more plausible than a tale told 42 years after the battle. Also, Confederate sources mentioned they observed the arrival of Brigadier General John Buford’s cavalry south of town. The Rebels could have spotted the Union troopers from Seminary Ridge, but it is doubtful whether they could have seen the horsemen from Herr’s Ridge.³

I have included some new material in this third edition. In Chapter 1, I added a few comments to the capsule histories of Cutler’s regiments. My ongoing research into the exploits of the 14th Brooklyn led to my discovery of daily field returns for the brigade throughout the campaign. The documents, housed in the National Archives, specify the number of men present for duty, on detached service, sick, or in arrest. I used these numbers for the regiments’ July 1 strengths instead of the counts I had in the second edition. Also, I adjusted the 14th Brooklyn’s casualties at the Battles of 1st and 2nd Bull Run based on extensive research I have done the past 25 years.

I added three new appendices to this edition. The first is a July 5, 1863, letter written by a soldier in the 95th New York. Sources for the 95th New York are scarce. This document, found in the infantryman’s pension file, provides a wonderful description of the opening of the battle. It is especially valuable for the New Yorker’s rendition of the charge on the railroad cut.

2 Samuel Bates, *The Battle of Gettysburg* (Philadelphia, 1875), p. 54; Sarah Broadhead, *The Diary of a Lady of Gettysburg* (Hershey, 1990), p. 11; Michael Jacobs, *Notes on the Rebel Invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania and the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 2, and 3, Accompanied by an Explanatory Map* (Gettysburg, 1909), p. 18.

3 “Battle 42 Years Ago,” *Gettysburg Compiler*, July 5, 1905; Harry Pfanz, *Gettysburg—The First Day* (Chapel Hill, 2001), pp. 25-27; Allen Guelzo, *Gettysburg, The Last Invasion* (New York, 2013), pp. 129-130.

Chapter 8 of *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg* covers the difficulties experienced by John Jochum, a 14th Brooklyn soldier wounded on the morning of July 1. Jochum's pension file provided most of the details about the chasseur's recovery as well as his efforts to obtain reasonable compensation from the government due to his injury. Recently, I discovered an 1893 newspaper article Jochum wrote detailing his ordeal: his response to his injury while still on the battle field; his evacuation from the combat zone; and his subsequent treatment and partial recovery. The column enriches the effort I made in explaining the trials of a soldier wounded at Gettysburg. The second appendix added to this edition is a transcription of Jochum's article.

The final addition to the appendix is a letter written by a soldier in the 76th New York to his hometown newspaper. I discovered this letter after the second edition of my book was published. I included it in this edition for two reasons. It offers an interesting, contemporary account of the part played by the 76th New York during the march to the battlefield and during the first day's fight. In addition, the list of casualties, by company, affords a grim look at the terrible human cost of the battle.

In Chapter 3, I noted the apparent, nonchalant attitude displayed by the Federal cavalymen encamped near the Lutheran Seminary on the morning of July 1. Large numbers of horsemen left their bivouacs and wandered into town to obtain a meal or to engage in friendly conversation. To emphasize why I found this behavior surprising, I included the tale of John Buford's conversation with Thomas Devin the previous evening. Buford predicted the Southern troops would "come booming" the next day. He asserted the Yankee cavalry would have to "fight like the devil" to hold back the advancing Confederates. Perhaps the Union cavalry should have spent more time organizing a defense instead of grabbing a good breakfast.

When I completed the first edition of the manuscript in 1986, it filled a void in the study of the battle. The book was one of the earliest attempts to detail the performance of a single brigade on those hallowed fields. Prior to my book, few titles focused on small unit actions: John Bigelow's *The Peach Orchard*, Oliver Norton's *The Attack and Defense of Little Round Top*, and David Riggs's *East of Gettysburg* were notable exceptions. Several authors concentrated on a single day: Warren Hassler's *Crisis at the Crossroads*, James K. P. Scott's *The Story of the Battles at Gettysburg* (first day), and George Stewart's *Pickett's Charge*. The manuscript preceded the first issue of *The Gettysburg Magazine* by nearly three years. A large

number of books focusing on small unit actions at Gettysburg have emerged since 1987.⁴

I was one of the first writers to correctly locate the position held by the 147th New York during its July 1 morning fight. Prior to the release of my first edition, historians placed the 147th New York on the middle ridge, in line with the 56th Pennsylvania and 76th New York. A thorough examination of firsthand accounts written by Oswego men who served in the regiment, however, convinced me that the 147th New York formed on the eastern slope of the western ridge. Subsequent historians have validated this placement. My research also led to a better understanding of the alignment and service of Cutler's brigade in the July 1 afternoon fight and during its assignment to Culp's Hill.

I always believed the best military studies required solid scholarship, gifted writing, and the inclusion of ample maps. Maps are especially useful when an author describes detailed troop maneuvers in the text. John Bigelow's monumental *The Campaign of Chancellorsville: A Strategic and Tactical Study* (New Haven, 1910) set an early standard with 47 maps, plans, and sketches. Although Bigelow set the bar for campaign study maps, no Gettysburg books came close to matching his efforts for nearly three-quarters of a century. When *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg* was first published, it contained 38 maps showing the intricate troop movements on the battlefield. Since the publication of the initial two editions of my book, several excellent Gettysburg titles have been issued that enhance the cartography of the battle.⁵

4 John Bigelow, *The Peach Orchard, July 2, 1863* (Minneapolis, 1910); Oliver Norton, *The Attack and Defense of Little Round Top, July 2, 1863* (New York, 1913); David Riggs, *East of Gettysburg: Stuart versus Custer* (Bellevue, 1970); Warren W. Hassler, Jr., *Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg* (Montgomery, 1970); James K. P. Scott, *The Story of the Battles at Gettysburg* (Harrisburg, 1927); George R. Stewart, *Pickett's Charge: A Microhistory of the Final Attack at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863* (Boston, 1959). The first issue of *The Gettysburg Magazine* appeared in July 1989. An excellent, chronological list of Gettysburg histories can be found in Richard Sauers, *The Gettysburg Campaign, June 3-August 1, 1863: A Comprehensive, Selectively Annotated Bibliography*, Second Edition (Baltimore, 2004), pp. 543-553.

5 The following Gettysburg books contain superior battle maps: John Imhof, *Gettysburg: Day Two, A Study in Maps* (Baltimore, 1999); Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of Gettysburg: An Atlas of the Gettysburg Campaign, June 3-July 13, 1863* (El Dorado Hills, 2007); Philip Laino, *Gettysburg Campaign Atlas: 421 Maps Encompassing the March to Gettysburg, the Battle, and the Retreat* (Dayton, 2009); and Carol Reardon and Tom Vossler, *A Field Guide to Gettysburg: Experiencing the Battlefield Through its History, Places, and People* (Chapel Hill, 2013). Gottfried, with publisher Savas Beatie LLC, has produced a series of map studies covering Eastern Theater campaigns. Since 1989,

My research uncovered manuscript material Civil War historians continue to overlook. The John Vliet Correspondence in the Brooklyn Historical Society provides an excellent take on soldier life in the Army of the Potomac. On August 1, 1865, Edward Brush Fowler sent Abner Doubleday an extract on the battle based on his diary. Gettysburg historians have seldom cited this document. The worthy John William Hofmann Papers in the Society Small Collection, housed at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, are also infrequently sourced.

Much to my dismay, many historians continue to denigrate or diminish the role of the 14th Brooklyn during the assault on the railroad cut. They claim that the Brooklyn lads, often referred to as chasseurs or Red Legs because of their unique uniform, began their charge well after the 6th Wisconsin started its attack. Some historians believe the 14th Brooklyn merely served in a mop-up capacity. More than 100 bleeding chasseurs lying between Chambersburg Pike and the railroad cut seem to refute that interpretation. My views, expressed in the book, lean toward John Bachelder's interpretation of the events. He concluded the attack represented the "accidental meeting and voluntary union of two gallant commands from different brigades, moving from a half mile asunder, whose objective point was the enemy." Hopefully, the 14th Brooklyn history I am currently writing will strengthen the arguments I present in *Cutler's Brigade at Gettysburg*.⁶

Since the release of the second edition, I have continued to research the role played by Cutler and his men—and especially the 14th Brooklyn—in the battle. None of the new material I have found contradicts the assessments I made in my earlier work. Hopefully, a new generation of readers will find this current edition to be an enjoyable and informative read.

James L. McLean, Jr.

January 29, 2023

The Gettysburg Magazine has included hundreds of excellent maps, many drawn by John Heiser, Philip Laino, and Hal Jespersen. In the revised edition of this book, Mike Priest consolidated a few of the maps. This new volume contains 26 well-crafted pieces of cartography.

6 David and Aubrey Ladd, ed., *John Bachelder's History of the Battle of Gettysburg* (Dayton, 1997), p. 226. The following source is an example of an author diminishing the role of the 14th Brooklyn at the railroad cut: Robert W. Sledge, "The Railroad Cut Reconsidered," *The Gettysburg Magazine*, Issue Number 52, (January 2015), pp. 25-40. Sledge suggested the 14th Brooklyn would have provided more help if the regiment had formed perpendicular to the railroad grade, thereby preventing the escape of the Rebels out of the west end of the cut. The suggestion lacks merit. Fowler's letter to Doubleday mentioned the Confederates extended beyond his left flank. A maneuver across the railroad cut would have exposed the backs of his men to retreating Southern infantry and to Heth's massed artillery on Herr's Ridge.