

## ENEMIES, YET BROTHERS

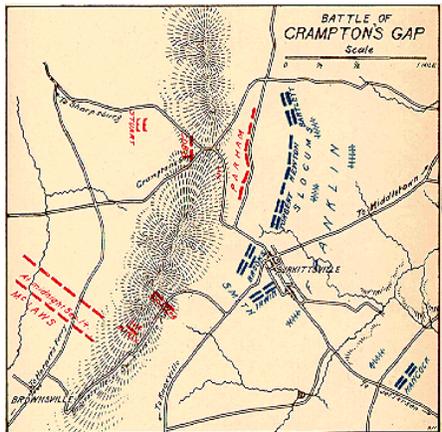
By Wayne D. Mower, III

The most terrible and divisive part of the history of our country is the four years of Civil War taking place from the first shot on Fort Sumpter, in Charleston Harbor, on 12 April 1861, to the signing of the surrender at Appomattox Court House, Virginia on 9 April 1865. The scars and influences of the War are visible and kept alive even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This paper is about only one small event which took place at the end of a horrific and valorous Battle which was instrumental in thwarting Robert E. Lee's first attempt to bring the war into the heart of the Union stronghold. The scene of the battle was at Burkettsville, Maryland. It occurred on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1862, and was called the "Battle of Crampton's Gap". This gap and two others, Turner's and Fox's Gaps, further north, all constituted the "Battle of South Mountain". This preceded the larger Battle of Antietam by three days.

Lee started setting in motion the plan for the invasion of Pennsylvania by attacking Harper's Ferry, West Virginia and, because of sharp resistance, sent part of his army to hold the South Mountain passes and prevent the Union army from gaining access to Pleasant Valley and falling into the rear of his forces at Harper's Ferry.<sup>1,2</sup>

The Union Army had been worried about the protection of the Capitol at Washington, D.C., but due to the finding of a bundle of Cigars wrapped with the plans for Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania,<sup>3</sup> the Union Army went on the offensive and marched on the passes at South Mountain.<sup>4</sup>



One can only imagine the trepidation the Union forces felt when they arrived at Burkettsville to prepare for the attack at Crampton's Gap. It was thought by the Union Commanders that there was an overwhelming force of Confederates defending the pass, and spread before their view was a wide open terrain of farm fields bordered by low stone walls. The mountain slope was covered by a dense forest, and the Confederates held positions behind the walls and up the side of the mountain. There were two narrow roads ascending the very steep grade rising up the side of South Mountain toward the pass which General Franklin described as a "rough ascent of unusual steepness".<sup>5</sup> (According to another report from General Franklin, who commanded the VI Corps, "In October, 1862, when Mr.

Lincoln visited the army, he came through Crampton's Gap; he told me that he was astonished to see and hear of what we had done there. He thanked me for it, and said that he had not understood it before".) When the Union Army arrived there was a battery of artillery just south of the Gap on the Brownsville Pass, they had a command of the field and the road to the south that the Union soldiers

<sup>1</sup> "History of Kearney's First New Jersey Brigade", 1910, Camille Baquet.

<sup>2</sup> "Battle of South Mountain, or Boonsboro" by Daniel H. Hill, Lieutenant-General, CSA.

<sup>3</sup> "The Civil War Career of Alfred T.A. Torbert" by Gary David Wray. Thesis for degree at University of Delaware.

<sup>4</sup> Crampton's Gap Map obtained from <http://americancivilwar.com/crampton.html>

<sup>5</sup> An eye witness report that is included in the book "The General Torbert Memorial", pg. 37, by George Alfred Townsend ("Gath"), Published by the Historical Society of Delaware, 1922, stated: "that had they not seen it, they never would have believed that the position could have been carried. A prominent general officer exclaimed: 'What devils they are!'. General Newton says: 'I wish, particularly, to speak of the brilliant charge with the bayonet, made at Crampton's Pass. General Torbert, in command of a brigade, commended himself particularly to my notice, by his cool and calm courage, and by his able conduct, in the face of the enemy, when he was obliged to charge where they were entrenched behind stone walls, and sheltered by woods on a hill nearly as steep as a crow's nest.'

thought to use to attack the Pass. It was decided to do a frontal attack with the main assault concentrating to the right flank (north). In the afternoon of 14 September 1862, the Battle of Crampton's Gap began. Torbert's First Brigade led the attack. Earlier, due to the large buildup of Union forces, the Confederate commanders sent for reinforcements. General Howell Cobb's Brigade, with the Troup Artillery, responded from Harper's Ferry. The Troup Artillery was positioned at the top of the pass where the two roads joined to go over the mountain. They got set up just before the New Jersey Brigade made the top of the pass, and managed to get off several rounds of grapeshot, bringing down many soldiers, but not stopping the onslaught.<sup>6</sup> The Confederates were driven in great disarray from the pass, down the other side of the mountain and into the valley. Crampton's Gap was a decisive victory for the Union Army. This victory culminated a day of heroics, valor and dedication to duty and captured a fortitude which unfolded in many battles fought in the year preceding and the over two years to follow.

After the battle in a show of his usual character, Colonel Torbert, who had a habit of touring the battlefield after a battle, found a severely wounded soldier of a Georgia Artillery Battery against a fence where he had fallen. Torbert attended to his wounds as best he could and sent the boy on his own horse in the company of his personal aide to the Army Hospital three miles away, with a message to the surgeon to give him his personal attention. It is interesting to note that it was Torbert's 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Brigade that the guns of the Troup Artillery attempted to annihilate. Would Waddell have survived had Torbert been killed in the charge.

"The 14<sup>th</sup> day of September 1862, the fortunes of war found your noble husband and myself in hostile opposition - he as Colonel commanding the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Brigade, I in a Georgia Artillery, just at sunset, I was desperately wounded, and left on the field all night. The next morning I was found by the Col. commanding the Brigade, who informed me that the ambulances were, and would be for some time busy on another part of the field, and that he was unwilling to leave me on the field so long without attention. He had me put on his horse, and sent his Irish orderly back to a small town called Burketsville, Md., three miles in the rear, sending a message to the surgeon of the hospital to give me his personal attention."<sup>7</sup>

This letter, was penned to the wife of General Alfred Thomas Archimedes Torbert almost five years after the General's death, was found during a research project, and started the quest of learning more about two enemies drawn together in one's hour of need, putting aside politics and disdain, and displaying the tender human chivalries that separate us, as human beings, from the harshness of animal behavior and hate. This trait of Torbert's played out many times during the war as evidenced by the many references to it and by other letters of condolence that are on file at the Historical Society of Delaware.

A.D. Slade, in her book, "A.T.A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue", writes, "Despite the difficulties of the campaign and the losses his regiment sustained, Torbert took time on the 15<sup>th</sup> to extend his characteristic courtesy to a fallen enemy soldier."<sup>8</sup> This was a courtesy that Sergeant John

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<sup>6</sup> Write up by John O. Waddell on his war experiences, last pages missing so not dated. "As soon as we could get into position - we opened on the dark blue line of the enemy - with canister at point blank range. Not more than one hundred yards from us. Our canister tore great gaps in their ranks - which they promptly closed up - and continued to move on us in splendid order - but no rush - or charge - They simply came on - firing as they came. When in fifty yards of us - I was wounded - a Minnie ball entering my left jaw bone at the angle and passing through the throat and neck - came out just below - (about two inches) the right ear - ..... By this time the section was forced to retreat, as the enemy were in thirty steps of them. I was left on the field....."

<sup>7</sup> Letter on file at the Historical Society of Delaware, from John O. Waddell, 18 Feb 1885, to Mary the widow of Alfred Torbert, 5 years after the General's passing.

<sup>8</sup> A.D. Slade; "ATA Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue", pg 48, Morningside Books.

Oliver Waddell would remember, and, for which he would be indebted the rest of his days. For many years after the war Waddell had tried to find who it was that saved him. It was only after Torbert was dead that he did find him as evidenced by the date on the above letter which was written five years after Torbert's death.

General Torbert was born 1 July 1833, in Georgetown, Delaware, to Jonathan and Catharine Milby Torbert. The Torberts were farmers and a large family. Due to this, Jonathan had to work evenings in the Farmer's Branch Bank in Georgetown. Jonathan was also a lay minister in the Methodist Church. Even though a very busy man he saw to it that his children were educated and well cared for. He also, with the help of friends, managed to get Alfred an appointment to West Point, where he graduated on his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday in 1855. At the end of the war Torbert married Mary, daughter of Daniel Curry of Milford. Torbert was buried at the Methodist Episcopal Cemetery, Milford, Delaware.<sup>9,10</sup>



While on leave, after his West Point graduation, he became a Master Mason member of Franklin Lodge 12, in Georgetown, Delaware. He was entered on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1855, passed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1855, and raised to the Sublime Degree on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1855. Since he had no time to attend lodge because of his duty in the west, Torbert turned in a demit, 4 April 1858.<sup>11</sup> Nothing else was found until 28 Aug 1868, when Torbert was elected to affiliation with Temple Lodge 9, Milford.<sup>12</sup> He was exalted to the Sublime Degree of a Royal Arch Mason, in Temple Chapter 2, Milford, 14 December 1868.<sup>13</sup> In 1869, when the Grand Royal Arch was constituted, Torbert was elected as its first Grand Secretary.<sup>14</sup> Nothing has as yet been found about his influences toward joining the Masonic fraternity, but he certainly exhibited the traits desired in a candidate for Freemasonry and lived by them during the war and up to his untimely death on 29 Aug 1880. There is more than one account of how he died, but one thing that is mentioned unanimously was that he died trying to help others.

John Oliver Waddell was born in Greene County, Georgia, 3 Dec 1841, to Reverend Isaac Watts Waddell and Sarah Rebecca Daniel.<sup>15</sup> His grandfather, Reverend Moses Waddell was the founder of the University of Georgia, originally Franklin College in Athens, Georgia.<sup>16</sup> He was reared in Greene County until 1854, when, with both parents dead he accompanied his brother James D. Waddell to Cedartown, Polk County, Georgia.<sup>17</sup> He attended local schools and then enrolled in the University of Georgia. He left the University to join with the Troup Artillery just prior to graduation and at the start of the Civil War. His diploma was given to him, along with 10 others, through the efforts of Chief Justice J. H. Lampkin of Georgia, at the first Commencement after the war. He advanced quickly to Lance Corporal and to Chief of Piece (Sergeant), which rank he held at the Battle of Crampton's Gap at South Mountain.<sup>18</sup> John married Ella Clifton Peek, 2 Sep 1863, she was the daughter of William Peek.

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<sup>9</sup> Torbert pictures from <http://www.generalsandbrevets.com/ngt/torbert.htm>

<sup>10</sup> Mary Currey Torbert picture from website of Mary Torbert Auxiliary, Sons of the Union Veterans, Milford, DE

<sup>11</sup> Records of Franklin Lodge 12, Georgetown, DE.

<sup>12</sup> Membership #199, in Temple Lodge 9 records and Book C of Temple Lodge 9 Records.

<sup>13</sup> 1881 Royal Arch Proceedings, Delaware.

<sup>14</sup> Grand RAM Proceedings, Delaware.

<sup>15</sup> J.O. Waddell Family Bible.

<sup>16</sup> Cedartown Standard, Thursday, 2 Oct 1913.

<sup>17</sup> Cedartown Standard, Thursday, 2 Oct 1913.

<sup>18</sup> Cedartown Standard, Thursday, 2 Oct 1913.

Waddell was the Sgt. (Chief of Piece) of the “Jennie”<sup>19</sup>, a 12 pounder howitzer, with “Jenny” marked on the axle, according to historian Timothy J. Reese, of Burkettsville, MD.<sup>20</sup> This piece was ultimately captured by the 95<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. Waddell was reported killed in the battle.<sup>21</sup> According to Atlanta, Georgia historian William S. Smedlund, Waddell was the Sgt. of the “Sallie Craig”, a six pound rifle. I will let the historians fight that battle.



“After being paroled, John returned home on 12 Oct 1862, to recuperate. On 20 Jan 1863,<sup>22</sup> he returned to duty. On 3 May 1863, he was again wounded (broken ankle) at Fredericksburg, VA. He was transferred to the 20<sup>th</sup> GVI prior to the battle of Gettysburg and was again wounded. On 26 Jun 1863, he was appointed Adjutant of the 20<sup>th</sup> GVI, with the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt., this was confirmed by General Robert E. Lee on 13 Jan 1864. He was again wounded, this time in the arm, at the battle of the Wilderness, on 6 May 1864. On 16 Aug 1864, at Richmond, VA, he was again wounded in the foot. Just before Lee’s surrender, he was promoted to Assistant Adj. and Insp. General, with the rank of Maj. He was paroled on 9 Apr 1865, at Appomattox, Court House, Virginia. After the war he became a planter in Polk Co., GA. In 1890, he worked for the Dept. of Agriculture in Atlanta, and became president of the State Agricultural Society. For six years he lived at Aragon, Polk Co., GA, 13 Jan 1902. In 1911, he was elected commander of the North Georgia Brigade, United Confederate Veterans. John Waddell died 29 Sep 1913, and was buried in Greenwood Cem., East Ave. & Greenwood Dr., Cedartown, Polk Co., GA.”<sup>23,24</sup>

NOTE: At the time of Lee’s surrender the 20<sup>th</sup> Georgia Volunteer Infantry was commanded by Col. James D. Waddell, brother of John O. Waddell.<sup>25</sup>

John Oliver Waddell was a member of Caledonia Lodge 121, Cedartown, GA. There is no record of when he joined the Fraternity either in Caledonia Lodge or the Grand Lodge of GA. Lodge records on file at the Grand Lodge of Georgia show that he was Junior Steward in 1877, Senior Steward 1878, Senior Deacon 1879 and 1880, Junior Warden 1881 and 1882 and Senior Warden 1886.<sup>26</sup> More than likely Waddell did not join the lodge until after the war as he was attending college and only 19 years of age at the time of his enlistment in 1861.<sup>27</sup>

In trying to give a feel for the man her g-grandfather was Mrs. Sara Nally wrote: “As the son of a minister and a long line of teachers and ministers, there is no doubt that John O. was taught and held to the highest standards of the etiquette of that era. Mr. Smedlund pressed me to consider the possibility that John O’s note to the widow of General Torbert showed a man of exceptional quality. While I must admit that reading the actual copy of the handwritten note touched my soul and brought an immense flood of emotions to my heart.....Yes, John O. was an educated man, who came from a long line of educated ministers, teachers, and leaders. Yes, he was a special individual. And yet the concept appears clear: the chances that he would have survived his severe injury without General Torbert’s assistance is now suspect. I knew he had suffered a severe injury. I had no idea a

<sup>19</sup> “Sealed with Their Lives”, pg. 162/3 by Timothy J. Reese.

<sup>20</sup> Official Report, by Col. Gustavis W. Town, 95<sup>th</sup> PVI, 25 Sep 1862, Bakersville, MD.

<sup>21</sup> “Athens Southern Banner”, Wednesday, 1 Oct 1862

<sup>22</sup> J.O. Waddell Letter

<sup>23</sup> Extracts from the roster of the Troup Artillery, by William S. Smedlund, Atlanta, GA.

<sup>24</sup> Picture of John O. and Ella Peek Waddell from Mrs. Sara Nally, Marietta, GA.

<sup>25</sup> Short “History of the 20<sup>th</sup> GA Volunteer Infantry.”

<sup>26</sup> Records of the Grand Lodge of Georgia. No records were located by Caledonia Lodge 121, Cedarville, Georgia.

<sup>27</sup> Reminiscence of J.O. Waddell, 17 Feb. 1901.

Yankee officer had been the one to assist his recovery and perhaps even insure his survival. Since my grandfather was born to John O. Waddell long after the injury at Crampton's Gap, and at Gettysburg, there is now special reason to be thankful that there were those involved in the war for whom human life was perhaps more important than the color of one's uniform..... Despite my strong family connections to the letter from John O. I must confess to you that the letter that moved me most was the letter written by Mrs. Godwin. There are volumes laying between the lines of that letter, and the revelation that General Torbert sheltered her and her Virginia family from harm during that delicate period of the war is absolutely phenomenal.”



It is amazing that while studying these two men, that they are so very similar in their personal courage and dedication to duty and humanity. Both moved through the ranks quickly. Torbert rose to the rank of Major General during the war, Waddell rose to the rank of Colonel during the war and then to General of the Georgia Division of United Confederate Veterans after the war.<sup>28</sup>



GEN. J. O. WADDELL.

We say in our rituals that you are first made a Mason in your heart. It stands to reason that both men would gravitate to the Fraternity of Freemasons.

I wish to thank Mr. William S. Smedlund of Atlanta, Georgia for the great help he provided for this paper. His research on the Troup Artillery unearthed much information and personal reminiscences on John O. Waddell and the Troup Artillery. He was also instrumental in getting me in touch with Mrs. Sara Nally of Marietta, Georgia, who provided insight on John O. Waddell the man as well as pictures and personal reminiscences. I also must thank Mr. Timothy Reese, whose book walked me through in minute detail the happenings of the Battle of Crampton's Gap. Mr. Reese also took time to conduct me about the battlefield and explained how the battle unfolded and where Waddell fell. The following pictures were taken by Wayne D. Mower, III.



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 Presented 23 May 2006

<sup>28</sup> Picture of John O. Waddell from the Cedartown Standard, Thursday, 2 Oct 1913.