

HISTORY
OF
CENTRE AND CLINTON
COUNTIES,
PENNSYLVANIA.

BY
JOHN BLAIR LINN.

ILLUSTRATED.

LOUIS H. EVERTS.
1883.

PRESS OF J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., PHILADELPHIA.

GREGG, GEN. JOHN IRVIN, was born in Bellefonte, July 19, 1826. His father, Andrew Gregg (State senator 1856-61), was a son of Hon. Andrew Gregg, United States senator from Pennsylvania, 1807-13. His mother, Margaret I., daughter of John Irvin, of Cedar Creek Mill, Harris township, is still living.

Gen. Gregg's early education was acquired at David McKinney's academy at Boalsburg, and at Mifflinburg under James McClune. In 1846 the Centre Guards, of which Gen. Gregg's father was captain, volunteered for the Mexican war. They were too late to be accepted, and the general went on to Pittsburgh, where he enlisted in Capt. James Murray's Company G, Second Pennsylvania Volunteers. On his arrival at Vera Cruz he heard of his appointment as lieutenant in the Eleventh Infantry, but no official notice coming he marched on to Jalapa, where Gen. Scott gave him a furlough to Washington to look up his appointment. Lieut. Gregg was then ordered to Williamsport on recruiting service, but joined his regiment in the City of Mexico in December, 1847, meanwhile, Sept. 5, 1847, being promoted captain. He was honorably discharged Aug. 15, 1848, at Fort Hamilton N. Y., after which, with his father and Gen. James Irvin, his uncle, he engaged in the iron business at Hecla. In November, 1857, he married Miss Clarissa H. Everhart, a lady of great amiability and personal beauty, whose early death was deeply regretted.

June 21, 1861, he entered the service as captain of Company E, Fifth Reserves, but was promoted in the regular service captain in Sixth Cavalry, and commenced duty in the Peninsular campaign of 1862. The battles of Williamsburg and Kent Court-House were followed by days and nights of weary marching, while the army of McClellan was fighting its way to the James. In November, 1862, he was selected to command the Sixteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry. Early in January, 1863, he joined the Army of the Potomac, and was assigned to Averill's brigade. During the remainder of the winter he performed important outpost duty, and acquired a reputation for efficiency which was never lost. The first battle in which Col. Gregg participated as a regimental commander was at Kelly's Ford, on the 17th of March. The numbers on either side were about equal, and the advantage gained by the Union force was decisive, marking a new era for that arm. At Brandy Station, on the 9th of June, nearly the entire cavalry of the two armies was engaged. Here Col. Gregg led a brigade.

At Aldie and Upperville the fight was severe, the combatants coming hand to hand. In the battle of Gettysburg his command was posted so as to protect the right flank of the Union army, and was engaged during the afternoon of the second day and during the third. After Lee made his escape to Virginia, Gregg's brigade, with the entire division, was sent across the Potomac to follow up the rebel rear and ascertain his whereabouts. But the rebel chieftain

covered his movements by leaving near the mouth of the valley his best fighting troops. At noon on the 18th, while near Shepherdstown, the Union skirmishers were driven in, and close upon their heels the enemy advanced in force. For eight hours, and until night put an end to the contest, the fighting was of the most determined character and the carnage terrible. The enemy was well supplied with artillery, which was effectually served. At first he concentrated his fire on his right, then on the left, and finally, just as the sun was sinking, a fire of unwonted power and destructiveness was opened upon the right centre. The enemy charged repeatedly, coming on in three columns, and gaining at times a point within thirty paces of the Union line; but nothing could withstand the withering fire that swept that gory field, and until darkness separated the combatants Gregg's small brigade held fast its position, and when the remnants of his faithful band were ordered to retire bore away the mangled forms of one hundred and fifty-eight of their comrades.

In the movement to Culpeper, Gregg was with the advance, and, in conjunction with Kilpatrick's men, captured a body of the enemy who were there cut off. When Gen. Lee commenced his flank movement towards Centreville, one regiment of Gregg's brigade was on the north bank of the Aesthem, or Upper Rappahannock River, charged with picketing in advance of the village of Jeffersonton. At eight o'clock on the morning of the 12th of October the enemy were reported advancing in force. With two small regiments of less than six hundred men, from early in the day until nightfall, Col. Gregg succeeded in checking the right wing of Lee's army and delaying his passage of the stream. The stubborn resistance which this devoted band here made was of signal service, as Meade was enabled to complete the crossing of the stream and gain a day's march on his antagonist.

In November, Gregg was ordered to Washington, where he remained the greater part of the winter under medical treatment. In the Wilderness campaign, which opened in May, he was in Sheridan's column, and for three days was engaged near Todd's Tavern. On the morning of the second day's march Col. Gregg had the advance in the movement upon Richmond, and soon after starting encountered the enemy in force. A brisk skirmish ensued. On the following day Gregg was of the rear-guard, and before the column had all moved the enemy attacked with great impetuosity, doubling up a part of his brigade, and was near throwing the whole Union force into confusion. At this juncture Gregg brought his artillery into position, and when the rebels were at close quarters gave them grape and canister in rapid rounds, which sent them back in utter rout. It is impossible, as it is unnecessary, to follow Col. Gregg through all the intricate mazes in which he led his brigade and division. He particularly distinguished himself in

the actions of the 12th of May inside the fortifications of Richmond, and at Trevillian Station on the 11th of June, for which he received the brevet rank of brigadier-general. In the action at Deep Bottom, on the 16th of August, he was wounded in the right wrist. He was also wounded in the ankle at Hatcher's Run on the 6th of February, while attempting to charge at the head of a portion of his brigade against the enemy's infantry. An amusing incident occurred in connection with the dressing of this wound. At the time of the engagement, and for some days previous, a young German, the Baron Morehouse, a lieutenant in the Prussian service and aide-de-camp to the king, who was here for the purpose of observing military operations, had been serving as a volunteer aide on the staff of Gen. Gregg. He had kept close to the side of the general throughout the battle and in the midst of the sharpest firing. While the surgeon was removing the boot from the wounded foot, seeing the bullet lying loose in the wound, he sprang forward in an excited manner and, seizing the blood-stained missile, exclaimed in his broken English, "Mein Gott! I will carry him to Europe and show him to mein king!"

Gen. Gregg was again wounded at Amelia Springs on the 5th of April, 1865, in a skirmish on the occasion of Lee's retreat from Petersburg. At the close of hostilities he was breveted major-general of volunteers for distinguished services during the war. He also received the brevets of major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, and brigadier-general in the regular army for gallantry in action in the battles of Kelly's Ford, Middleburg, Shepherdstown, Wilderness, Sulphur Springs, St. Mary's Church, Deep Bottom, Stony Creek Station, and Hatcher's Run. Throughout his entire term of service Gen. Gregg displayed the best qualities of the intrepid soldier, and by his stubborn fighting on many fields fairly won the character of an heroic and reliable officer, one who was not afraid to face superior numbers, even under the most unfavorable circumstances, and who made his dispositions with so much coolness and self-possession as to reassure his own men and intimidate the foe.

After the war closed Gen. Gregg was sent with his brigade to Lynchburg, Va., and placed in command of that part of the State. Here he displayed signal ability in regulating the civil relations of the whites and blacks, a matter of extreme difficulty on account of the new status of the blacks. The prominent citizens of Lynchburg, July 18, 1865, united in a letter thanking the general for efficiency, courtesy, and impartiality.

Continuing in the service he was assigned to duty as inspector-general of freedmen in Louisiana. Under the establishment of July 28, 1868, Gen. Gregg was appointed colonel of the Eighth United States Cavalry, and assigned to duty in Arizona, where his duties were most arduous, in consequence of the hostilities of the Indians. From Arizona,

Gen. Gregg was transferred to the command of the District of Nevada, and in 1870 was stationed at Fort Union, New Mexico. In 1873 was assigned to the command of the District of New Mexico. In 1875-76 he was with his regiment in Texas. In 1876 he was detailed as superintendent of mounted recruiting service at St. Louis Arsenal, which position he occupied until October, 1878, when he was retired from active duty by reason of a serious affliction of the knee-joint. Mrs. Gregg dying while he was in the army, the general subsequently married Miss Harriet C. Marr, daughter of the late Rev. Joseph Marr, and now lives at Lewisburg, Pa. In stature the general is six feet four inches in height. He is suave in manner, humorous in conversation, while his towering form and handsome presence fill the eye with the *beau ideal* of an officer of the United States army.