

July 9 81

Theodore A. Dodge

Brevet Colonel U.S.A.

Dear Colonel-

I have read with great interest and as much attention as my numerous official calls would admit, your book on "Chancellorsville". You have indeed given an exhaustive review of the campaign and everything of importance attending it. The showing to our commander and to our army is certainly not very flattering to our pride. I would not be prepared, without a study at least equal to your own, to express a decided opinion upon the causes of our failure in that campaign. Certainly the Cavalry Corps did not accomplish what General Hooker ordered and expected. I have thought that he believed at one time that Stoneman had effectually cut the enemy's communications, that Lee's apparent retreat was in consequence of that work taken in conjunction with our position gained upon his left rear. The Wilderness was so vast and as yet new to General Hooker and his officers that I doubt if he or they had any very clear conception of the actual relative position of the two armies at any time during the conflict. Your review shows that General Lee had accurate knowledge and was not afraid of taking desperate chances. I am much pleased to see your good maps. They do, without a word of comment, indicate my Corps dispositions. The location was not my own. Skirmishers were out, reconnaissances in force were ordered by me, while scouts were sent by me and by General Hooker beyond [enemy ?] lines for information. All reasonable precautions were taken. Intrenchments for the reserve were dug, and batteries placed. Even with what <sup>men</sup> we had, after General Hooker had ordered troops from our three Corps with Pleasanton's Cavalry, to advance and attack Lee's retreating columns, while they were passing along our front three miles away, even then we could have made a fair fight if the division and brigade Commanders could have kept their troops well in hand. A panic, to which all troops are liable, prevented the division and brigade Commanders even from attempting to charge front, from throwing in their own



reserves, from extending their lines or withdrawing their troops in order. As soon as Deven's position had to be abandoned I endeavored to stretch out a line in support of the reserve batteries along the new intrenchments which Barlow had left for the front attack above described. This new line masked Jackson's advance and would have enabled General Hooker to reinforce me but it was the panic which prevented the execution of the movement. As you have shown, a simple brigade of Steinwehr with the artillery did hold Jackson's advancing lines in check for a considerable time. As soon as I had filled the trenches and hoped to rally more and more of retreating regiments behind them the crazy panic caused the men in them to fly towards Chancellorsville. It is true that the trenches were filled with broken fragmentary organizations and stragglers, a force most difficult to manage at any time and particularly so in the face of one of Stonewall Jackson's charges. The panic began on the flank rolled down the line and could not well be exorcised by the simple ditch when a forest of trees was near at hand and farther from the enemy's terrific fire. I think you have well remembered that except Stoneman's and Sedgewick's commands the Corps had opportunity for very little independant action. For example, I could not move to my right rear and extend the general line without orders from General Hooker no more than could Generals Meade, Sykes, or Reynolds do so and fill up the space between me and the Rapidan in order to prevent the possibility of success to a flank movement in that direction. I handled the same Corps with other troops at Gettysburg. Better still, at the battle of Chattanooga. I hope your account will interest other Commanders as it has myself and while you and other writers will doubtless find great defect, may we not feel that each while training in the school of war was brave, patriotic and conscientious. I feel sure, for one, that though deeply mortified even so much that death would at one time have been a happy relief, I did nevertheless exert all my powers and endeavored to do, what for the time, seemed to be wisest and best. Of course I can have hard words against those associated with me. Thank God the right cause prevailed at last and Union and Liberty have triumphed.

Yours very truly  
(sgd) O. O. Howard



Aug 5 81

John A. Owens Esq.

Counsellor at Law

317 Broadway

Dear Sir:

Please consult a volume just issued by Major Theodore A. Dodge.

He has answered this and other modern charges against the right Corps Commander.

If you prefer and will give me a visit, I will show you all my retained papers.

I do not wish to deal unkindly with the reputation of the deceased.

Doubtless the slander you have seen has proceeded from some ill natured informant or inventor years after the occurrences to which it relates.

1. The order claimed was 9 A.M.
2. The attack occurred about six P.M.
3. After 9 A.M. General Hooker and Colonel Comstock his engineer rode with me along my whole line and saw the Division and Brigade Commanders when every even slight suggestion of preparation was heeded.
4. After this during the afternoon General Hooker's Aide de Camp, Captain Moore, came to me and explained in such manner Jackson's movement as to confirm the idea that he (Jackson) was making for Orange C.H. and directed me to send my reserve (it was more than half of Steinwehr's division) to support General Sickles' attack which was going on about two miles and a half straight out on our direct front.
5. I worked the men all day in preparing our intrenchment for this reserve and for the support of the reserve batteries in order to meet and withstand the possible turning of General Devens right flank which way under the cover of the dense forest.
6. I kept General Hooker apprised of the movement beyond the prolongation of his line and sent staff officers to the Division Commanders constantly during the day with instructions to reconnoitre and to keep the *qui vive* lest Jackson should turn to the right from his apparent line of march and mass for an attack.



7. Believing that the movement of Sickles's Corps supported by part of mine would call for the speedy use of my whole command. I took General Steinwehr with me to the right of Sickles's position where the one of his brigades moved out. We reconnoitred and then returned. Soon after my return a sharp skirmish firing indicated an attack on my extreme right. I was on the ground and but for the panic which is now and then uncontrollable and certainly was at that time, should have made a strong stand using the reserve Artillery and General Schurz' division in the new trenches, first to cover and protect [Cheveu's ?] right flank to enable him to change front and gain ground to the right or if forced back to cover his retreat.

The panic interrupted and defeated my design.

8. As it was, the new intrenchment was the first rallying point and held back the enemy some little time while the remainder of Steinwehr's division being my left simply faced about and did good service for nearly an hour till our stragglers had disappeared towards Chancellorsville.

9. My next rallying line was at the edge of the woods of the first opening into which Jackson's men had emerged. The next rallying line was the prolongation of General Berry's line on the first bluff towards Chancellorsville where nearly all my Corps Artillery and all my Infantry not disorganized, except that absent with Sickles, was well located. It was in front of these lines that Stonewall Jackson fell and my command did not leave the position till General Hooker ordered me in the night to the extreme left.

10. My Army Commander at the time had no censure for me. I was not put under arrest. I was not investigated. I was not relieved from the Command of the Corps. I received the thanks of Congress for Gettysburg, the same Corps forming part of my Command. I received the thanks of General George H. Thomas for the engagement of Lookout Valley with the same Corps.

These thoughts give you but glimpses of the facts. I admit and I would suggest again that if you wish to give an enthusiastic article you had better see me and several other living witnesses. The memory is defective and one is doubtless



biassed in his own favor. Still I think I can prove by living witnesses every point that I need to make to show that General Hooker was in error in condemning me for my conduct by the words which you have sent me as coming from him.

Very respectfully Yrs.

(sgd) O. O. Howard

Brig. General. U. S. Army



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TS copies of obscured text from pages 5+6 of letterpress letter;  
OOA to John A. Owens en.p. 3 August 5, 1881



Augt. 6 [18]81

Sarah Winnemucca

Salisbury

Madison Co., M. T.

Dear Sarah:

I enclose you a  
letter to the chief clerk,  
Indian Bureau, whom  
I know. Have your  
account for transportation made out in  
good shape, in duplicate,  
and send it with my  
letter to Mr. Stevens  
and I guess you'll  
get a favorable reply.

I cannot help you  
in the tradeship for



your brother in law.

The agent on the Reserve  
must recommend him.

We are quite well and

Mrs. Howard will be  
glad to hear from you.

Sincerely your friend

O. O. Howard



Augt 6 [18]81

Mr. Stevens

Chief Clerk

Indian Office

Dear Sir:

It appears that

Sarah Winnemucca

was employed as inter-

preter from Fort Vancouver

to Fort Hall with a

band of captured Indians

then she was discharged

without the transpota-

tion to take her home.

From Fort Hall to Salisbury, Madison Co.,

Salisbury, Madisn Co.,

Montana Ty. the cost

was \$26 $\frac{75}{100}$ . Sarah has



done so much for the  
Government, I think it  
would be well to allow  
this amount

Very truly yours

O. O. Howard

Brig. Genl. U.S.A.



Augt. 31 [188]1

A. R. Shepherd, Esq.

Dear Sir:

This will introduce to  
you Mr. F. O. Von Fritsch a  
gentleman of much experience  
in Railroad Engineering and  
business, a brave and worthy  
soldier during our Civil War  
and a man of good character  
and deserving of any assistance  
that you may be able to ren=  
der him.

Very truly yours

O.O.Howard

Brig. General U.S.A.



Sept. 16 [18]81

General J. Gibbon

Colonel 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry

Fort Snelling, Minn.

Sir:

In answer to your letter of the  
8<sup>th</sup> instant I have the honor to forward  
the following statement:

Captain Jas. E. Calloway with a  
company of Mounted volunteers from  
Virginia City, M. T. joined my com=  
mand in the Nez Percé campaign  
at Junction Station the 17<sup>th</sup> of August  
1877. My record gives him 55 Montana  
volunteers. All who came with him  
may not have belonged to his organiz=  
ation, certainly I think his claim  
for 44 other citizen volunteers besides  
himself is true.

The 21<sup>st</sup> of August Captain Calloway  
and a large part of his command  
left my column escorting the wound=  
ed by the way of Dry Creek to



Virginia City. On the 23<sup>d</sup>, the  
remainder, 5 in number, set out  
for home. I think, taking in  
the time necessary to join my  
troops and the time required to  
reach their home, the volunteers  
must have been in the saddle  
from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> of August  
^ inclusive

I am, General

Very respectfully

Your Obed't servt.

O. O. Howard

Brevet Major General, U. S. A.

Comd<sup>g</sup> Department



Sept 16 [18]81

General J. Gibbon

Colonel 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry

Fort Snelling, Minn.

Sir:

In answer to your letter of the  
8<sup>th</sup> instant, respecting the alleged loss  
of 19 horses and mules by Captain  
Calloway's volunteer company in the  
Nez Percé campaign of 1877, I have  
the honor to make the following  
statement:

According to my report at the  
camp of Camas Meadows I state  
volunteers  
that "Captain Calloway's ^ came up  
"and camped about one hundred  
"yards from me across a creek.  
"They were between two streams of  
"water whose banks were fringed  
"by the thickest of willows."

During the night of the 19<sup>th</sup> and  
20<sup>th</sup> of August 1877 a night attack  
by the Indians was made. My



report further says, "then immediately  
"there is firing from every quarter.  
"The citizens' camp is near this approach  
"and may of their horses break away;  
"all the mules between the two creeks  
"are easily stampeded, and a rush  
"is made for the other animals."

The report again declares  
that "the cavalry succeeded in  
"striking the escaping herd, and, at  
"first, recovered at least half, but  
"many, made wild by the charges  
"and the firing, again ran to  
"the enemy."

These extracts indicate a  
loss by Capt. Calloway's command  
but just how many horses and  
animals  
pack ~~mules~~ escaped I could not  
tell. I would not think 19 an  
unreasonable claim.

Very respectfully

Your obdt servant

O. O. Howard

Brevet Major General, U. S. A.

Comd<sup>g</sup> Department



Oct 4<sup>th</sup> 1881

My dear child:

I have  
just hurriedly written  
a note to Dr. Webb and  
have written right on about  
his wound. Please present it  
as soon as you can.  
He will like you &  
do all he can to make  
you happy except marry  
you to that young man  
across the way. Mrs. Howard  
& the children are quite well.  
Much love to yourself &  
wait for me if you can't  
do better      very sincerely yours

O. O. H.

For note to Dr. Webb - see Webb, E.B.



Oct. 4 [188]1

Rev E. B. Webb.

My dear Sir:

How could  
you shoot ypurself?  
I am anxious to hear from  
you or someone to write  
write for you. A wound  
is a wound whether  
inflicted in war or in peace.  
I do hope it is not very  
bad. I have just heard of  
the accident. I have wanted  
to have you visit me  
dreadfully and to preach  
to my young men.

You have a dear friend  
of mine, the daughter of



Hon. E. P. Smith, once  
Commissioner of Indian  
Affairs, who went afterwards  
as Missionary to Africa.

Miss Gertrude is a delightful  
young lady, intimate friend  
of my daughter Grace  
whom you know. She  
wishes to know you - so  
I will send this letter  
through her. She will  
probably visit to join  
your church. She  
speaks & teaches both  
the German & French, her  
father having left her  
& her mother in Europe.

With much love and  
sympathy - Your friend

O. O. Howard



Oct. 8 [1881]

Dear General Hancock

Your very  
thoughtful & kind  
invitation & offer for  
Yorktown is received. I  
find that it will not be  
possible for me, consistent  
with engagements made  
& duties here to attend  
the exercises at Yorktown.

Convey my sincere  
regrets to our friends.

Mrs. Howard joins  
me in grateful acknowl  
edgement of your courtesy,

very  
Yours ^ truly

O.O.Howard

Maj. Gen. W.S. Hancock

Governor's Island N.Y. Harbor