

For those of us in the Civil War Reenacting Community the 150th Anniversary Gettysburg event was something we've been pointing towards for a while now. I was very honored to be offered command of the Gettysburg event hosted by the Blue Gray Alliance. I normally command the Army of the Ohio which is composed of military and civilian folks in Ohio and NY mainly. I have commanded many local and regional events, but never anything larger than perhaps 400 on a side. To be offered command of something with 4-5000 on a side was quite a step up and a huge honor! It was an incredible amount of work ranging from planning where portable toilets and water would go to researching battles to put together scenario plans. Many folks have asked me since the BGA Gettysburg has now passed if it was worth the time and effort that went into commanding it. There were certainly moments of extreme frustration dealing with many, many issues. One goal early on was to get as many units to be able to do their home unit portrayal as possible at Gettysburg. The Army of the Ohio was able to portray the 25th OVI on Cemetery Hill as well as the 8th OVI during Pickett's Charge. But, for most of our folks the one that stood out was to portray the 140th NY, who fought on Little Round Top and have as much or more of a case for saving the day as the 20th Maine. The reenacting 140th NY is part of the Army of the Ohio by the way. During planning we laid out a scenario to do Little Round Top that included the both the 20th Maine on the Union left flank and the 140th NY on the right. When you read the comments below, written by my friend Dave George of the 140th NY it is easy to see why yes, it was worth every bit of effort we put forth. To be able to provide these men, with this experience is more priceless than anything in a MasterCard commercial....and there were other units, many others with similar joy. Many folks ask why we reenact? I submit the info below as a well written example of why we do what we do. Without further ado, Dave's comments:

### Gettysburg 150th

It is hard to believe that what we have been anticipating for the last several years has come and gone. This truly was a once in a lifetime experience. Was it the best reenactment ever? Probably not. Was it the worst ever? Definitely not. While many in the hobby will debate many points as to the success or failure of the event to reach expectations, I want to focus on just a couple of things.

First, I am proud of the 140th NY. Our organization was represented by more members on this road trip than any I can remember in my years with the 140th. Our civilians were featured with their "Temperance Tableau" and our military had the honor of portraying our hometown heroes.

Certainly the highlight for me was the fight at Little Round Top on Saturday afternoon. It was the part of the weekend that I was most looking forward to. I remember commenting on our march that afternoon that I feared I may have set my expectations too high for the coming scenario.

The 140th and the rest of our battalion formed at the crest of the "Little Round Top" hill behind the trees. The battle raged below us and eventually swelled to our left as LRT became the focus of the Confederate attack. Nearly drowned out by the sound of battle, our Lt. Colonel (Scott Sharp) delivered a brief but thorough description of the 140th and the role they played 150 years ago.

Within moments the battalion moved to its final staging position before the great counter-attack. The fury of battle was now directly below us and Colonel Bills waved his sword above his head and called out “Down this way boys!” Forward went the colors in the careful hands of Sergeant Eney and the men rushed headlong down the hill. I remember desperately trying to establish our line as Sgt. Eney took a hit. The tumult created such a scene as I will long remember with men falling, even rolling down the hill. The firing was furious but for a few minutes and the gray clad soldiers eased their way back down the hill. A great shout went up from the men on the hill. One of our parads called out “Did you see ‘em?” He exclaimed, “Did you see the look on their faces?” “Yeah, I saw it,” another announced, “they didn’t see that coming!”

In the quiet moments that followed, I stood back from it all and as tears filled my eyes, I noticed that I was not alone. A man from the 95th NY joined us just for this fight because his great, great grand-dad had fought with Company A of the 140th NY at Gettysburg. He was sobbing. I made my way toward him shaking many hands on that hill in the aftermath of the battle, not saying a word. There weren’t words to say as I looked into the moistened eyes of each man. Tom Eney pulled me close and we wept on each other’s shoulders. As the quiet moments passed, the men began recounting already what had taken place on that hill and we posed for group pictures. I discovered in those moments that my expectations hadn’t been set too high. I knew what we were there to do. Every man among us knew the weight of what we were doing there. I had thought that cornfield in Maryland last year just might be the height of my re-enacting experience. I was wrong.

Thank you men,  
David George  
140th NYVI, Army of the Ohio

Submitted by Bob Minton  
Colonel, Army of the Ohio