

BOOK OF BIOGRAPHIES

THIS VOLUME CONTAINS

Biographical Sketches

— OF —

LEADING CITIZENS

— OF —

BERKS COUNTY, PA.

“Biography is the only true history.”—Emerson.

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General Gregg spent his earlier boyhood with his father's family in Bellefonte, Harrisburg, and Hollidaysburg. In April, 1845, the family removed to Potomac Furnace, Loudoun County, Va. When in the following July, the father died, the widowed mother with her nine children returned to Hollidaysburg, where her death occurred not long after in August, 1847. Our subject then became a member of the family of his uncle, David McMurtrie, living in Huntingdon, and for two years attended the school of that excellent teacher, Mr. John A. Hall. From this school he went to Milnwood Academy, in the lower end of Huntingdon County, and a year later joined his elder brother, Andrew, at the University at Lewisburg. While at the University he received an appointment as cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, which he

entered July 1, 1851. He graduated in June, 1855, standing eighth in a class of thirty-four members; among his class-mates were Generals Averill, Webb, Ruggles and Comstock, all prominent officers in the Union Army in the War of the Rebellion, and General Nichols of the Confederate Army. He was promoted in the army to Bvt. Second Lieutenant of Dragoons, July 1, 1855, and served in garrison at Jefferson Barracks, Mo., in 1855-56, being commissioned Second Lieutenant of First Dragoons, Sept. 4, 1855. In 1856 he was assigned to frontier duty in the West and on the Pacific Coast, and remained there until the outbreak of the Civil War recalled him to the East. He was stationed at Fort Main, New Mexico, in 1856; took part in the march to California in the same year; was at Fort Tejon, Cal., in 1856-57; Fort Vancouver, Wash., in 1857-58; and at Fort Walla Walla, Wash., in 1858. He took part in the Spokane Expedition of 1858, being engaged in a desperate combat with the Indians at To-hots-nimme, Wash., May 17, 1858; was present at the combat of Four Lakes, Wash., September 1, 1858; combat on Spokane Plain, September 5, 1858; and skirmish on Spokane River, September 8, 1858. He was on frontier duty at Fort Walla Walla, Wash., in 1859; at Fort Dallas, Oregon, in 1859-60; was scouting against the Snake Indians in 1860, being engaged in a skirmish near Hamoy Lake, Oregon, May 24, 1860. The winter of 1860-61 was spent in duty on the Warm Spring Reservation.

Our subject became First Lieutenant of the First Dragoons on March 21, 1861, and was made Captain in the Sixth Cavalry on May 14, 1861. During the first months of the war he saw duty in the defenses of Washington, D. C., and throughout the remainder of the war was connected with the Army of the Potomac. From Oct. 12, 1861, till January, 1862, he was on sick leave. He became Colonel of the 8th Reg. Pa. Vol. Cav. on Jan. 24, 1862, and took part in the Virginia Peninsular Campaign. He was engaged in the battles of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks, May 31 and June 1, 1862, skirmishes at New Kent Court House, Savage Station, Bottom's Bridge and White Oak Swamp, June, 1862, battle of Glendale, June 30, 1862, battle of Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862, and covering the

movement from Hanson's Landing to Yorktown, August, 1862. He was in the Maryland Campaign of the Army of the Potomac, which extended from September to November, 1862, being engaged in several skirmishes on the march to Falmouth, Va., in October and November. On Nov. 29, 1862, our subject was commissioned Brigadier General U. S. Volunteers. From December, 1862, to June, 1863, Gen. Gregg commanded a Division of Cavalry, being engaged in the skirmish at Rappahannock Bridge, April 4, 1863, and "Stoneman's Raid" towards Richmond April 13-May 2, 1863. The Pennsylvania Campaign of the Army of the Potomac was participated in by our subject, still as a cavalry commander; he was engaged in the combat of Brandy Station, June 9, 1863, skirmish at Aldie, June 17, Middleburg, June 19, Upperville, June 21, 1863, battle of Gettysburg, July 1-2-3, 1863, skirmish at Shepherdstown, July 16, 1863, and pursuit of the Rebel Army to Warrenton, Va., July, 1863. Central Virginia then became the scene of operations for the Army of the Potomac, and our subject there participated in the action at Rapidan Station, Sept. 14, Beverly Ford, Oct. 12, Auburn, Oct. 14, and New Hope Church, Nov. 27, 1863. From March 26 to April 6, 1864, Gen. Gregg was in command of the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and in the Richmond Campaign from April 6, 1864, to Feb. 3, 1865, was in command of the Second Cavalry Division of the Army of the Potomac, being engaged in the skirmishes at Todd's Tavern, May 5-7, 1864, where he was in command, Ground Squirrel Church, May 11, 1864, combat at Meadow Bridge, May 12, 1864, battle of Haw's Shop, May 28, 1864, skirmish of Gaines' House, June 2, 1864, battle of Trevilian Station, June 11, 1864, action of Truett Station, June 21, 1864, action of St. Mary's Church, June 24, 1864, where he was in command, skirmish at Warwick Swamp, July 12, 1864, combat of Darbytown, July 28, 1864, skirmish at Lee's Mills, July 30, 1864. On Aug. 1, 1864, Gen. Gregg came into command of the Cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, being brevetted on that date Major-General U. S. Volunteers "for Highly Meritorious and Distinguished Conduct Throughout the Campaign, Particularly in the Recon-

naissance on the Charles City Road." On Aug. 17, 1864, he was in the action at Deep Bottom, skirmishes and battle of Ream's Station, Aug. 23-25, 1864, combat of Peeble's Farm, Sept. 29-30, and of the Vaughan Road, Oct. 1, 1864, where he was in command. The battle of Goydton Plank Road, Oct. 27, 1864, destruction of Stony Creek Station, Dec. 1, 1864, and skirmish at Bellefield, Dec. 9, 1864, terminated Gen. Gregg's active work in the army. He resigned from the service Feb. 3, 1865.

Gen. Gregg's brothers, Henry H. and Thomas J., were both in the Union Army and served three years, the former as Captain in the 125th Reg. Pa. Vol. Inf., and as Major in the 13th Reg. Pa. Vol. Cav., the latter as Lieutenant in the 6th Reg. Pa. Vol. Cav., and as aide-de-camp on his brother's staff.

In February, 1874, President Grant appointed General Gregg U. S. Consul at Prague, Bohemia, which position he resigned and returned to Reading in the following August, where he has since made his home. In 1891 he was nominated by the Republican party as its candidate for Auditor-General of Pennsylvania, was elected, and made a splendid record in his three years of service. He was elected Commander of the Pennsylvania Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U. S. in 1886, and was continued in office by successive elections every year until the present. He is president of the board of directors of the Charles Evans Cemetery Company of Reading, and is a member of the board of trustees of the State Lunatic Hospital at Harrisburg. On Oct. 6, 1862, General Gregg married Ellen F. Sheaff of Reading, a great-granddaughter of Frederick A. Muhlenberg, as also of Gov. Joseph Hiester. They have two sons, namely: George Sheaff; and David McMurtrie.