



A Tale of Two Statues: The William Wells Statues at Gettysburg and Burlington, Vermont

*This statue and bas-relief may remind
future generations that Vermont raised
men who dared to do even more
desperate deeds than that famous charge
of the Light Brigade at Balaclava.¹*

By DAVID F. CROSS

Battery Park in Burlington, Vermont, overlooks Lake Champlain. During the War of 1812, an artillery emplacement consisting of embrasures for thirteen cannon was constructed to repel British warships coming up the lake from Canada, and these earthworks did withstand a harmless twenty-minute bombardment in 1813.² The only Civil War connection here is the arrival the same year of General Wade Hampton to command the force being assembled for an ill-fated invasion of Canada.³ This Major General Hampton (1752–1835) was the grandfather of Confederate Major General Wade Hampton III (1818–1902), who organized the Hampton Legion and commanded the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia following J.E.B. Stuart's death at Yellow Tavern, Virginia.

It is, therefore, somewhat of a surprise and an anachronism to encounter in the center of Battery Park a large statue of a Federal Civil War cavalry officer. He stands eight feet five inches tall and is portrayed

.....
DAVID F. CROSS, M.D., is a retired physician residing in Ferrisburgh. Long fascinated by Vermont's role in the Civil War, he is the author of *A Melancholy Affair at the Weldon Railroad: The Vermont Brigade, June 23, 1864* (2005). His website is <http://www/weldonrailroad.com/>

Vermont History 73 (Winter/Spring 2005): 40–62.

© 2005 by the Vermont Historical Society. ISSN: 0042-4161; on-line ISSN: 1544-3043

afoot, striding forward, sword in hand, wearing a double-breasted general's uniform, a wide-brimmed hat, sidearm, knee-high boots, and spurs. This bronze sculpture stands atop a seven-foot-square multitiered granite base. The figure is Brevet Major General William Wells of the First Regiment of Vermont Cavalry (FVC).

Four hundred miles to the south, visitors to the battlefield at Gettysburg can view this same statue because an identical sculpture occupies a conspicuous site on South Confederate Avenue where it crosses Plum Run. Actually, the Gettysburg statue is the original (by 11 months) while the Burlington version is the replica.⁴ The prominent location at the base of Big Round Top of this statue of a lesser-known Civil War hero attracts the attention of many visitors to the park. One battlefield guide quips, "As we tell of Hood's hot, thirsty, tired men making their advance on Day 2, and are just beginning to cross Plum Run, someone in the car, van, or bus invariably blurts out, 'Who's that guy?'" To which she replies, just 'Some Cavalry guy.'⁵

Eight equestrian statues of specific individuals stand on the battlefield (Hancock, Howard, Lee, Longstreet, Meade, Reynolds, Sedgwick, and Slocum). The Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association (GBMA), perhaps John Bachelder⁶ himself, is thought to have insisted that no one ranking below general at the time of the battle could have his own monument and only corps and army commanders could be portrayed mounted.⁷ Hence, although cavalry commanders, both John Buford and George Custer are horseless while the Gregg Cavalry Shaft on East Cavalry Field bears no statue. Alfred Pleasonton⁸ and David Gregg have individual nonequestrian statues as part of the Pennsylvania State Memorial group. An unidentified trooper on horseback surmounts the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry Memorial. Sometimes the veterans circumvented the GBMA rules. Colonel A. Van Horne Ellis, with folded arms, stands atop the 124th New York Infantry monument at Devil's Den. His is the only full length statue of a regimental commander on the battlefield. Lt. Stephen Brown, without his hatchet,⁹ surmounts the 13th Vermont Infantry Monument. He is the lowest-ranking officer depicted in bronze. The trooper portrayed on the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry monument is George Ferree of Company L, and there are several other surreptitious depictions.¹⁰ There are many images of generic enlisted men on regimental memorials. One woman, a pregnant Elizabeth Thorn, in the Gettysburg Civil War Women's Memorial dedicated in 2002, one chaplain, Father William Corby, one civilian, John Burns, one enlisted man, Albert Woolson, who was not at the battle but outlived all his Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) comrades, and one Delaware Indian warrior, Chief Tamenend, are depicted in bronze. But, excluding

.....



Statue of Brevet Major General William Wells in Battery Park at Burlington, Vermont. Photograph by the author.



Statue of Brevet Major General William Wells in the Gettysburg Military Park at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Photograph courtesy of Jack Anderson.

Lt. Brown, who was not a commander, Major William Wells is the lowest-ranking federal officer with a statue specifically to honor him.¹¹

Who was this “Cavalry guy?” How does one explain the statue of a lowly major located on the Gettysburg battlefield and why a replica on a site in Vermont commemorating the War of 1812 ?

William Wells was arguably the most extraordinary Vermont soldier of the Civil War.¹² Few, if any, men endured more arduous service or took part in more engagements. Enlisting as a private in 1861, he was almost continuously in the field until the end of the war. After being elected the second lieutenant of Company C, he rose to brevet major general¹³ and was the last commander of the Army of the Potomac’s Cavalry Corps. Wells was captured by John Singleton Mosby and was wounded twice. He was in the engagements at Culpeper Court House, Brandy Station, and Ashland, and he commanded a battalion at Yellow Tavern. He took part in the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren Richmond Raid, Wilson’s Raid, Third Winchester, and Cedar Creek. Of the seventy-six engagements credited to the FVC, Wells was involved in seventy. He commanded a brigade or division in eighteen battles. Following the death of General Elon Farnsworth during the ill-fated charge on the third day at Gettysburg, Wells led his battalion to safety. Licensed battlefield guide Andie Custer observes, “Most people think he [Wells] simply rode with Farnsworth, however, primary evidence (and Wells’s own letters) reveal that Farnsworth was NOT with him when he broke into the meadow.”¹⁴ He was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1891 for leading his battalion in Farnsworth’s Charge.¹⁵ At the Grand Review in Washington on May 22, 1865, he commanded the 2nd Brigade, 3rd (Custer’s) Division, Cavalry Corps, which led the advance of the Army of the Potomac.¹⁶ Philip H. Sheridan is reputed to have said of Wells, “He was my ideal of a cavalryman.”¹⁷

Wells was born in 1837 in Waterbury, Vermont, into an influential Vermont family. His father, William W. Wells, had graduated from the University of Vermont in 1827, was prominent in the pharmaceutical and other businesses, served in the state legislature and sent four (of six) sons to the Union armies.¹⁸ An uncle, Paul Dillingham, Jr., was the lieutenant governor of Vermont from 1861–65. Young William was educated at the Vermont Academy in Saxtons River and Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, New Hampshire. From age nineteen until the outbreak of the Civil War, Wells worked for his father in his extensive business interests. In 1861 he assisted in raising Company C, FVC, and his company elected him its second lieutenant. Wells was commissioned a first lieutenant in October 1861 and captain a month later. In September 1862, he returned to Vermont to assist in regimental recruiting. In

January 1863, having been promoted to major while away, he returned to Virginia. All the officers of the regiment concurred in recommending his promotion to colonel of the regiment in June 1864. He was awarded the brevet rank of brigadier general of volunteers in February 1865 and brevet major general “for gallant and meritorious service” in March 1865. Upon the recommendation of Generals Sheridan and George A. Custer for his brilliant service, he was commissioned brigadier general in May 1865. Students of Vermont in the Civil War believe he received more promotions than any other Vermont officer during the war.¹⁹

The military career of Major Wells came close to being terminated by John Mosby in March 1863 at Herndon Station, Virginia. A month earlier, Mosby had embarrassed and ended the career of Brigadier General Edwin H. Stoughton when he rode into Fairfax Court House with twenty-nine of his partisan rangers and captured the commander of the Second Vermont Brigade arousing him from bed with a famous slap on the backside.²⁰ On March 17, 1863, Mosby raided the federal outpost at Herndon Station, Virginia. His Rangers surprised troopers of the FVC and captured two dozen Vermonters. It so happened that Wells was visiting the post to investigate complaints that federal troopers were stealing from the local citizenry. Major Wells, accompanied by Captain Robert Scofield, Jr. and Lt. Perley C. J. Cheney, was enjoying lunch across the road from the station at the home of Nat Hanna with the commander of the post, Lt. Alexander G. Watson. Mosby recalled,

We saw four finely-equipped horses tied in front of a near-by house. My men at once rushed to find the riders. They found a table spread with lunch. One of the men ran up-stairs where it was pitch dark; he called but got no answer. As a pistol shot could do no harm, he fired into the darkness. The flash of the pistol in his face caused one of the Yankees to move, and he descended through the ceiling. He had stepped on the lathing and caved it in. After he was brushed off, we saw that he was a major. The three other officers who were with him came out of their holes and surrendered. My men appropriated the lunch by right of war.²¹

Wells’s spectacular arrival from above into the midst of Mosby and his Rangers seems the stuff of Hollywood fiction, and in a lesser man might have been the end of his military career. The episode, however, did his reputation no harm. He spent seven weeks in Libby Prison until being paroled on May 5, 1863, and then returned to his regiment, where he distinguished himself in numerous engagements.

At Gettysburg, General Farnsworth led Wells’s battalion on the charge associated with his name. Farnsworth was mortally wounded early, and when the Vermonters debouched into the meadow, he was probably already dead. It was Wells who broke through the line of

Confederate infantry, got cut off from the Union lines, reorganized and held his command together, and escaped with few casualties.²² Wells wrote home describing the charge:

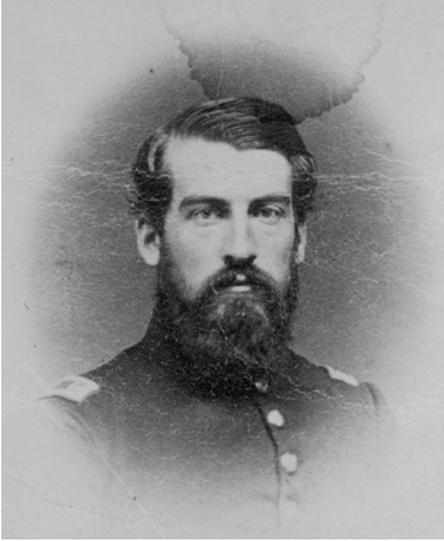
Dear Parents

In the afternoon My Battalion B. H. A & G made a charge. Also the 1st [West] Va made one on our left. Genl Farnsworth led my Battalion in the Charge. We charged over rocks over stone walls & fences. Drove in 200 Infantry. Captured 30 or 40 Prisoners. Genl F was dismounted. One of Co C Men gave up his horse to him. The Genl was wounded. I have not seen him since. It was reported that he was wounded but in our Lines. [It was not until July 5 that Farnsworth's body was discovered on the battlefield, pierced by five bullets.] He is a fine officer. We charged about 1 [written over with a "2"] miles until we ran onto a Brigade of Infantry stationed behind a Stone wall in the woods. They opened on us, killed some horses & Captured some men. When we fell back we met Cos L & E & F who were sent to support us. . . . Officers & men behaved themselves gallantly.²³

Wells was wounded by saber cuts in a savage cavalry melee at Boonboro, Maryland, in July 1863 and wounded again in September by a shell fragment at Culpeper Court House, Virginia.²⁴ He commanded the 7th Michigan Cavalry during Kilpatrick's raid. Following the death of Colonel Addison W. Preston in June 1864, Wells succeeded to the command of the FVC. In August he led it into the Shenandoah Valley under General Sheridan. In September Wells assumed command of the brigade²⁵ and sometimes the entire Third Division. The Vermonters and the brigade performed creditably at Third Winchester and spectacularly at Cedar Creek, helping to reverse the rout of the morning and achieving a major victory at nightfall. Wells was the last commander of General Sheridan's Corps. He remained in the army until January 1866.²⁶

Wells returned to Waterbury and to the family wholesale drug business of Henry & Company. The company moved to Burlington in 1868 and became Wells, Richardson & Co. pharmaceutical company in 1872.²⁷ He left the management of the company in that year to accept the office of collector of customs for the district of Vermont proffered to him by President Grant to replace the disgraced George Stannard. The *Burlington Free Press* commented, "But while we sorrow over Stannard's fall, we are pleased that the office is given to another soldier, Gen. Wm. Wells of Burlington."²⁸ After thirteen years as customs collector in Burlington, Wells resumed active management of Wells, Richardson & Co. By this time he had become one of the wealthiest men in Vermont.²⁹ His business interests were numerous. He was president of the Burlington Trust Company, the Burlington Gas Light Company, and the Burlington Board of Trade. He was a director in the Rutland Railroad and

.....



Carte de visite of Major William Wells of the First Regiment Vermont Volunteer Cavalry in 1863. Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

the Champlain Transportation Company, which operated steamboats on Lake Champlain. He served his community in numerous civic capacities, including being a major benefactor and trustee of the Burlington YMCA and a vestryman of St. Paul's Episcopal cathedral. Always an active veteran, he was a president of the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers, a president of the First Vermont Cavalry Society (FVCS), a member of the Gettysburg Monument Commission (1889–90), the first commander of the Vermont Commandery of the Loyal Legion, a member of GAR Stannard Post #2, and a founder and first president of the Vermont Veterans Home.

Wells represented Waterbury in the state legislature in 1865–66. In that year he was elected by the legislature to serve as Vermont's adjutant and inspector general and was reelected to this post consecutively for thirteen years. In 1886–88 he served as a State Senator from Chittenden County.

In 1891 the adjutant and inspector general of Vermont was Theodore S. Peck, once a trooper in the FVC and Wells's successor in the job. Peck wrote the secretary of war "respectfully call[ing] your attention to the record of the following named Vermont soldiers, and sincerely trust it may be your pleasure . . . to issue them medals of honor for distinguished services rendered during the war of the rebellion."³⁰ The secretary of war just happened to be a Vermonter, Redfield Proctor, previously colonel of the 15th Vermont Infantry. Peck listed several

Vermonters, including Wells, and cited his gallantry at Funkstown, Cedar Creek, Five Forks, and especially Gettysburg, where:

Major Wm. Wells led the charge of the second battalion, First Vermont cavalry upon Round Top, Gettysburg, Pa. at the time Gen. Farnsworth was killed. This charge . . . was considered one of the most daring charges of the war of the rebellion, or any other war.³¹

The record does not reveal any investigation by a staff officer. Instead, there is an endorsement dated August 29, 1891, by the acting secretary of war, Lewis A. Grant (formally commander of the First Vermont Brigade), directing:

Issue medal of honor to Brevet Major-General William Wells for distinguished gallantry at the battle of Gettysburg.³²

Seven months before his death, an ill Wells received his Medal of Honor along with fellow Vermonters Col. Wheelock G. Veasey, Lt. Erastus W. Jewett, Adjutant Josiah G. Livingstone, and, not surprisingly, Lt. Theodore S. Peck.

Immediately upon his return from the army in 1865, Wells married Arahanna Richardson (1845–1905). They had two children, Franklin Richardson Wells (1871–1956) and Bertha Richardson Wells (1873–1954).³³ Because of his wife’s health problems, Wells began spending winters in New York City, where he became ill with coronary disease in 1890. He died suddenly of “angina pectoris” in New York in 1892 at the age of 54. The *Burlington Free Press* in a lengthy editorial commented:

In the death of Gen. Wells which . . . brought sorrow to so many hearts, the city of Burlington lost one of its foremost citizens and the State of Vermont one of its worthiest, best known and universally respected citizens.³⁴

The funeral was directed by the Vermont Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion. Business activity was suspended throughout Burlington, with flags flown at half-mast. The Cathedral of St. Paul was inadequate to accommodate the crowd wishing to attend the service. Dignitaries ranging from the governor to leaders of Vermont’s business, social, fraternal, and veterans groups were present. The huge procession that accompanied the body on the 1½-mile route from the cathedral to Lake View Cemetery included a hundred employees from Wells, Richardson & Co., seventy-five veterans from Burlington’s Standard Post #2 GAR, seventy-five men from the Camp William Wells Post of the Sons of Union Veterans, and the thirty-man Burlington cadet corps. Twenty-five members of the FVCS walked with the hearse. At the cemetery the column formed a hollow square for an impressive

burial service.³⁵ A large granite boulder bearing a medal plaque that chronicles Wells's accomplishments marks the grave.

In 1908, by joint resolution of the senate and house, the Vermont legislature authorized the placement of a medallion portrait of General Williams Wells in the State House in Montpelier. On October 5, 1910, the plaque was dedicated "before a large group of dignitaries and a dwindling number of veterans."³⁶

A delegation from the FVCS journeyed to Gettysburg in the autumn of 1910 to confer with the Gettysburg National Military Park Commission, and the War Department promptly granted a site for a monument to Wells on October 30, 1910.³⁷ The location was chosen by the veterans because it was "near the spot where the second battalion crossed Plum Run on the charge of July 3, 1864." The Commission "assured the Vermonters that when the monument was in position a vista would be opened from that point to the granite monument of the First Vermont Cavalry, . . . a distance of one thousand yards."³⁸ Actually, it seems this spot was originally intended as the site for a Farnsworth/First Cavalry Brigade Monument. The *National Tribune* of October 4, 1888, reported:

A monument to Gen. Elon J. Farnsworth, who commanded the brigade and fell leading what at the time was considered a desperate and hopeless charge, is proposed to be erected. It is to be placed on the spur of Round Top, southeast of Snyder's house where he fell. It is to be composed of a mound of boulders gathered in the neighborhood, upon which is to be placed a pentagonal granite shaft, on each of the faces of which is to be inscribed historical data relating to the regiments of the brigade and battery engaged. The mound and shaft are to be surmounted by a statue of Farnsworth. It is desired that all surviving members of this brigade actively interest themselves in this project, in order that it may be made one of the most striking features of the field, as his (Farnsworth's) fall is one of the most romantic incidents of the battle of Gettysburg. Having won in the 8th Ill. Cav. his promotion, which occurred four days before he was killed, members of that regiment are deeply interested in these proceedings.³⁹

This proposal for a First Brigade Monument honoring Farnsworth came to nothing.⁴⁰ Farnsworth, after all, was in command of the brigade for only a few days.⁴¹

In December 1912, Governor Allen M. Fletcher approved an act of the Vermont legislature that appropriated the sum of \$6,000 "for the purpose of erecting a monument on the battlefield of Gettysburg . . . commemorating the services and perpetuating the memory of General William Wells and the officers and enlisted men of the First Regiment, Vermont Cavalry."⁴² The bill authorized the governor to appoint five commissioners to carry out the provisions of this act. Governor Fletcher appointed Myron M. Parker, former colonel of the FVC and president

of the FVCS, as chairman. Committee members were Seymour H. Wood (former sgt., Co. L, FVC and secretary of the FVCS); George L. McBride (former sgt., Co. L, FVC); Henry O. Wheeler (former bvt. capt., Co. A, FVC and treasurer of the FVCS); and John E. McClellan (member of the Vermont legislature and former pvt., 1st Massachusetts Heavy Artillery). The ever-present Theodore Peck was secretary and General Lee S. Tillotson (Vermont's adjutant general) served as its treasurer. At a meeting in Burlington in January 1913 the commission met with Wells's son and daughter plus other family members. Veterans of the regiment raised an additional \$2,000, earmarked for a bas-relief plaque of a scene depicting Farnsworth's Charge.

In June 1913 the FVCS announced that its 41st annual meeting would be held on the battlefield at Gettysburg and specifically that "services of unveiling and dedication of the Memorial in honor of General William Wells and officers and men of the first Vermont Cavalry will be held at 3:30 o'clock, p.m., July 3, 1913, near the spot where the second battalion crossed Plum Run on the charge of July 3, 1863. The services will be of unusual interest."⁴³

With eighty-seven veterans of the FVC present, the exercises opened with "assembly" sounded by the Fifth Infantry Bugle Corps. The Reverend Albert W. Clark, formerly a sergeant in the 12th Vermont Regiment, gave the opening prayer, saying, "Behold, O God, to-day our offering of granite, marble and bronze. . . . We do dedicate to Thee this



Dedication of the statue of William Wells at Gettysburg, 1913. From Horatio Nelson Jackson, Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells and the Officers and Men of the First Vermont Cavalry on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 3, 1913 (1914). Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

monument in memory of the Green Mountain Boys and of this unflinching leader.” During the playing of “The Star Spangled Banner,” the statue was unveiled by Mrs. H. Nelson Jackson (nee Bertha Wells) and Frank Wells.⁴⁴

Colonel Myron M. Parker presided and opened the proceedings, saying, “To-day the survivors of the First Vermont Cavalry have assembled here to dedicate a monument to the officers and men of that historic regiment and to their distinguished commander, Major General William Wells.” Governor Fletcher then transferred ownership of the monument to the War Department. The secretary of war, Lindley M. Garrison, couldn’t make the ceremony and a major acted on behalf of the War Department.

Theodore Peck then spoke on behalf of the Vermont monument commissioners and described the features of the monument. He noted that, borrowing from the original Farnsworth monument proposal, the large boulder that forms the base of monument is in its original position while the second was taken from a spot nearby. Next, Vermont Senator William P. Dillingham⁴⁵ rambled on for several minutes. The Army Band played “Dixie” (reported to have been loudly applauded by the crowd), which heralded the appearance on the podium of Confederate General Evander M. Law, who commanded Hood’s Division at Gettysburg. He recounted (perhaps somewhat fancifully) from the Confederate commander’s perspective the engagement with the Federal cavalry. The next speaker was also an ex-Confederate officer, General Jerome B. Robertson, who commanded a brigade in Hood’s Division. The audience must have been astounded to hear a ringing defense of Jefferson Davis, and that Robertson expected from the assembled Vermonters “a generous recognition of the high qualities Jefferson Davis manifested.” The *Burlington Free Press* dismissed this as “a witty speech.” John McElroy, the editor of the *National Tribune* and the poet laureate for Andersonville survivors, next gave a flowery mini-oration about the “surpassing glory of the Army of the Potomac” (to which he never belonged). Various other Vermont veterans and other former Union and Confederate officers then provided brief remarks.⁴⁶ John W. Bennett, former lieutenant colonel of the FVC, told the audience that “General Kilpatrick ordered that reckless, ill-advised charge.” He added that he remembered Farnsworth telling him, “Major, I do not see the slightest chance for a successful charge.” He claimed that he heard General Kilpatrick reply after hearing Farnsworth’s conclusions, “General Farnsworth, well, somebody can charge.” At the implied insult, Farnsworth “straightened up (in the saddle) every fiber of his body seemed rigid” and replied, “General Kilpatrick, if anybody can charge,

we can sir.” George Hillyer, formerly a captain in the 9th Georgia Infantry, repeated for the audience the almost certainly erroneous tale that when ordered to surrender, the wounded Farnsworth committed suicide.⁴⁷

Mr. W. B. Van Amringe, president of the construction company that placed the monument, spoke next. Without any explanation, the sculptor, Mr. J. Otto Schwiezer, did not attend the ceremony.

At 5 P.M., near the hour when Major Wells ordered his battalion into a gallop, the former bugler of Company L, FVC, Private Gilbert D. Buckman, again sounded the charge. The audience stood, uncovered, and sang “America.” The bugler played “Taps” and the exercises concluded.⁴⁸

Eleven months later on Memorial Day, under a cloudless May sky, the Burlington Wells statue was dedicated. The *Burlington Free Press* of June 1, 1914⁴⁹ reported on its front page:

Burlington paid royal tribute to her soldier dead Saturday under the skies of one of the grandest early summer days imaginable. The parade of the 2nd cavalry, the university battalion, the company of the National Guard, Sons of Veterans, Spanish War Veterans, and Boy Scouts acting as escort for the thin ranks of the veterans of the Civil War was unusually complete, and was viewed by hundreds of citizens as it wound its way to Battery Park, where the exercises of the day were held, the latter including the dedication and unveiling of the replica of the Gettysburg statue of General William Wells.

The large crowd included family, friends, aging veterans of Burlington’s GAR Stannard Post #2, prominent citizens of Burlington and Vermont, members of patriotic organizations including the William Wells Camp #19 Sons of Union Veterans, the U.S. Cavalry, a mounted band, a detachment of the Vermont National Guard, the Students’ Battalion of the University of Vermont, veterans in automobiles, children of the public and parochial schools, members of the clergy, aldermen, Mayor James E. Burke, and the Boy Scouts. The *Burlington Free Press* reported that an “almost continuous applause greeted the members of the GAR and the veterans of the First Vermont Cavalry as they marched by.” The report continued, “Until the moment of the unveiling, the statue was draped in the folds of two great flags.” The ceremony was initiated by George D. Sherman, formerly of the Ninth Vermont Regiment, sounding “assembly,” followed by a formal salute to the dead by the members of the GAR, and an opening prayer by the Reverend John E. Goodrich, former chaplain of the FVC. General Wells’s daughter, Mrs. Jackson, and her sister, Mrs. James W. Brock, assisted by other family members, then unveiled the statue as the band played “The Star Spangled Banner.” Wells’s son then presented to Mayor Burke the deed transferring ownership of the monument to the city. After more music performed



Dedication of the statue of William Wells at Battery Park, Burlington, 1914. From Horatio Nelson Jackson, Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells and the Officers and Men of the First Vermont Cavalry on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 3, 1913 (1914). Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

by the 2nd U.S. Cavalry Band, the Reverend Doctor Isaac C. Smart, pastor of the College Street Church of Burlington, gave the keynote address. He informed the audience that:

General Farnsworth, with Major Wells at his side, led the charge over stone walls and through rocks and woods in an attempt to gain the hill where were placed the enemies' guns. They found themselves fenced in a field exposed to the fire of masses of infantry. They charged and wheeled, and charged and wheeled again. They failed because the feat was impossible.

Once again, Theodore Peck spoke and was described as being "particularly interesting with his reminiscences of the war." The ceremony concluded with the singing of "America," a benediction by Chaplain Fleming of the 2nd U. S. Cavalry, and the sounding of "Taps." A resolution was then passed by the survivors of the FVCS proclaiming:

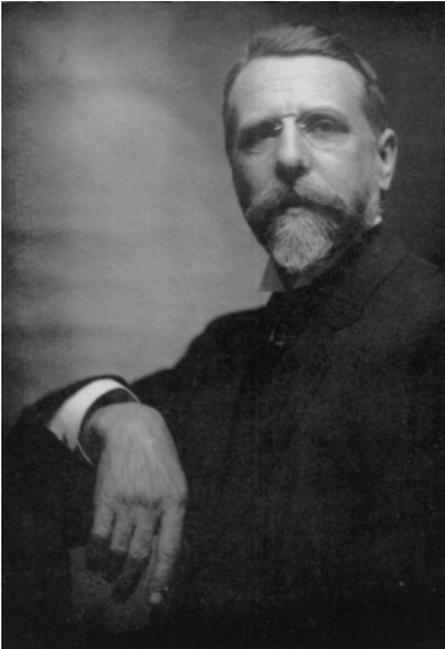
That from "this beautiful monument . . . the youth of our city and State will have a lasting object lesson in true patriotism, unflinching courage, and soldierly obedience, and a memorial of the valor of those sons of Vermont who . . . paid to their country the uttermost tribute of devotion.

The *Burlington Free Press* explained to its readers:

.....

The statue is an exact duplicate of the one erected upon the battlefield of Gettysburg during the reunion there last July, and bears a striking resemblance of General Wells in action. The aged physical appearance of the general, who at the time was but 25 years of age, is explained by the hard service which he has been through. The haggard expression upon the face brings out the anxiety of General Wells, who at the time as major at the head of the Second Battalion First Vermont cavalry, knew he was leading his men, whose faith in him was complete, to an almost hopeless charge.⁵⁰

The sculptor of these statues was J. Otto Schweizer (1863–1955). Born in Zurich, he studied sculpture in Europe before immigrating to the United States and settling in Philadelphia in 1895. During his fifty-year career as a competent but uncelebrated American sculptor, he was responsible for a number of well-known statues, particularly those of Baron von Steuben (1914) at Valley Forge, Utica, and Milwaukee, the Molly Pitcher statue (1916) at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Heinrich Mühlhenberg Memorial (1917) at Germantown, Pennsylvania. He has the distinction of having more bronze statues at Gettysburg than any other sculptor—seven statues, namely: President Lincoln, Generals David McM. Gregg, Alfred J. Pleasonton, John W. Geary, Rutherford B. Hayes, and Andrew A. Humphrey, and Major Wells. The Pennsylvania



Photograph of sculptor J. Otto Schweizer, taken in 1910. Photographer unknown. From Ernst Jockers, J. Otto Schweizer, The Man and His Work (1953). This photograph also appears in Horatio Nelson Jackson, Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells and the Officers and Men of the First Vermont Cavalry on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 3, 1913 (1914), page 138. Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

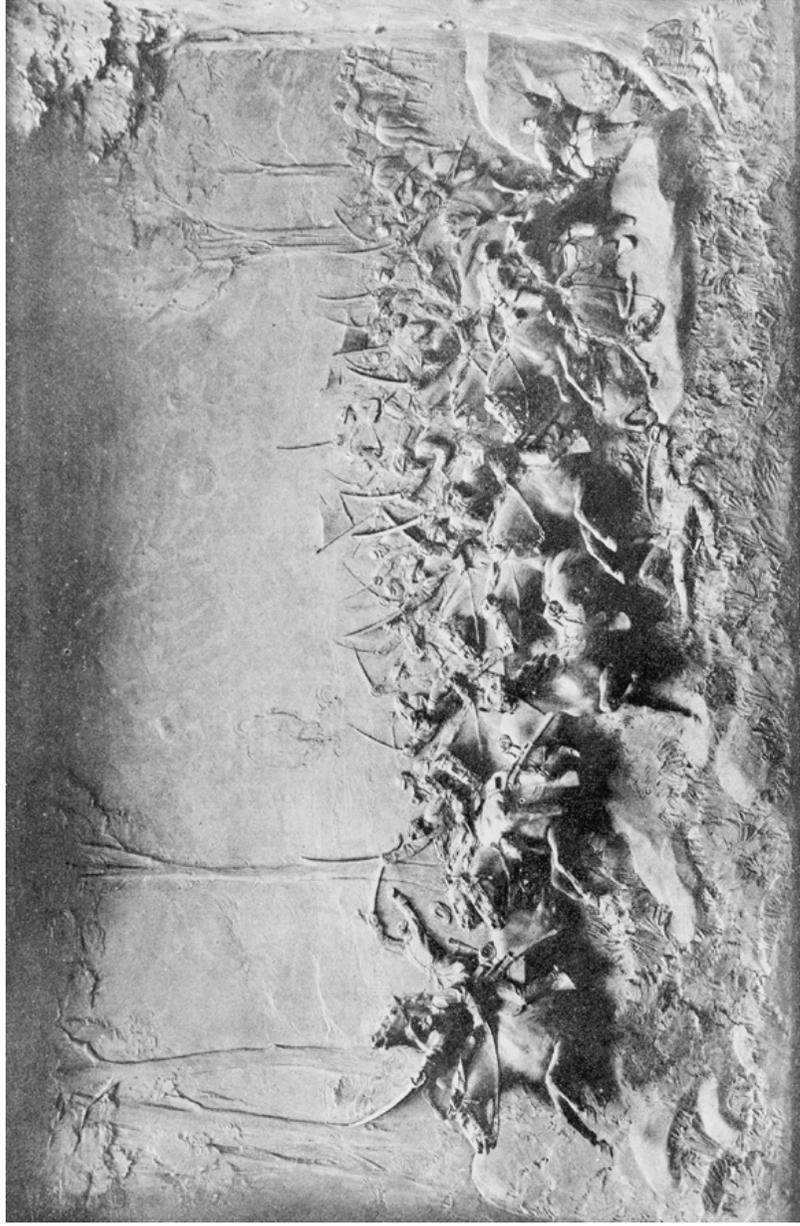
State Memorial displays eight bronze statues. Schweizer sculpted three of these: Lincoln, Gregg, and Pleasonton. They were installed in 1913 and unveiled along with the Wells statue on the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. The statues of Geary, Hayes, and Humphrey were unveiled later on the sites where they had fought.⁵¹ Other Civil War-related sculptures by Schweizer include the Fort Stevens Monument in Washington (1920), a Lincoln statue (1917) in Philadelphia, and a monument to the Confederate Mother (1913) on the lawn of the Arkansas State House in Little Rock. Schweizer sculpted the All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors (1934) located in Fairmount Park in Philadelphia.⁵²

Schweizer portrays Major Wells (albeit in a general's coat) as vigorously striding forward with his left leg, his right hand holding his saber while his left hand grasps the scabbard at his hip. He is looking upward somewhat to his right. He has full, almost patriarchal, facial hair with a neatly trimmed beard hiding individual characteristics.⁵³ Effort has been taken to make him appear older than his twenty-five years and to emanate an expression of "undaunted fearlessness."⁵⁴

The veterans of the FVC who raised the money for the much-praised bas-relief had requested that Schweizer "retell" their bold charge in bronze. According to Schweizer's biographer:

To give a true-to-life presentation the rough battleground littered with granite boulders was carefully measured and photographed from all possible directions. Daguerreotypes of twenty-five men who had taken part in the battle were secured to be portrayed in relief. A similar number of combatants was invited to give an account of the progress of the battle and the fatalities that occurred. Provided with such information, Schweizer recreated the whole affair in three days and so accurately that veterans of the battle spoke of the scene as uncannily true to reality. With dramatic instinct the artist has chosen the climactic moment when Wells takes over command of the brigade from its falling leader, General Farnsworth. His resolute action electrifies men and horses to such a degree that they act like a single body magically driven to the same goal. The unity of action is achieved by grouping all the figures in wedge line formation.⁵⁵

Careful study of this bas-relief suggests that, although Schweizer may have gone to great lengths using photographs of the actual participants to model each face and even to make sure the horses were "Morgans," much of the "story" portrayed is romantic fantasy. It is not a snapshot of history ("uncannily true to reality") but an embellished representation of the charge. Wells is depicted as riding beside Farnsworth, and Farnsworth's death was, for a long time, thought to have occurred where the Wells monument stands today. Actually, Farnsworth was



Bas-relief of Farnsworth's Charge by J. Otto Schweizer. Photographer unknown. From Horatio Nelson Jackson, Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells and the Officers and Men of the First Vermont Cavalry on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 3, 1913 (1914). Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

mortally wounded earlier in the charge. In addition, it is now generally believed that Capt. Oliver T. Cushman, wearing a white jacket with gold braid, was next to Wells instead of further back as depicted.⁵⁶ A number of the troopers portrayed (including Lt. Col. Addison Preston) did not even ride with Wells.⁵⁷ Accurate history or not, the bas-relief is exquisite and the aging veterans of the FVC loved it—as do latter-day pilgrims to the battlefield.

But, after all this, why Wells? There were many majors in the Federal army at Gettysburg. Many, without doubt, were equally courageous. The answer to this question has principally to do with the mystique that developed surrounding Farnsworth's Charge. What was special about this militarily unimportant charge that involved a small number of men (300), accomplished little more than perhaps creating a useful diversion, and produced few casualties (less than 6 percent) beyond the death of one general?⁵⁸ The veterans of the FVC didn't remember it that way. Theodore Peck, speaking at the dedication at Gettysburg, described "the brave men of the First Vermont Cavalry under the noble Preston and the gallant Wells, [who] did magnificent work . . . in charging Round Top, when they knew the impossible lay before them, yet faltered not in soldierly duty."⁵⁹ Some of this rhetoric, of course, is the vainglory of aging veterans, and part was the parochial belief that the Vermonters, and particularly the Vermont troopers, were the "best of the best." The FVC did achieve a remarkable record. During its three years in the field, the Vermont cavalry captured three Confederate battle flags, thirty-seven pieces of artillery, and more prisoners than it had men—a record that Vermonters believe was not excelled by any other regiment in the Federal armies.⁶⁰ There was no dissent when the veterans were told that "the First Vermont Cavalry is . . . well known to us all as the bravest, most intrepid, and hardest fighting Cavalry Regiment in the service."⁶¹ How, then, could it be that the charge was a failure? The Vermonters resolved this dilemma by adopting the belief that, although the charge may have been, in military terms, a failure, nevertheless, like the British Light Brigade at Balaclava and Pickett's Charge in "The Lost Cause" mythology, its heroic dimension transcended historical reality. In Vermont tradition "no more gallant or more desperate charge was made during the war, nor one more fruitless."⁶² How being "fruitless" makes something all the more gallant than if successful may be a mystery, but in remembering history this way, the proud and unabashed Vermonters focused on Wells as the embodiment of the deed. Hence, William Wells became the only Vermonters to have a personal monument.⁶³

Why not an equestrian statue? Wells portrayed afoot hardly captures

the scene. Disregarding the nineteenth-century bias reserving equestrian statues to army commanders, simple economics decided the issue. The Vermont legislature appropriated \$6,000 for the project. Equestrian statues cost \$25–50,000, whereas a single bronze figure could be obtained for \$5–12,000.⁶⁴

William Wells did possess a rare constellation of attributes. He had great wealth, political connections, ambition, ability, handsome appearance, personal charm, and remarkable luck. His father had been in the legislature and his mother's brother served as governor.⁶⁵ He himself had served in the legislature and as Vermont's adjutant and inspector general. He was a business and civic leader in Vermont's largest city. Although described as a quiet-spoken person, he was nevertheless a very ambitious man.⁶⁶ "Promotion is everything in this business," he said after the war.⁶⁷ A student of his development observes that Wells "became educated in the art of war and the art of politics while in the Army and learned both lessons well."⁶⁸ He was acknowledged to have been "Vermont's most promoted and most decorated war hero."⁶⁹ Given all this, he easily became for the aging veterans the embodiment of all that was gallant and noble.⁷⁰

Why the replica in Burlington? Wells's only son, Franklin Wells, when presenting the monument to Mayor Burke, told the assembled crowd, "As Burlington was so long the home of General Wells, it is but fitting that Battery Park, one of its most historic places, overlooking Lake Champlain and within a short distance of the Old Fair Ground, which was the rendezvous of the First Vermont Cavalry, . . . should be the site of a monument." He added, "For years it had been my mother's wish and mine to have a statue of my father in Burlington."⁷¹ He proposed "to erect and donate" to the City of Burlington "a bronze statue of his late father . . . to be placed upon a suitable pedestal of Barre granite . . . erected in Battery Park without expense to said city." The Burlington monument was then "an act of filial devotion on the part of . . . the only son of General Wells, it being a gift from him to the city of Burlington."⁷² Regarding the statue's incongruous location in Battery Park, the *Burlington Free Press* explained that this was not the case at all.⁷³

Situated upon Battery Park, rich in history, over-looking Lake Champlain, and within a stone's throw of the old fair grounds where many of the men for whom it was erected were mustered into service, its location is appropriate in every way.⁷⁴

The most recent chapter in the story of the Wells statues occurred on Veterans' weekend 2002. Civil War re-enactors raised \$4,000 to clean and repair the Burlington monument. Channel 3 News reported:

History Unveiled in Burlington. A crowd gathered in Battery Park in Burlington, where 140 years ago the Vermont troops mustered to be sent south to fight the war that would end with the Union victory that preserved the nation. . . . Among those men, were members of the First Vermont Volunteer Cavalry. The Vermonters fought at Gettysburg under the commander whose statue dominates Battery Park. It underwent a restoration this year, and this gathering was timed for Veterans Day weekend. The unveiling reveals the striking figure of General William Wells, who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor on the bloody battlefield at Gettysburg.

And, quite fittingly, the newsman noted,

A piece of history has been preserved so that the next generations understand the meaning of that war so long ago.⁷⁵

NOTES

¹Horatio Nelson Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells and the Officers and Men of the First Vermont Cavalry on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, July 3, 1913* (Privately printed, Burlington, Vt., 1914).

²The battery was constructed under the direction of Lt. Sylvester Churchill and armed with six 24-pounder cannon. "Murray's Raid" took place on August 2, 1813, with Lt. Col. John Murray commanding the British fleet.

³Karen Stites Campbell, "Propaganda, Pestilence and Prosperity: Burlington's Camptown Days During the War of 1812" *Vermont History*, 64 (Spring 1996), 138–158; Russell P. Bellico, *Sails and Steam in the Mountains: A Maritime and Military History of Lake George and Lake Champlain* (Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain Press, 1992), 210.

⁴A bas-relief depiction of Farnsworth's Charge is mounted on the front of the Gettysburg monument while the Burlington version has a bronze tablet relating Wells's record in this location with the bas-relief on the reverse side of the base.

⁵Andie Custer, "The William Wells Monument," *The Battlefield Dispatch* (Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide newsletter, Jan. 2000).

⁶John Bager Bachelder (1825–1894) was the acknowledged expert of his day on the battle of Gettysburg and a dominant member of the GBMA.

⁷Prior to the Civil War, it was customary to erect monuments only to victorious commanders, and the bias reserving statues to generals persisted. Reflecting an egalitarian spirit, the Pennsylvania State Monument Commission refused to permit any personal statements or inscriptions on memorials built under its supervision. No official "monument policy" of the GBMA has been discovered. Thomas A. Desjardin, *The Monuments at Gettysburg* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, 1997), 5; Frederick Hawthorne, *Gettysburg: Stories of Monuments and Men* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides, 1988), 53; Wayne Craven, *The Sculptures at Gettysburg* (Conshohocken, New Jersey: Eastern Acorn Press, 1982), 53, 61–62; personal communication with Ginny and Lew Gage of Cornish, N.H., 2 February 2004.

⁸Licensed Battlefield Guide Andie Custer points out that this statue probably was meant to represent Pennsylvanian Augustus J. Pleasonton rather than his better-known younger brother, Alfred J. Pleasonton, who had no relationship to Pennsylvania. Andrea L. Custer of York, Pennsylvania, personal communication, 19 January 2004.

⁹During the march to Gettysburg, in intense heat, Brown ignored specific orders against breaking ranks and filled his company's canteens. He was arrested and obliged to give up his sword. General George Stannard released him from arrest but the sword could not be located and Brown led his company into battle brandishing a camp axe. The axe was not included in the statue because it was felt it might be seen as condoning disobedience to orders. Marius B. Peladeau, comp., *Burnished Rows of Steel: Vermont's Role in the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1–3, 1864* (Newport, Vt.: Vermont Civil War Enterprises, 2002), 60.

¹⁰Including a face that looks remarkably like that of Colonel Strong Vincent atop the 83rd Pennsylvania monument. Kathy G. Harrison, *The Location of the Monuments, Markers, and Tablets on*

.....

Gettysburg Battlefield (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Thomas Publications, 1993), 44–45; Desjardin, *Monuments at Gettysburg*, 5; Hawthorne, *Gettysburg*, p. 53.

¹¹ Tom Desjardin points out that Gettysburg displays “quite likely the largest collection of outdoor sculpture in the world. More than 1,300 monuments, markers, and memorials dot and sometimes dominate the landscape in and around the Pennsylvania borough of Gettysburg.” There are at least 27 life-sized bronze statues of specific individuals in addition to the 7 equestrian statues. The first monument was a memorial urn placed in the National Cemetery in 1867 by the First Minnesota Infantry. The first regimental monument located outside the cemetery was the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry tablet at the edge of Spangler’s Meadow in 1879. A large number of memorials followed, and by the time of the 25th anniversary of the battle 200 monuments and markers adorned the site. Originally, the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association made the rules and oversaw the placement of these monuments, followed by Battlefield Commissioners of the War Department in 1895 when the Gettysburg National Military Park was created by Congress. The 3,000-man terra cotta army of the Emperor Qin Shi Huang discovered near Xi’an, China, obviously dwarfs Gettysburg. Desjardin, *Monuments at Gettysburg*, 3; Harrison, *Location of the Monuments, Markers and Tablets*, 41, 44–45; Hawthorne, *Gettysburg*, 10–11, 17, 79, 113–114, 128.

¹² Dr. Elliott Hoffman has analyzed Wells’s military career. Elliott W. Hoffman, *Vermont General: The Military Development of William Wells* (Master’s Thesis, University of Vermont 1974), 181; Elliott W. Hoffman, ed., *H. K. Ide’s History of the First Vermont Cavalry Volunteers in the War of the Great Rebellion* (Baltimore: Butternut & Blue, 2000); personal communication with Elliott Hoffman of Tiverton, R.I., 14 March 2004.

¹³ Wells was one of only nine generals in the Union army who rose from private to Major General. This rank was by brevet. His highest regular rank was brigadier general of volunteers conferred in May 1865.

¹⁴ Personal communication Andie Custer, 19 January 2004.

¹⁵ Theodore S. Peck, comp., *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers During the War of the Rebellion* (Montpelier, Vt.: Watchman Publishing Co., 1892), 220,749; Medal of Honor record of William Wells, Group 94, W-199-VS-1869, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

¹⁶ Peck, *Revised Roster*, 749.

¹⁷ Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

¹⁸ William W. Wells was the recruiting officer for Washington County, Vermont, throughout the war.

¹⁹ Thomas Ledoux, “Vermont in the Civil War” website, <http://www.vermontcivilwar.org/1cav/wells.shtml>; Peck, *Revised Roster*, 220.

²⁰ George G. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press, 1888), 2: 428, 583–84.

²¹ There was no lasting amity. When President Garfield appointed Mosby to be the American consul in Hong Kong in 1878, Wells sent him a congratulatory message. Kevin H. Siepel, *Rebel, the Life and Times of John Singleton Mosby* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1983), 202; John Singleton Mosby, *Mosby’s War Reminiscences and Stuart’s Cavalry Campaigns* (Boston: G. A. Jones & Co., 1887), 164.

²² Personal communication Andie Custer, 19 January 2004.

²³ Wells Papers, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

²⁴ In hand-to-hand combat he was struck twice across the back and received a thrust in the front of his body striking his ribs. Medal of Honor record of William Wells.

²⁵ 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, Cavalry Corps.

²⁶ Although still on active duty, Wells returned to Vermont in July 1865 to run for the Vermont legislature and get married.

²⁷ William Wells, Edward Wells, A. E. Richardson, W. J. van Patten, Henry Wells, and Franklin H. Wells were officers of the Wells, Richardson & Company in Burlington, Vermont, that manufactured butter coloring, dyes, and children’s foods, as well as *Paine’s Celery Compound*, a cure-all containing 20% alcohol.

²⁸ *Burlington Free Press*, Burlington, Vermont, 17 April 1872.

²⁹ Although born into the union of two middle-class New England families, Wells aspired to patrician status. In 1877 he had a grand home built in the French Second Empire style. Italian craftsmen were imported to design and construct the extensive interior woodwork. He employed servants wearing livery. The house is now the Phi Gamma Delta house at the University of Vermont. The Wells family changed from Congregationalists to Episcopalians. Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns, *Horatio’s Drive: America’s First Road Trip* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 18; The Beta Upsilon Chapter House, <http://www.uvm.edu/~fiji2/house.html>.

³⁰ Medal of Honor record of William Wells.

.....

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ In 1899 Bertha R. Wells married Dr. Horatio Nelson Jackson, recently made famous as the Horatio in Ken Burns' PBS documentary "Horatio's Drive." Elliot W. Hoffman, ed., *A Vermont Cavalryman in War and Love: The Civil War Letters of Major General William Wells and Anna Richardson* (Lynchburg, Virginia: Schaeffer Books, in print).

³⁴ *Burlington Free Press*, Burlington, Vermont, 2 May 1892.

³⁵ *Burlington Free Press*, Burlington, Vermont, 4 May 1892.

³⁶ The legislature authorized a plaque for George Stannard at the same time. Wheelock Veazey and Stephen Thomas also have such plaques. Peladeau, *Burnished Rows of Steel*, 35.

³⁷ Report of the Gettysburg Military Park Commission, August 1, 1911; Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

³⁸ Peladeau, *Burnished Rows of Steel*, 33.

³⁹ Courtesy of Andie Custer.

⁴⁰ There is a Park Union Brigade placard for the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division Cavalry Corps on South Confederate Avenue at Bushman Hill.

⁴¹ His regiment, the 8th Illinois Cavalry, achieved glory on the first day east of Gettysburg. It dedicated its memorial in 1891 on South Reynolds Avenue. The monument makes no mention of Farnsworth.

⁴² John E. McClellan recalled that once "it had been explained [to the Vermont legislators, most of whom were veterans] why the money was wanted it was one of the easiest jobs he had ever tackled and the bill passed with a unanimous vote." *Burlington Free Press*, 1 June 1914; Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

⁴³ Evander Law confirmed at the unveiling of the monument that it was located exactly where he first saw Wells and his battalion emerge from the cover of the trees into the meadow from his vantage point near the current Alabama monument. Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

⁴⁴ Ibid., *Burlington Free Press*, 1 June 1914.

⁴⁵ Wells's cousin, referred to as "Cousin Will Dill," who is remembered chiefly for his anti-immigration legislation.

⁴⁶ Pvt. Heman Allen, 13th Vermont Regiment; Sgt. Henry O. Clark, 13th Vermont Regiment; General Lewis A. Grant, former commander of the First Vermont Brigade; General E. D. Dimmick, 5th New York Cavalry; Col. W. D. Mann, 7th Michigan Cavalry; Judge and former Captain George Hillyer, 9th Georgia Infantry.

⁴⁷ History has assessed Farnsworth's Charge as a military blunder with Farnsworth goaded into leading a foolhardy charge by a reckless Kilpatrick. Andie Custer in a series of articles has reassessed the charge and its participants. She concludes, "All popular stories to the contrary, new research reveals that Farnsworth's Charge was not a hopeless slaughter [less than 3 percent casualties]. It was viewed by Union commanders as a successful diversion." Andie [Andrea L.] Custer, "John Hammond's 'Mis-stake': How a Misplaced Wooden Stake Altered the History of Farnsworth's Charge at Gettysburg" *Gettysburg Magazine* (January 2004): 98–113; Andie Custer, "The Kilpatrick/Farnsworth Argument That Never Happened" *Gettysburg Magazine* (January 2002): 100–116; Andie Custer, "You Are There! William Wells and Farnsworth's Charge on July 3, 1863" *Park Watch* newsletter, Gettysburg; Custer, "The William Wells Monument."

⁴⁸ *Burlington Free Press*, 4 July 1913; Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

⁴⁹ No one seemed to notice that the dedication occurred 100 years after "Murray's Raid," the unsuccessful British attack on the Burlington waterfront battery.

⁵⁰ *Burlington Free Press*, Burlington, Vermont, 1 June 1914.

⁵¹ The eight statues are those of Lincoln, Curtin, Meade, Hancock, Pleasonton, Reynolds, Gregg, and Birney. Harrison, *Location of the Monuments*, 44–45.

⁵² In an era less concerned with "political correctness," neither the Philadelphia commissioners nor Schweizer himself were concerned with his sculpting a monument to African-American soldiers/sailors after completing a memorial to the Confederate Mother. Hene D. Lieberman, "Race and Remembrance: Philadelphia's *All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors* and the Politics of Place," *American Art Journal* 29 (1998): 19–51.

⁵³ These statues tend to look alike—generic heroic Federal generals. From a distance Wells, Birney, Hancock, and Pleasonton appear very similar.

⁵⁴ Ernst Jockers, *J. Otto Schweizer: The Man and His Work* (Philadelphia: International Printing Company, 1953), 55.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁵⁶ Andie Custer theorizes that one reason a Farnsworth monument was never erected on the site of the Wells monument is that it was discovered that William Oates was not a credible eyewitness to

.....

the location of Farnsworth's death. Also, Farnsworth's reputation had been besmirched by the story of his having committed suicide. Custer, "The Wells Monument."

⁵⁷ An expert on the charge quips that "it seems the criteria for appearing on the relief was that you had to have been a member of the Vermont legislature, an alumnus of the University of Vermont, or were a casualty during the charge, e.g., Sgt. George H. Duncan, Cpl. Ira E. Sperry, Capt. Olive T. Cushman." Andie Custer, personal communication.

⁵⁸ Custer, "You Are There!"

⁵⁹ Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General William Wells*.

⁶⁰ Otis Wait, in his history of Vermont's contribution in the Civil War, concluded: "No organization in the army, it is believed, endured more exposure and fatigue, without a murmur or complaint; fought more battles, without straggling and flinching; made more desperate and successful charges into the ranks of the enemy, or deserved more honor, than the First Vermont Cavalry." Otis F. R. Wait, *Vermont in the Great Rebellion* (Claremont, N.H.: Tracy, Chase & Co., 1869), 249; Peck, *Revised Roster*, 218.

⁶¹ Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ One might inquire why one of the other luminaries in the Vermont military pantheon (e.g., George Jerrison Stannard, William Farrar Smith or Lewis Addison Grant) wasn't chosen for this special commemoration. However, Brevet Major General Stannard (d. 1886), although beloved by the veterans of the Second Vermont Brigade, had neither wealth, family connections, nor political clout. He had been disgraced and run out of Vermont. He was, however, remembered atop the Vermont State Memorial at Gettysburg. Brevet Major General L.A. Grant (d. 1918), who had been the commander of the First Vermont Brigade, was never loved by his men. Moreover, he had forsaken Vermont for faraway Minnesota. Major General "Baldy" Smith: (d. 1903) had few fans in Vermont due to his cantankerous nature, plus his checkered military career, and his support to Democratic presidential candidate George McClellan.

⁶⁴ The 1912 \$6,000 appropriation would be equivalent to \$111,283 in 2002 dollars. Craven, *The Sculptures at Gettysburg*, 53; The Inflation Calculator, <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/>.

⁶⁵ The politically powerful Dillingham family were relatives and neighbors in Waterbury. Paul Dillingham, Jr., served as lieutenant governor from 1862–65 and was Vermont's governor 1865–66. Hoffman, *Vermont General*, 179.

⁶⁶ George Benedict, Vermont's official Civil War historian, described Wells as "modest, brave, faithful, and equal to every position in which he was placed." Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, 2:647; Hoffman, *Vermont General*, 15.

⁶⁷ Hoffman, *Vermont General*, 180.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

⁷⁰ Along with Wheelock G. Veazey and Theodore Peck, Wells was probably the most popular veteran during the era in Vermont when much depended upon wearing a GAR lapel pin. David F. Cross, "Gen. Wheelock G. Veasey Dead," *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* XXV (1995), 26–43.

⁷¹ Jackson, *Dedication of the Statue to Brevet Major-General Williams Wells*.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Burlington Free Press*, 1 June 1914.

⁷⁴ The statue is oriented southeast, with Wells facing the original Burlington fair grounds that served as the FVC's 1861 training camp.

⁷⁵ WCAX-TV, Burlington, Vermont, <http://www.wcax.com/>.