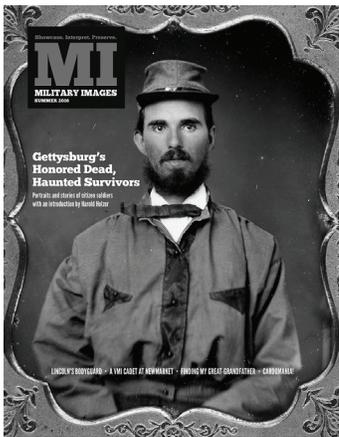




The Gettysburg Story Continues

I was a seasonal park ranger at Gettysburg many years ago, and that place will be forever special with me. Now, to see stories of the indi-



vidual soldiers at the battle (Summer 2016) is solemn, haunting, and brings the past to a new chapter in my appreciation of what the soldiers did there.

Tom Rice
Champaign, Ill.

New Subscriber Makes a Family Connection

Your *MI* magazine arrived, and I must say I am very impressed—especially the more recent issue that



contains interesting stories about the soldiers. The choice of stories, and the caliber of writing, is superb! I am fascinated by early photographs and am

thoroughly enjoying those in your magazine. I can easily say, *MI* is the best magazine I have read, and I am looking forward to the next issue.

The story featuring Smith Stimmel in the Summer 2016 issue

(“Highly Honorable and Strictly Confidential Service”) prompted me to look into a connection to my family. My great grandmother’s sister married a handsome guy named Ben Stimmel in Spokane, Wash. I knew Ben Stimmel’s father’s name, so it was an easy matter to do a little research on Ancestry.com, and sure enough, Ben’s grandfather was Smith Stimmel’s older brother.

Julie Alice Johnson
Boise, Idaho

Custer’s Red Necks

Shortly after “Custer’s West Virginia Red Ties: The Life and Times of the 3rd West Virginia Cavalry” appeared in the spring issue, author Richard A. Wolfe discovered and purchased a letter from a soldier in Company B of the regiment. “It is to his sister and only gives his name as Will,” reports Wolfe. He adds, “In the letter he refers to the unit



as ‘Custer’s Red-Necks.’ This is the earliest use of the term redneck that I have seen.

It is well documented that the term redneck was

used in southern West Virginia during the 1920s mine wars. These mine wars were the largest insurrection since the Civil War. The miners wore red bandanas around their necks. This was so the miners could identify each other from the mine guards. Both sides referred to the miners as rednecks.”

Readers Answer Photo Sleuth Question

In the last installment of *Photo Sleuth*, columnist Kurt Luther explained how his investigations into an inscription on the back of a tintype of two soldiers led him to identify the men, who served in the 142nd New York Infantry.

Luther ended the column with a question: Which soldier pictured in the tintype is Lewis Smithers, and which is George Wilson? Subscriber



Smithers, left, and Wilson.

Garret Ogata responded, “Great article. Did you check the National Archives for service records? Enlistment documents usually record the soldier’s height and if you obtained both you could find out which was the taller of the two which would point to the correct identity since one is significantly taller than the other.” Longtime subscriber and contributor Seward Osborne followed through on the same insight, “In looking at the image, the fellow on the right is obviously taller. Checking 142nd New York muster rolls on Fold3.com, they read as follows: Lewis Smithers is 5’6 1/2” tall and George Wilson is listed as 6’. I would conclude the fellow on the right is Pvt. George Wilson!” Mystery solved.

Give Post His Due

One thing that caught my eye in the last issue was the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooter in *The Last Shot*. Col. Henry Post commanded the regiment, not Hiram Berdan.

Tom Clemens
Keedysville, Md.

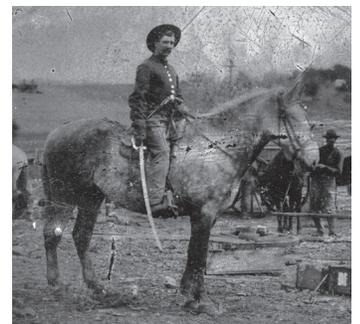


A member of the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters with his Sharp’s rifle.

MI: Both Berdan and Post commanded the regiment. Berdan commanded it in 1861, and from November 1862 until 1864. Post was in command from Jan. 1, 1862 until Nov. 16, 1862. The caption mistakenly leaves the impression that Berdan commanded the entire time, including the period during which the photograph is estimated to have been taken.

Cavalry Mount or Draft Horse?

The tintype of the mounted soldier featured in *Stragglers* (Summer 2016, page 70) could be an artil-



leryman. His mount looks more like a draft horse.

Bob Boquette
Birch Run, Mich.

Did Meigs Borrow Gardner’s Famed Chair?

The presence of what may be a famous chair on the left of the image on page 8 of the Spring 2016



issue (“The Confederacy’s Commander-in-Chief”) may be evidence that Meigs was borrowing the studio facilities of Alexander

Gardner. It has also been claimed that the D.C. Brady studio had a similar chair from an auction of House of Representatives chairs and desks in the 1840s.

Marc Daniels
Barnesville, Pa.