

## INTRODUCTION:

Thanks...

Realizing today & Asking what qualifies me to talk about MG Meade to Meade Society

- I decided to follow the guidance the Army gives Soldiers for press
- Stay in your lane and only talk about what you know about
- My lane: Andy's introduction: non-academic, non-historian but a retired Soldier; an Infantryman who's served continuously, one way or another, in war and peace, since 1976.
- So, that's today's theme: why someone like me might admire MG Meade's service

We'll do that by considering

- What Meade's peers thought of him
- What Meade's adversary thought of him
- What we at USAWC think of him today...

*...in the interest of time - assume a little knowledge of the battle here, among people willing to bear mid-winter weather to attend a ceremony like this...*

MAIN BODY #1: What did Meade's peers think of him? Anyone at this level has adversaries (cabal of Sickles, Butterfield & Hooker). But more broadly, had great faith in him.

- Post Chancellorsville Revolt of Generals led by 2 Corps Cdrs: Darius Couch & Henry Slocum
- While Couch went to Halleck, Slocum approached the senior generals to get signatures petitioning Lincoln to replace Hooker with Meade... Ever a professional, Meade rejected offer
- Day or so later, another Cops Commander, John Sedgwick approached Meade
- Meade no Hooker loyalist **"Hooker disappointed the army & myself in failing to show the nerve and 'coup d'oeil' at the critical moment, which all had given him credit for."**
- He walked thin line. On one hand, Bruce Catton, Meade was "no part of a plotter." Meade would not join intrigue. On other hand, if President asked his opinion, he'd give it.
- Two points here: First, incident is evidence Meade's peers held him in esteem & Second, his integrity, character and professionalism is admirable, as our present times illustrate.

MAIN BODY #2 (Lee): On to the next point, what Lee thought of George G. Meade

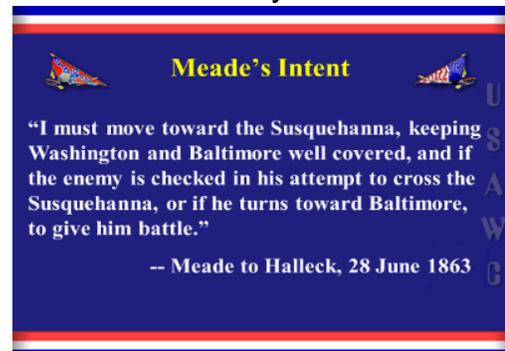
When Longstreet brought the spy Harrison to Lee late the night of 28 June, Lee learned the Union Army was north of the Potomac, north of Frederick and was now commanded by MG George Meade.

- One of our historians (Kevin Weddle) likes to quote Lee on Hooker, **"I am sorry to see him go, we have gotten to know each other so well."** Nothing like to how Lee thought of Meade.
- LeBron on Warriors: **"The margin of error is very low. It's almost like playing the Patriots. You just can't have mistakes. They're not going to beat themselves."**
- Essentially, that's what Lee said of Meade, **"He will not make a mistake and if I make one, he will take advantage."** Competence! Lee knew he faced a worthy counterpart.

MAIN BODY #3 (USAWC): As we transition, I think one can frame things as Lee anticipated;

1. Initial Actions – while not a point we bring up to students or guests, as I've studied the Campaign, Meade's cool-headed reaction to being thrust into command is noteworthy...

- Not only did Meade not know where Lee was...
- Didn't know where his army was (lots of good about Hooker, but keeping subordinates informed not one)
- First Principles: gains situation awareness and quickly clarifies his purpose, key tasks and broad plan of action
- Gaining awareness, *deals with uncertainty* & acts decisively: keeps the army moving... When Reynolds reports Gettysburg is place to fight... no hesitation, despite likely preference to fight Pipe Creek; Meade is adaptable & fights the enemy not plan; complete trust in Reynolds & he's all in with fighting where the situation dictates... he pushes Army forward.



2. Next Two Points Related & Intertwined: Clear Communication & Empower Subordinates:

- Intentions well known to subordinates: fight it out on Cemetery Ridge
- One Example: Hold at all costs: Warren – to – Vincent – to – O'Rourke & Chamberlain
- Leads to next point: as Russell Weigly (Temple) pointed out years ago, time and again, key leaders were at the right place, at the right time to head off a developing crisis
  - Already mentioned Little Round Top
  - Hancock sent forward July 1; takes command, stems retreat and stabilizes
  - Hancock again on July 2, handling the Union left for Meade

3. Not everything was delegated; reminds me of my old boss, GEN McKiernan; tactically capable Discipline to maintain "view from balcony" but knowing when to dive into the details typically handled by subordinates... Coddington suggests Meade saved the day with four actions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> messages II Corps to come up, adjust and help out
- 2<sup>nd</sup> messages V Corps to come up
- 3<sup>rd</sup> orders Hunt to bring the artillery up (McGilvery)
- 4<sup>th</sup> sends Warren to Little Round Top

### SUMMARY:

Today, I wanted to speak a word of praise for a MG George Gordon Meade, who doesn't seem to get enough praise, respect or recognition today for what he did then.

What Meade did, was to demonstrate a mastery of military operations that couldn't be matched by his enemies and he did it largely by setting the conditions for empowered, capable subordinates

Respected by his peers and enemies alike, MG Meade kept his head; kept perspective & directed the efforts of others and it's a privilege to be hear and raise a glass to MG George Gordon Meade.