

General George Sears Greene



As Portrayed By Paul A. Bourget



“Old Pap” or “Pop” Greene as his soldiers called him was born in Apponaug, RI in 1801. His family had roots in the founding of Rhode Island and in the American Revolutionary War, including Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, George's second cousin. When his father's shipping mercantile business failed due to President Jefferson's embargo and the War of 1812, Greene sought his future in New York City. Obtaining a commission to West Point, Greene graduated second in his class in 1823, just like his student Cadet Robert E. Lee. The Point asked Greene to teach mathematics and engineering for the next four years after graduation.

From 1827-1836, Greene was assigned to garrison duty at various posts in RI and Maine. In 1832-1833, Greene's wife and three children died from fever within a seven-month period. In 1837, Greene married Martha Barrett Dana, the daughter of Samuel Dana, a prominent Boston politician, and the couple had six children, two of whom served as officers in the Civil War.

In 1836, Greene resigned his commission and became a civil engineer. For the next twenty-five years, General Greene built railroads, bridges, and reservoirs throughout New England and the Midwest. He was one of twelve founders in New York City of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1852.

Greene waited until January 1862 before returning to active duty and taking command of the 60th NY Volunteer regiment. In April 1862, he was promoted to Brigadier General and commanded a brigade at Antietam, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg.

Gettysburg was the highlight of Greene's military career even though he was the oldest Union commander at the age of 62. On

the night of July 2, 1863, Greene's lone brigade of New Yorkers successfully defended Culp's Hill against superior forces. Outnumbered nearly four to one, Greene's brigade held the

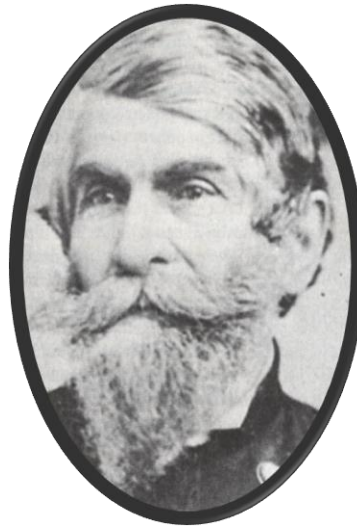
extreme right flank against Maj. Gen. Edward “Allegheny” Johnson's division. The confederates were denied access to the Union Army's ammunition trains, reserve artillery, and the Baltimore Pike. Earlier in the morning, Greene's leadership, engineering skills and abilities were responsible for the building of breastworks and entrenchments along the entire XII Corps battle line on Culp's Hill.

On the following morning, Greene's brigade along with the rest of the XII Corps successfully defended Culp's Hill for seven straight hours until the confederates stopped their attacks. Robert E. Lee had failed to take Culp's Hill.

At the midnight battle of Wauhatchie, Tennessee, in October 1863, Greene was shot in the upper jaw, losing most of his teeth and a part of the jawbone. For the next year, he underwent two operations and a great deal of therapy. Greene returned in January 1865 to lead a brigade in General William Tecumseh Sherman's army until the final surrender. Greene was brevetted Major General in March 1865 for valor and courage.

After the war, Greene returned to engineering for the next twenty five years. After living a full life, General Greene died in 1899 at the

age of 97 and was buried in the Greene family cemetery in Warwick, RI. A two-ton stone was obtained from Culp's Hill and placed on General Greene's grave.



General Greene is portrayed by Paul A. Bourget, who resides in Woonsocket, RI.