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(Pg. 64)



Adams County

of a strong defense. Every tree was a breastwork, every log a barricade, every bush a cover and concealment, and we made good use of every defensive object.”

Indeed, morning broke early along Willoughby Run on July 1, 1863. The ring of smoke around the borough that would be produced by Federal and Rebel cannons, canisters and muskets, however, would make dusk fall early too.

The Battle of Gettysburg remains the bloodiest on American soil. The three-day fight, from July 1 to July 3, 1863, saw more than 51,000 casualties. No soldier fighting in the Civil War thought that the prior year's horrors at the Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest single day in American history (almost 23,000 casualties) could happen again. And then there was Gettysburg.

This month marks the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. Events to commemorate the seminal battle of the Civil War have taken place since January, and many more are planned for the remainder of 2013. I've been to a Battle of Gettysburg re-enactment, which happens July 1-3 every year. My mother is from Chambersburg, Pa., in Franklin County (only 25 miles from the battlefield in Gettysburg's Adams County). In fact, the Borough of Chambersburg has a rather dubious Civil War history. On July 30, 1864, just one year after the famed battle 25 miles to the east, Chambersburg was occupied and burned on orders from Confederate Brig. Gen. John McCausland. It was in retaliation for Union forces having sacked and burned towns throughout Virginia. And when Chambersburg was set ablaze 149 years ago this month, it became the first and only town north of the Mason-Dixon Line to be burned by Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

Indeed, the month of July is tremendously significant to Civil War historians, to students of Americana and to the generations of residents in Franklin and Adams counties. “Gettysburg is a place that moves people; it offers an engaging experience, one that bonds families and connects generations,” says Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau media manager Carl Whitehill. “There is just something about taking your children to Gettysburg that moves people, much like it did when their parents took them.

It's not just learning, it's reflecting back and putting historical events into a different perspective.”

It's only fitting — serendipitous, even — that we have Armie Hammer as our cover story (page 40). Hammer is playing the iconic Lone Ranger opposite Johnny Depp's Tonto. *The Lone Ranger* is based on a post-Civil War crime-fighting duo in Texas and is a reboot of the original 1938 movie.

The same year the original version of *The Lone Ranger* came out was the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. That was the last time a major Gettysburg commemoration included living Civil War veterans. Whitehill says this year's commemoration — planning for which has been going on for years — will be the most involved tribute since 1938, a year in which living Civil War veterans actually saw *The Lone Ranger* on the silver screen.

“After visiting Gettysburg for the first time, people immediately want to come back,” Whitehill says. “Most visitors, their first time, don't realize there was that much to see and do here. More often than not, a visit to Gettysburg piques the interest and eventually, a lifelong passion for history.”

I can say with absolute certainty that it did for this son of a mother from Chambersburg, just a stone's throw from the hallowed battlefields of Adams County.



ADAM PITLUK
Editor

MORNING BROKE EARLY and ever so peacefully on the first day of July. The sky was a robin's-egg blue, and a gentle breeze rustled the old oak and maple trees of McPherson's Woods, which flanked the meandering stream at Willoughby Run. Summer months in this part of rural Pennsylvania are often stifling hot and chokingly muggy, but not on that morning. The forthcoming day, however, would end decidedly different from how it began, with plumes of smoke billowing from scorched earth, emanating the distinct smell of gunpowder.

But not just yet. As the sun slowly crept over ghostly Cemetery Hill and reflected off the lush greenery of McPherson's Woods — and then cast a golden corona around the entire Borough of Gettysburg in Adams County, Pa. — those woods and that thicket assumed a dual role. For scattered along both sides of Willoughby Run were thousands of soldiers from the Union and Confederate armies. Regiments from the North and the South had marched and fought their way to this rural hamlet — land that was flush with incomparable natural beauty but land that was a tactical military position for both armies. As a soldier from the Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry would record in his memoirs when recounting the early-morning calm along Willoughby Run: “The grove was our citadel, and it in itself furnished the means

272 Words

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