

No. LXVII

**General Alfred T. A. Torbert  
Memorial**

BY

**GEORGE ALFRED TOWNSEND**

**Taken From**

**The Army and Navy Journal  
November 13th, 1880**

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**PUBLISHED BY THE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE**

**1922**

## The General Torbert Memorial

[The following memorial of Gen. Torbert is published by arrangement with the committee having charge of his funeral services. They have chosen this method of publication in preference to a pamphlet issue, believing that it will bring the article more immediately within reach of Gen. Torbert's friends in and out of the Service.]

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

By George Alfred Townsend

The death and funeral of Gen. Alfred Torbert have called the attention of the continent to that old and separated Peninsula on which he was born, who made such mark in the military, social, and diplomatic history of the country.

### Family and Birthplace

The Delaware Peninsula, as it is called, is composed of the State of Delaware and parts of Maryland and Virginia. It was of ancient settlement, but a few years later than that of Jamestown. William Penn and Lord Baltimore divided between them that portion of the peninsula north of Virginia, and from the Duke of York's settlement probably came the ancestors of Gen. Torbert. He was born at the present county seat of Georgetown—to which the courts were removed about 1790 from old Lewes, on the Delaware Bay—July 1, 1833. \*Georgetown was named for George Washington, and placed near the centre of the country between rills which flowed, some into the Delaware Bay, some into the Chesapeake. As Delaware State was acquired by the English half a century after the occupation of proximate parts of Maryland and Virginia, families from both those States penetrated into Delaware and assisted in the composition

\*Also said to be named for George Mitchell, who owned the land.

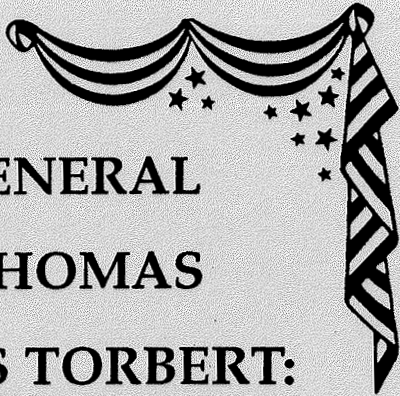

Resolved: That the thanks of the  
Military Order of the Royal Legion of the United States  
be and the same are hereby tendered to the  
gentlemen of Milford, Delaware, for the  
courteous hospitality shown the Companions  
who represented the Order in accompanying the  
remains of Companion Genl. Alfred T. W. Forbert  
on September 30<sup>th</sup>, to their final resting place.

Resolved: That a copy of the above resolu-  
tion be sent by the Recorder to Captain  
Theo. Townsend, Milford, Delaware, with  
the request that he make its tenor known, as  
far as possible, to the citizens of Milford, Del.

Official Extract from the Minutes.  
Hend. Nicholson  
Capt. Lt. Col. U. S. A.  
Recorder

Gift of G. Marshall Townsend,  
Mildred, Del., Apr. 23, 1946

#166



MAJOR GENERAL  
ALFRED THOMAS  
ARCHIMEDES TORBERT:



Delaware's Most Famous  
Civil War Hero

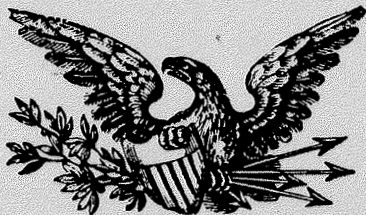
a memorial by

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taken from

The Army and Navy Journal

November 13th, 1880



*Preface by Donald Odell Virdin*



A HERITAGE CLASSIC





## **Major General Alfred T. A. Torbert: Delaware's Most Famous Civil War Hero**

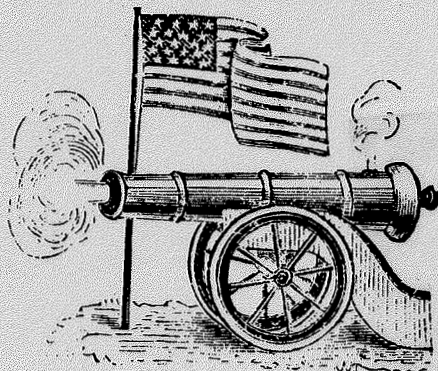
by George Alfred Townsend  
with a new preface by Donald O. Virdin

Torbert was born in Georgetown, Delaware, in 1833, participated in the Civil War, served as a diplomat in Central America and Paris, and died tragically in a shipwreck off the Florida coast in 1888. Although some commentary is made on the social and political climate during Torbert's lifetime, the main thrust of this work is on the man's military career.

After he graduated from West Point in 1855, Torbert was stationed in New Jersey as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army at the outbreak of the Civil War. In 1861, Governor Charles S. Olden selected him to be Colonel of the First Regiment of New Jersey Volunteers. He fought at Gaine's Hill, guarded a railroad bridge at Bull Run, and became commander of a brigade at the battle of Gainesville when General Kearney was shot dead.

Torbert led his brigade in a charge against the enemy at Crampton Gap, relieved a part of Sumner's corps at Antietam, took part in the movement against Fredericksburg, and marched on to Gettysburg.

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(THE)  
PRESIDENT of the **United States** of AMERICA,  
E PLURIBUS UNUM



(To all who shall see these presents greeting)

**Know Ye**, That I do hereby confer on Alfred East of the Army of the United States by and with the advice and consent of the Senate the rank of Colonel BY BREVET, in said army, to rank as such from the 1st day of Jan in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and 54

And I do strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command, to obey and respect him accordingly and he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time, as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of America, and other Officers set over him, according to law, and the rules and discipline of war: This Commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being.

Given under my hand at the City of Washington, this 22nd day of Jan in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and 54 and in the 30th year of the said Independence of the United States

Abraham Johnson

(By the President)

Edwin M. Stanton  
Secretary of War

*IN MEMORIAM.*

MAJOR-GEN'L A. T. A. TORBERT.

*Born 1833.*

*Died 1880.*

→ ORDER + OF + MEMORIAL + SERVICE. ←

AVENUE M. E. CHURCH, MILFORD, DEL., SEPT. 30TH, 1880.

*Chancellor Saulsbury, Presiding.*

*Music. Marche Funebre.*

HYMN—"From all that dwell below the skies."

*Prayer. By Rev. Jonathan S. Willis.*

ANTHEM—"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

*Oration. By Gen. Robt. F. Stockton.*

QUARTETTE—"Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping."

*Addresses. By Hon. John W. Houston,  
General A. S. Webb,  
Hon. Jas. R. Lofland.*

HYMN—"God moves in a mysterious way."

*Addresses. By Hon. George P. Fisher,  
Col. A. L. Snowden,  
Levi C. Bird, Esq.*

SOLO—"One Sweetly Solemn Thought."

*Addresses. By Gen'l Daniel E. Sickels,  
Geo. V. Massey, Esq.,  
Col. E. Buxd Grubb.*

HYMN—"Immortal Honor, Endless Fame."

*Prayer and Benediction. By Rev. J. B. Quigg.*

*Committee of Arrangements:*

GENERAL WM. F. SMITH, New York.  
GENERAL ALEX. S. WEBB, "  
WALTER H. GILSON, ESQ., "  
GENERAL WM. STRYKER, New Jersey.  
COLONEL WM. E. POTTER, "  
CLARK FISHER, ESQ., "  
COLONEL JOSEPH F. TOBIAS, Pennsylvania.  
CAPTAIN RUDOLPH ELLIS, "  
W. W. WEIGLEY, ESQ., "  
RICHARD HARRINGTON, ESQ., Delaware.  
A. B. RICHARDSON, ESQ., "  
DR. JAMES A. DRAPER, "

*Organist:* MISS DELAMATER.

*Quartette:* MISS REYNOLDS, MISS STORM,  
ROBERT HALL, CHAS. E. TREIDLER.



Copied from original copy loaned by  
Miss Thelma Mayhew, teacher at  
Milford School, May 27, 1953.

Drowning of General Torbert

St. John Marshall

SAVED FROM THE SEA.

Fourteen More Survivors of the Vera Cruz Disaster Reported Safe.

THEIR ARRIVAL AT TITUSVILLE.

Names of the Reticent Persons Who Landed at New Smyrna.

ENGINEER OWENS' NARRATIVE

Passengers Engulfed in the Waves or Dashed About Through the Floating Debris.

THE BREAKING OF THE SHIP

General Torbert's Heroism in the Hour of Danger.

Recent advices received by the HERALD enable the following list of persons thus far reported saved from the steamer City of Vera Cruz to be made out:—

- THE SAVED.
ARRUE, RAFAEL, passenger.
OWEN, A. K., passenger.
SILVA, O. P., passenger.
BRANDENBERG, E., Quartermaster.
CONNELL, JOHN, coal passer, Ireland.
DROMGOLD, THOMAS, Fourth Assistant Engineer.

- GREENFIELD, F., seaman, Germany.
KELLY, JAMES, seaman, New York.
SMITH, CHARLES, second assistant engineer.
TALBOT, MASON, seaman, England.

Fourteen others, one of whom was a negro, are reported to have landed near Titusville, a point over one hundred and eighty miles south of the place where Mr. Owen and his companions were cast upon the beach.

A BATCH OF SHIPWRECKED MEN ARRIVE AT JACKSONVILLE—ONE FIREMAN FROM THE VERA CRUZ AMONG THE NUMBER.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.] JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Sept. 10, 1880.

The schooner Magnolia, Captain Cook, arrived this evening bringing Captain N. W. Poland, Joseph Graves, steward, and Joseph Sires, of the brig Loug Beach, wrecked off Cape Comovarr in the late storm. Captain Poland was badly bruised, having been struck by a spar. The patella of his right knee was broken, and his limbs have been badly swollen. He is now under the care of Dr. Burroughs.

The schooner also brought Captain C. H. Richard, P. Lawson, first officer, and William H. Ballard, passenger, from the schooner Ada J. Simonton.

On board the same schooner were Captain J. P. Dix, Mr. Hall, first officer; T. Hobson, second officer; Z. T. Cox, steward, and P. Nolan, T. Finnegan, W. Calligan, deck hands, T. Sebor and M. Nelson, seamen, saved from the bark New Republic, lost eleven miles from Mosquito Inlet.

An Irish fireman, name unknown, from the steamer

is no reflection against the stevedores—and at meals it was difficult to keep the dishes on the tables; particularly was this the case during Friday.

THE FIRST SIGN OF DANGER.
On Saturday, at daybreak, the fore and aft sails were set. The wind was then blowing brisk from the southeast and the sea was running high. At breakfast the ship was rolling so much that not any of the women, and but about half a dozen of the passengers came to the table. At one P. M. Captain Van Sice was heard to remark to Mr. Harris, his first officer, "I have just noticed that the barometer is falling rapidly. We are going to have a hurricane." Mr. Harris said:—"I have not looked at mine. I did not think of it." Orders were given to take in the sails, &c., and to cut up and throw the car overboard; also the barrels of oil, cases of acid and crates of vegetables. The real blast of the cyclone struck us on the port bow about twenty-five minutes to two P. M. (Saturday) and listed the ship almost on her beam ends, the hurricane deck on the lee side kissing the water. This blast of wind was accompanied with a heavy rain. From this time it became next to impossible to walk about without clinging to posts, tables, &c., and all things not securely fastened were quickly thrown from port to starboard. The wind had been northeast up to the calm on Friday night. Through the evening and night the passengers were generally lying or sitting on the floor of the saloon, talking to and assisting each other, for many were more or less cut or bruised in the face and hands, from being thrown against different things. Yet good cheer was the rule, and many were the pleasant exchanges of wit and humor between them. The servants were, as a rule, attentive and in the best of spirits, John O'Toole and the stewardess being conspicuous for their services.

BRAVE TORBERT.
General Torbert had been washed out of his stateroom (No. 5), which was the first on the port bow, early Saturday evening, and came to me (room 27) in the saloon. The General had been thrown against a table during the afternoon and had cut his right cheek, which troubled him considerably as it bled freely; but he was in his best and kindest humor—speaking a cheering word here, assisting a man there and attending to the women and children everywhere. An Irish woman, en route for Havana, perhaps Miss E. Burns, but who was called "Nellie" by her companion, whom I take to be Miss Clark, but who was called "Rose," was the wit of the occasion; and many hearty laughs did she create for us. These two women and John O'Toole sat on the floor of the saloon, opposite to where the General and I were lying, and ate nuts, raisins, &c., while the skylights were being carried away and when the lights were being knocked down and out.

"At one A. M. Sunday there is said to have been no water in the engine room. The ship had not leaked a drop. About two A. M. the drag was put out. It was a patent iron frame concern, in appearance like an umbrella. It was covered quickly and insecurely, and reversed as soon as it got into the sea. Even had it been in proper condition it is said it would have been too small to have been of use. About this time a heavy sea came over the port side and sufficient water found its way to the engine room to put out the fires and to stop the main engine. The donkey pump was then started, but it did no service. The captain was continually in the engine room after this. The purser, directly following this mishap, came hurriedly and excitedly into the saloon, calling General Torbert, and stated that the Captain had sent him to tell the passengers that they must come and assist the crew of the vessel to go down. The General and I walked out of our berth and I went to the hurricane deck and to the floor of the engine room, and assisted for half an hour to pass water in buckets. I gave it up disgusted and exhausted—disgusted that any commander should so exhaust the strength of his crew and passengers in an attempt to bail out a sinking ship with buckets."

PUTTING ON LIFE PRESERVERS.
Regarding the saloon I told General Torbert that we were filling with water and fast going to pieces, and it remained for us but to get life preservers on the women and children and to prepare for the worst, which all did in good spirits and without excitement, each assisting the other. Dennis Casey—as true and faithful a man as ever walked upon another—went with me down in the "Glory Hole," or lazarette storeroom to get life preservers for those who had not found good ones in their rooms. This was the last time I saw poor Dennis. He had a distressed look on his face but he worked vigorously for others to the going down of the ship. The sea at this time was continually breaking over the vessel and coming between decks in large quantities. This was owing doubtless to the difficulty of keeping her head to the storm, which had increased since the

hands stretched heavenward and the waters g down upon her with the force of a Niagara. The captain never came near the passenger sent no one to inquire as to their comfort this I censure him. I think that the in such cases should have a little cotion from the person in charge. I wise also to say that boats are of no servs a storm. They are generally the firsts broken or washed away; and even if sucoy launched, cannot stand a sea. Life rafts are all cases, and had we had two or more of the proper condition, we might have gotten the upon them, and out in the waves, before being up of the vessel; and then they might had a chance, poor as it was, for their lives.

THE SHIP GOES DOWN.
It was about six A. M. when the ship went, breaking in the middle and filling the sea with tents, stores, trunks, &c. To say that these ten million pieces of wreck all clashing together would be a gross exaggeration; but with such a statement no idea co conceived of the case as it actually listed. Men, women, children, horses, rats mixed about and went in and through and out under and with this mass. The waves were feet high. Not in swells or ridges, but in from peaks breaking like surf and each other. When we went up it was not to go down on the other, as is ordinarily the case, but to be d over at the top and sent rolling under the waf debris or flying through the air to the one one, and so back and forward or by the right and its opposing column. This lasted about hours, after which the waves took a more or character and came in swells and a, and we rode over and tumbled, ora whirled, rather, down on the other. The wind was so terrific that when a planis raft would wash the top of a wave it was tak and whirled back through the air with a forob le to behold, and then would fall with frui destruction among the living and lying. A no after the ship broke in pieces every one was ing more or less from cuts in the head and, and half of the entire party were dead w ten minutes after they took to the waves. The was most appalling—sad indeed was it to see heroic women, children and men struggling ag timbers, waves, wind, rain and fate. The pr was clinging to a mast, going over and p, when last seen, and must have soon a drowned. I passed Mr. Wallengde and so minutes after the sinking of the vessel. Thre about ten yards apart, clinging to different p of the wreck, and the little fellow looked as call as handsome as when playing our decks two days before. I spoke to the as I whirled by and he nodded a recogni. I passed "Nellie" and "Rose" several times, but close enough to speak. They were bleeding at the head, but were getting along as well as of us. I might say a word about many others, do not know their names, hence must forgo it otherwise would be a duty.

GOING DOWN WITH THE SHIP.
The crew stood on the hurricane deck and fore and the passengers occupied the Social; when the vessel went down. Edward Lane (e had his right thigh broken about five A. M. Su by being thrown against something. He was in Social Hall. The fireman who took John D place was dangerously cut in the head about P. M. Saturday, and both of these men, being less, doubtless went down with the ship. I stood behind the sail, against the mainz until the water came rushing over the starb side; then I ran up the rigging, and was over and washed over when about twenty-five feet to the deck. The sparks from the donkey numpre flying from the smokestack when the sea engulfed. I was dashed over and over and under into the gen destruction and came to the surface with a sh across my scalp and cheek and one over my it eye. For the next half-hour I was mostly of everything, and perhaps escaped death at the bning owing to these circumstances. The women o crawled on top of everything and as high as possi were the first to be killed. With me it was a fig ing rush up and back over and under, first hoig on to one thing and then under everything for hour perhaps, after which I climbed upon a sil of the dining saloon, thirty-five feet long by six ft. Through one of the window holes was the head shoulders of a man—Thomas Drangool. He ask me to break the frame and get it out. This was impossible, so I showed it down and he came up through the he opening. We now threw off life preservers all stuck to this fragment through thick and thin fr about twenty-two hours. Drangool could not swim, hence it was his plan never to let go. He upon the crosspiece between the window holes, id when the waves came and the raft turned he ad upon that as a person would upon a horizontal p, and when the raft went over three or more times, fore coming to the surface he would let up and down and through those window with a rapidity that would entitle im to a benefit in a first class circus. The great danger was from the drift, which was more or floating everywhere. During the twenty-two hours we were under the waves at least two-thirds of the time. The sea was warm, but the wind int

and crossed the bar at four P. M. Friday. In this sail we passed close to the beach. It was strewn with fragments of the wreck. We passed the wrecks of one schooner, one brig, and a 300-ton copper covered boat was floating bottom upward. We heard of ten wrecks. At Matanzas they had buried five bodies from the Vera Cruz.

NINE VICTIMS BURIED.
These, added to the four Charles Smith saw buried below, make nine in all. Two of those interred at Matanzas I should judge to be Mrs. Welsh and daughter. One of the others was a woman.

George S. Greeno, Mayor of St. Augustine, joined the Anna at Matanzas and came with us eighteen miles up the Matanzas River to his city, where we arrived at half-past eight P. M. This accounts for Mayor Greeno not answering the telegrams sent me that day. He had gone to the shore to see what he could learn of the wreck. Mayor Greeno, L. G. Crane, C. F. Hamblin and G. Van Dora opened their houses to us and did everything for our comfort and entertainment. Through the kindness of these gentlemen and Captain House, United States Collector of Customs, we were taken in the cars Saturday forenoon fourteen miles to the St. John's River, and there Captain J. Hall, of the Water Lily, gave us transportation fifty miles and meals, to Jacksonville, where we arrived at quarter past two P. M., Saturday, September 4. Here we were met by Mr. P. F. Wellington, who provided quarters and meals and showed us the kindest possible attentions. Messrs. Alexandre & Sons had telegraphed to give the survivors meals and transportation.

The shipwrecked schooner men were moneyless, friendless and wanted assistance to get to New York; and in their behalf I called on one General Hopkins, collector of United States Customs. I was referred to an elderly individual, in his shirt sleeves, sitting on his back with his feet on the desk and higher than his head. I explained the distressed condition of the schooner's men and asked him to interest himself in their behalf. With the coldness of an iceberg this public servant told me that he would have nothing whatever to do with any of us, that he had strict orders from the Department at Washington to turn a deaf ear to all such persons.

At three A. M. (Sunday, September 5), we boarded the side-wheel steamer City Point, commanded by Captain Thomas Cresser, of New York. The agent, E. J. McLaurin, of Jacksonville, kindly gave the schooner men a passage to Charleston, S. C., and Captain Cresser showed every one of us every possible courtesy and attention, giving us staterooms and the privilege of his own table. We stopped at Ferdinand for an hour and arrived at Charleston before daybreak Monday. Captain Cresser did more than this. He invited us to remain on his boat as his guests until we took passage on the Charleston at five P. M. Tuesday, for New York. He got passage for the schooner men on the George W. Clyde for New York and he and I saw them well fixed on the steamer.

From Charleston the weather has been dismal and the sea rough, but Captain W. S. Lockwood and Captain James Berry have given us tales of the sea, which managed to make things pleasant.

THE FINDER STORY DISCREDITED.
In addition to the above, Mr. Owen said that he had not heard of the plundering of trunks alleged to have been committed by the pilots of St. Augustine, and also that he did not state that he had \$3,000 in bills in his trunk. What he did say was that in General Torbert's trunk was \$700 in greenbacks. Before the Vera Cruz sunk Mr. Owen had had a bag containing his money around his waist and had it with him when he reached shore. He said that he was going to Mexico with General Torbert on an engineering scheme. When told that fourteen survivors of the Vera Cruz had been discovered at Titusville, Fla., among them a colored man, Mr. Owen said that no such person was on board.

The other survivors had very little to say, all but one remarking that they agreed with Mr. Owen's statement in every particular. Kelly denied that the ship broke in two, claiming that she went down when filled with water. This seaman also expressed the opinion that only seven persons had been saved. He stated that when he had been in the water but fifteen minutes he saw men and women drowning all around him. He calculated that the small struck the vessel eighteen hours before she foundered. The Charleston reached pier 27, North River, at ten P. M., and at that hour a large crowd was waiting for her arrival. Several survivors went to their homes in this city, but they all promised to meet Mr. Owen on board the vessel at eight o'clock this morning, and at nine they will call at the office of F. Alexandre & Sons, the owners of the wrecked vessel.

GOOD NEWS—FOURTEEN MORE PERSONS SUPPOSED TO BE SAVED FROM THE VERA CRUZ AND LANDED ON A DESERTED PORTION OF THE COAST OF FLORIDA.

Since the first tidings came of the loss of the Vera Cruz there has been little until yesterday to suggest the possibility of hope to the friends of the passengers, and the indefiniteness of what came yesterday forbids the placing of much reliance upon it. It seems certain, however, from two letters received by

LOSS OF THE ANGLIA.

Run Into by a Bark, She Founders at Sea.

PERILS OF A FOG.

All the Passengers and Crew Safely Landed at St. Johns.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.] ST. JOHNS, N. F., Sept. 10, 1880.

The screw steamer Anglia, of the Anchor line, was run into at sea on Monday evening last and sank about two hours after the collision. The following particulars were elicited from the officers of the lost steamer:—The Anglia, laden with grain, general cargo and about three hundred and fifty head of cattle, was on her voyage homeward bound from Boston September 2, to London. The whole cargo was valued at \$112,000. On the evening of Monday last, about sixty miles east of the Grand Banks, she was run into by the iron bark Trongate, of Glasgow, laden with railway iron, and bound from Antwerp to New York. A dense fog prevailed at the time of the collision, so that no effort could be made to alter the position of the ships or to abate in any way the shock of the collision.

FILLING WITH WATER.
The Anglia was pierced by the bark abaft the engine room, filled with water in the course of a few hours, and then sank immediately. The bark sustained very severe damage, but not of a character to render her unable to continue her voyage. The crew, numbering forty-five men, and eleven passengers were brought into St. Johns bay by the Trongate and were there embarked on their lifeboats, in which they rowed into St. Johns this morning. The crew of the Anglia were scarcely safe on board the Trongate, and the bark's head directed for St. Johns, when two enormous icebergs were descried looming through the fog and in dangerous proximity to the bark. Fortunately, however, the wind was favorable, and what might have been a second tremendous peril was fortunately evaded. No accident occurred on board either of the colliding ships, and the officers and crews are all well and in good condition.

COOLNESS OF THE OFFICERS.
At the moment of collision the first impression created among the officers and crew was that the damage done to the Anglia was not fatal and that it was within their power to save the steamship. This was fortunate, producing as it did the utmost coolness and deliberation among the ship's company and the exercise of the most vigorous discipline. The shock was of necessity sudden, the great iron bark of at least one thousand tons having been completely veiled from the observation of the commanding officer of the Anglia till she swooped down like a huge sea bird with outspread wings upon the doomed steamer. The second officer was in charge at the time, and the captain was also on the bridge. With rare prudence and tact he ordered all the passengers to go into the boats immediately and followed this order with a direction to have the falls and tackles all ready to be used at a moment's notice.

EFFORTS TO SAVE THE STEAMER.
Meantime strenuous efforts were made to keep the steamer afloat, but all the extemporized appliances proved to be of no avail. On trial it was ascertained that there were eight feet of water in the hold and that the steamer was rapidly settling down. Still every nerve was braced and the utmost energy exerted to rescue the damaged steamer. When at length it appeared hopeless to save the ship, and an imperative challenge was addressed to

Western freight, and, of course, this would be likely to be insured by the shippers if at all.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STEAMSHIP.
The lost vessel was built at Glasgow in 1869. She was constructed of iron, brig rigged, and was 2,253 tons burden, old measurement. She had a length of keel and fore-rake of 335 feet—on deck, 340 feet—a breadth of beam (moulded) of 35 feet, and a depth of hold of 29 feet. The ship was constructed with three decks, the height between the first and second being 8 feet, and between the second and third, or lower deck, 18 feet, clear of beams. She drew when loaded 21 feet 6 inches of water. Her plates were 3/4, 1/2 and 1/4 inch in thickness, and her outer and inner stern posts, of hammered iron, were of the usual dimensions commensurate with efficiency and safety. She was fitted with six water-tight bulkheads of iron, and her steering apparatus was remarkably strong, the rudder being provided with a hammered iron stock, bound with plates of the same material. There were two water tanks forward and the same number aft, capable of holding 30,000 gallons, while 2 fresh water condensers furnished, in addition thereto, eighty gallons per hour. The steamship carried six large lifeboats and one of smaller size for general use, each of which was adapted to carry safely, in case of emergency, fifty persons. The boats were supplied with improved lowering apparatus. The motive power of the Anglia consisted of two direct-acting engines, having cylinders of 50 inches diameter, and 3 feet 6 inches stroke of piston, the nominal power of which was 400-horse, while the effective power that could be utilized if necessary was 1,500-horse. Steam was generated from two horizontal tubular boilers 21 feet long, 14 feet wide and 21 feet in height. It is understood that she was insured for not more than one-third her value in English companies.

THE PRONGATE.
The vessel which collided with the Anglia was the iron bark Trongate, launched about two years since from the same shipyard on the Clyde as the steamship which she has been the means of destroying. Her commander is Captain Dunn, and she belongs to Alexander E. Lennox, of Glasgow. Her tonnage is rated at 949 tons, and her dimensions are as follows:—Length, 204 feet; breadth, 33 feet; depth of hold, 20 feet. She sailed from Antwerp for this port on August 15.

CAUGHT IN A HURRICANE.

FEARFUL EXPERIENCE OF THE CITY OF BRUSSELS—TERROR OF THE PASSENGERS.

The steamship City of Brussels, of the Inman line, which arrived yesterday, experienced some frightful weather during her voyage. She left Liverpool on September 1, and on the morning of the 9th the vessel was caught in a hurricane, which, although lasting but a few hours, was of such violence that the Captain said in all his experience he had never known such another. It had been blowing a little hard on the evening of the 8th, when, at one o'clock on the morning of the 9th, the wind rose with a sudden roar which will never be forgotten by those who heard it. The ship was not tossed, but hurled about on the waves, which were running mountains high and which broke over her with frightful fury. The passengers were panic stricken, as the vessel rose up on the foaming mountains or plunged again into the deep, as if she were never coming up again. The greater number of the cabin passengers crowded the saloon, and a passenger on the steamer told a HERALD reporter that he should never forget the scene there. There was not a soul in that saloon that thought the ship could last in such a hurricane, and they prepared for the end. Men and women cried aloud and wrung their hands in an agony of despair. Two or three ladies fainted, and strong-hearted men, with faces as pale as death, were uttering what they thought would be their last prayer. Husbands and wives and brothers and sisters and friends were embracing each other, expecting in a moment to be parted forever. And as the fury of the hurricane increased the panic became greater. Many were almost speechless with fright. When the storm began to subside the terror-stricken passengers came to their senses, and most of them with tears in their eyes offered up prayers of thankfulness for their merciful preservation. There was another terrible scene in the steerage—700 passengers, of nearly every nationality, rushing about and being hurled mercilessly about their quarters, screaming and howling in despair, prayers and oaths mingling in strange contrast. Every now and then they made a rush for the deck, and it was with great difficulty that the officers could keep them below. If they had once made their way up they must have been washed overboard. Every officer, from the captain downward, was unanimous yesterday in saying that they had passed through the most awful hurricane that they had ever experienced, and that through that terrible hour the ship had behaved admirably. Apart from the hurricane, one of the officers told a HERALD reporter that during nearly the whole voyage the weather had been unusually rough for the time of year. With the exception of a slight injury to a sailor, who was hurt by being hurled against a spar, no casualty was reported.

to look out for and assist Mr. O. P. Silva, a passenger on the Vera Cruz, as soon as he arrives here.

Mayor J. Ramsey Dev, of this place, has ordered the survivors from the Norwegian bark Captain Matison to be taken care of here until Monday.

NAMES OF TWO PASSENGERS AND ONE FIRE-MAN FROM THE VERA CRUZ WHO LANDED AT NEW SMYRNA.

It was noted as a strange circumstance at the time of the loss of the Vera Cruz that some survivors who had landed at New Smyrna should have refused to give their names for publication, thus adding to the awful suspense of the relatives of those aboard.

THOSE REMIENENT SURVIVORS. NEW SMYRNA, Fla., Sept. 2, 1880.

The first mate and seven passengers or seamen, I am unable at present to ascertain which, saved from the wreck of the steamer Vera Cruz, are on the North River, among the citizens.

JOHN CONNELL, fireman; IRAFAEL ARRUE, passenger, and O. P. SILVA, passenger, are here. These are all that are known to be saved.

LOSS OF LIFE FROM A DRIG.

The brig Long Beach, of Philadelphia, N. W. Poland, master, loaded with lumber, bound from Appalachicola to Philadelphia, went ashore sixteen miles south of Mosquito Inlet on Monday, the 30th ult.

COURSE OF THE GALE.

The gale commenced on Saturday, the 28th of August, the wind being north. It increased to a hurricane on the morning of the 29th.

ARRIVAL OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE VERA CRUZ—THE STORY OF THE WRECK AS TOLD BY MR. OWEN—GENERAL TORBERT IN THE HOURS OF DANGER—THE SHIP BREAKS IN THE MIDDLE AND ALL HANDS ARE ENGULFED IN THE WAVES—CLINGING TO RAFTS AND DASHED ABOUT THROUGH THE FLOATING DEBRIS—MOST OF THE PASSENGERS DEAD TEN MINUTES AFTER THE SHIP WENT DOWN—THE STORY OF THE BREAKING OF THE VESSEL CONTRADICTED BY A SEAMAN.

The steamship Charleston, from Charleston, S. C., was reported off Squan Beach at twenty minutes before eight P. M., last night, and she reached Quarantine forty-five minutes later.

A HERALD reporter was the first to board the steamer and to congratulate Mr. Owen and the others on their miraculous escape from drowning.

MR. OWEN'S STORY. "The cold wave," with the rain of Wednesday, August 25—the day we started—continued, with a brisk wind from the northeast during Thursday and Friday, but calmed down Friday midnight.

The starboard side, and the rain cut like hail. It was at the risk of one's eyes to face it. General Torbert and I were lying in my berth with our life preservers on, when, at twelve minutes past four A. M., a sea came over the port side, breaking into the engine room and through the port side of the saloon, making a crash like a battery of artillery, striking terror for an instant into every one and dashing the passengers, tables, doors, fragments and water into one mass, and to the starboard and aft.

WASHED OVERBOARD.

"This was the last time I saw the General alive, although I went to the foot of the stairs and called him several times. I think he must have been washed overboard in trying to gain the hurricane deck by the aft stair way, which was on the port quarter, for after the ship sank Charles Smith assisted him onto a piece of the wreck, and he was then much exhausted.

THE LAST FAREWELLS.

The passengers now crowded into the Social Hall, at the top of the saloon stairs. Here they said farewell, readjusted their life preservers and extended sympathy, one to the other. Never before, perhaps, were there a set of persons so orderly and unexcited under circumstances so appalling.

GETTING OUT THE BOATS.

The captain called for a knife to cut the boat (No. 3) on the port midship, just after the crash. At twelve A. M., Mason Talbot gave him one.

AT THE WHEEL TO THE LAST.

The quartermaster, William O'Neill, and a sailor (name unknown) stood at the wheel and steered while she was being engulfed.

A FAITHFUL SERVANT.

They had not time to get life preservers. John Casey stood on duty as if nothing extraordinary was going on. Mason Talbot went in the mate's room to get a life preserver and Casey told him that he was not allowed there.

thumb and forefinger. We caught apples, lemons, onions as they washed against us, and with an appetite which would have thrown us into the heart of a boarding house keeper.

THINGS ON THE BRIDGE.

"When we struck the breakers we were spun over six times before coming to the surface and our raft went into fragments. Not being able to see the land, and not knowing what this new feature was, we called out a 'Goodby' as we drifted apart, and after a terrible ordeal of ten minutes more were thrown upon the beach, ten miles north of Mosquito Inlet and opposite to Daytona, Volusia county, Fla.

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tidings as there may be in store have not been reported before this. "It is better late than never," however, and the truth of the adage was never better exemplified than when the letters were received yesterday telling that two persons had come ashore floated by life preservers and twelve more had escaped on a raft from the ill-fated vessel, landing near the Indian River, Fla.

The information received, as was said, is exceedingly meagre. It consists solely of two extracts from letters received by Mr. Charles Dennis, the secretary of the Board of Underwriters in this city, from Mr. Henry F. Titus, the agent of the Board in Titusville, Fla., and its vicinity.

Two persons, one of them a negro, came ashore with life preservers and report they left a steamer from New York bound for Havana. When at Cap Canveral they were struck by the gale. The cabin was taken overboard with many passengers.

The second extract is from a letter of September 3, dated "Ten o'clock." It is as follows:—

AN ISOLATED REGION.

Mr. Titus, in writing as he did, was either unable to secure the names of the survivors who thus made their appearance some hundred and fifty miles from the landing place of those already reported, or else he was unaware of the anxiety with which the news is looked for here.

INQUIRY AT THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF UNDERWRITERS

Inquiry at the office of the Board of Underwriters and at that of Messrs. F. Alexander & Sons for further particulars was fruitless.

GENERAL TORBERT'S BODY.

The body was placed in our boat and Mr. Botofuhr and I passed most of the night scarping tide and wind, in regaining Daytona. It was sad for me to sit there on that quiet night beside that quieter body.

MARSHALL O. ROBERTS.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.] SARATOGA, N. Y., Sept. 10, 1880. Marshall O. Roberts is still living but steadily sinking.

LAWYER BAUM'S TRIAL.

FOUGHKEEPSIE, Sept. 10, 1880. In the Baum alleged bogus divorce case to-day Baum was eight hours on the witness stand, and told his story of his connection with the Simmons divorce case.

When the boat in charge of the first boat was lowered into the water some twenty of the passengers and crew found a place in her. But no sooner was the boat in readiness to leave the ship's side than it was discovered that her bottom had been pierced by the horns of the oxen swimming and scrambling for life in the water.

A STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

It was only by frequent application of oars and boat-hooks that the drowning steers were prevented from working ruin to the shipwrecked sailors and passengers. Such was the terrific character of the stroke dealt by the Trongate to the Anglia, that it was a matter of speculation on board the steamer's boats as to the possibility of the bark being aloft.

AN EXCITING SCENE.

The scene as described by one of the passengers, of hundreds of oxen struggling in the water for hours around the sides of the Trongate can be more easily imagined than described. One was taken on board for food purposes to provide against the new demand on the provision resources of the bark.

BUT LITTLE KNOWN OF THE DISASTER IN THIS CITY—THE COLLIDING VESSELS DESCRIBED—

THE AGENTS OF THE ANGLIA ASSURED OF HER STRENGTH AND HER CAPTAIN'S ABILITY.

At the offices of the Anchor Line, No. 7 Bowling Green, little was known concerning the disaster other than what was contained in a brief despatch to Henderson Brothers setting forth the foundering of the steamship Anglia, after a collision with the bark Trongate.

ing the storm by Captain Watkins, and the passengers unanimously addressed him a letter asking for bringing them safely through their peril which they said, besides affording them sad remembrances of their own weakness and littleness in the midst of the angry elements, also left them joyful memories of their liberation and protection (under Providence) by the captain's skill and efficiency.

AMONG THE BREAKERS.

STORY OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE WRECK OF THE SCHOONER ADA J. SIMONTON—WAITING FOR DEATH.

The steamship Clyde, which arrived in this port yesterday evening from Charleston, had on board as passengers three sailors belonging to the schooner Ada J. Simonton, which went ashore on the coast of Florida during the cyclone which sent the Vera Cruz to the bottom.

"WE LEFT PENSACOLA, BOUND FOR BOSTON, ON THE 17TH OF AUGUST. I CAN'T REMEMBER DATES EXACTLY, BUT WE WENT ASHORE LAST SUNDAY WEEK AND WERE THIRTEEN DAYS OUT, SO THAT'S ABOUT RIGHT."

We had bad weather almost from the very start; head winds all along and everything on board was wet through. Every day was worse than the previous one, and for a few days before we went ashore it was the most awful weather I ever witnessed.

We washed ourselves to the davits aft and waited there as best we could, and unable to do a thing to save ourselves. There were eight persons aboard in all.

The Ada J. Simonton was a three-masted schooner 295 tons, built at Camden, Me., in 1872, and owned by Kilham, Loud & Co., of Boston.



Photo courtesy of Massachusetts Commandery Military Order of  
the Loyal Legion and the U.S. Army Military History Institute

**ALFRED T. A. TORBERT**  
as colonel of the 1st New Jersey Volunteers

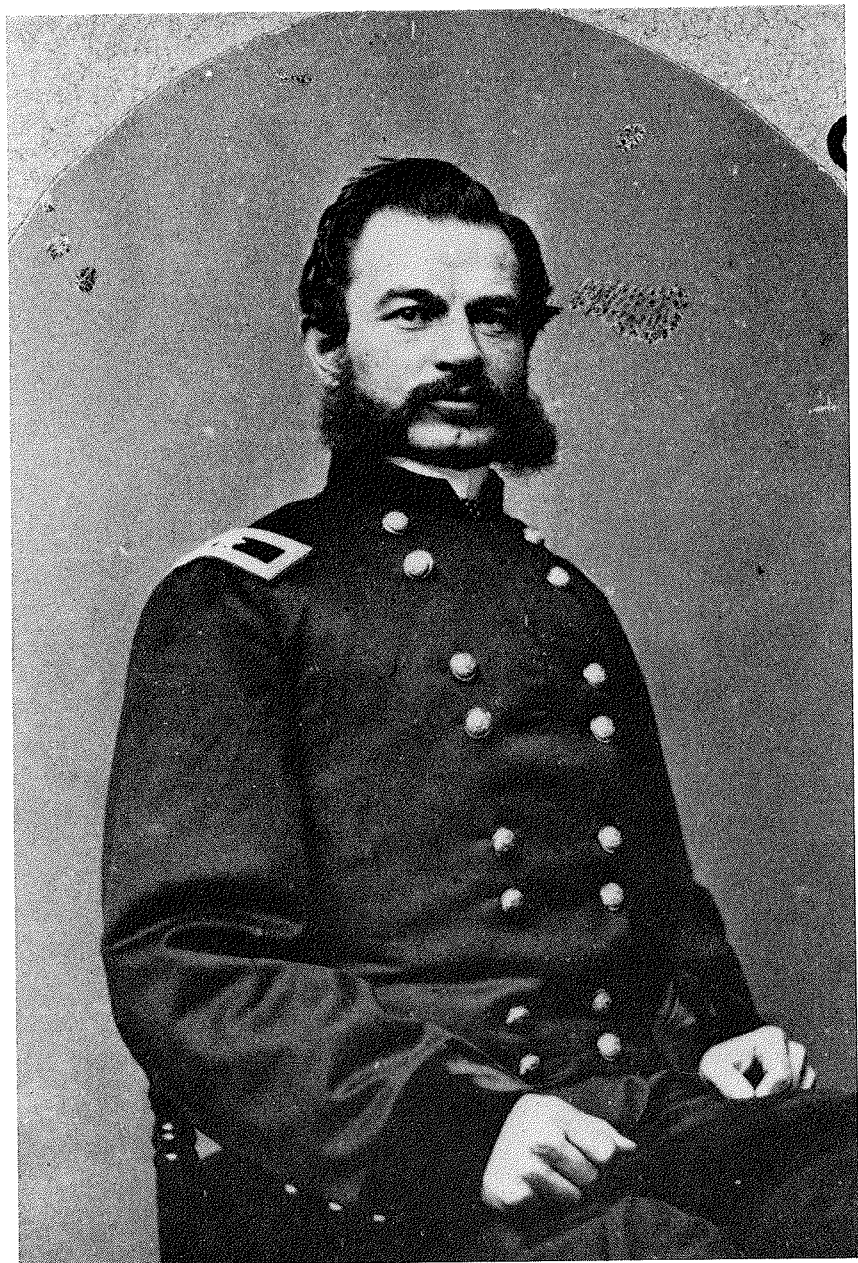


Photo courtesy of Massachusetts Commandery Military Order of  
the Loyal Legion and the U.S. Army Military History Institute

GEN. A. T. A. TORBERT



## The General Torbert Memorial

[The following memorial of Gen. Torbert is published by arrangement with the committee having charge of his funeral services. They have chosen this method of publication in preference to a pamphlet issue, believing that it will bring the article more immediately within reach of Gen. Torbert's friends in and out of the Service.]

A Delaware dandy rose to Chief of Cavalry with Sheridan but fell from favor. Gen. A.T.A. Torbert still managed to die a hero's death 15 years after the Civil War

# An Unremarkable Life

By GARY MULLINAX  
Staff reporter

It's fitting that the very month Delaware's A.T.A. Torbert joined the Union cavalry under Phil Sheridan he developed a cyst on his rear end and couldn't ride for several weeks.

Torbert's military career was filled with missed opportunities and bad luck, along with a few successes (notably at Cold Harbor and Cedar Creek in Virginia). In some ways, his was an absurd life in wartime. He muddled through pretty much the way most regular folks would have, though any man had to be brave to endure four years of the Civil War.

All this is suggested by a new biography, "A.T.A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue," from Morningside, a Civil War specialty house. The author, Anne D. Slade of Grand Rapids, Mich., will be at Wilmington's Smoke Shop today to sign copies.

"I wanted to show him with all his faults," said Slade, whose interest in Torbert grew out of a fascination with Sheridan and the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign both participated in. "He was a real person — that's one thing I enjoyed about him. I didn't want to make him a school kid's hero."

No danger of that.

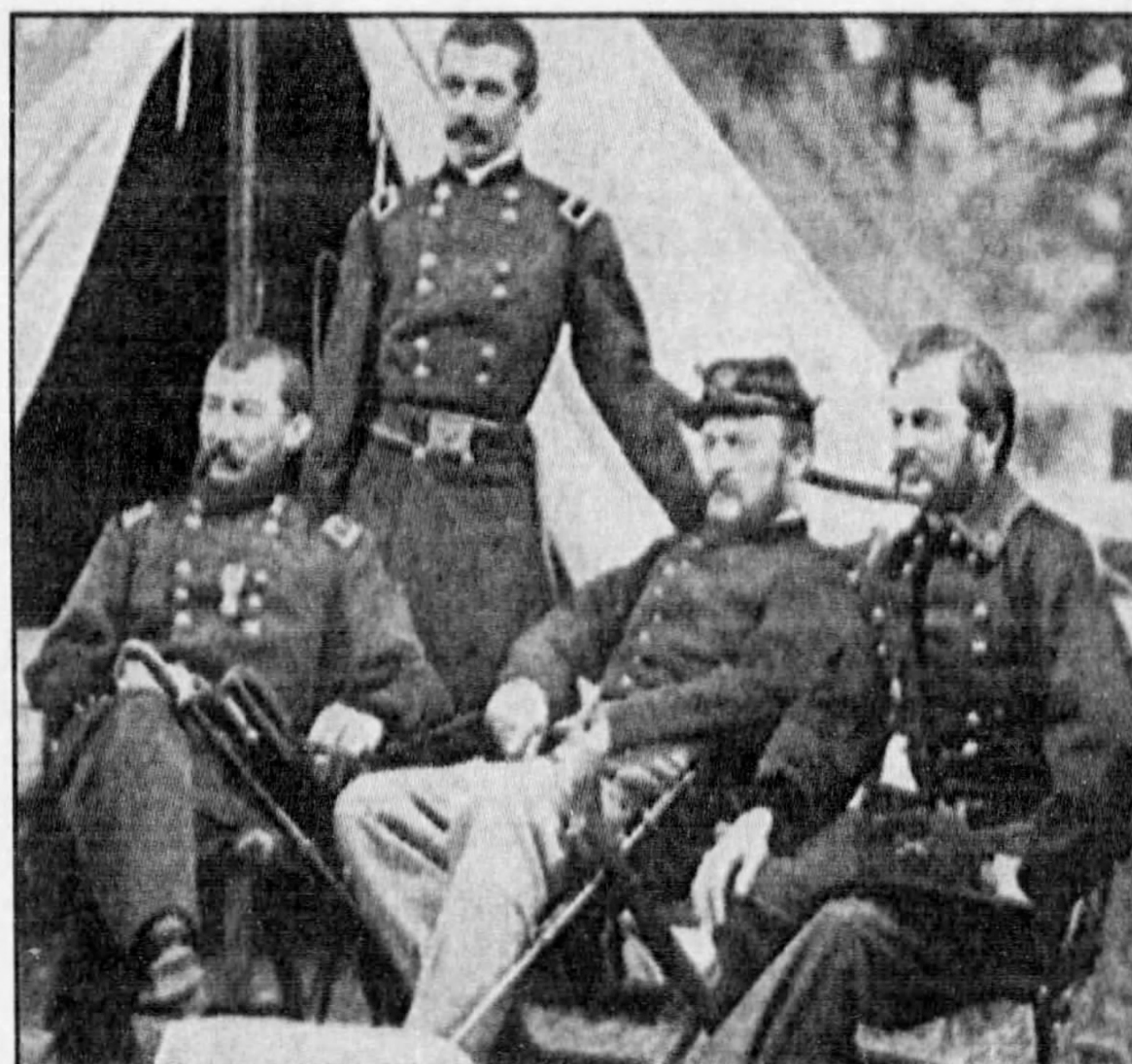
Sociable, sartorially splendid, always angling for promotion, Gen. Torbert got close to some big events but often stayed on the fringes. Through no fault of his, the First New Jersey Regiment he commanded reached Antietam too late to fight. It got to Gettysburg just before Pickett's Charge, which Torbert could watch from behind a stone fence as Union troops cut down the charging Rebels.

Torbert, whose mutton-chop whiskers stuck out on either side of a bare chin, ate his lunch during the charge. Annoyed by what he thought were pebbles being tossed at headquarters by his men, he was informed that "them's Rebel bullets, General."

Torbert was around famous and heroic people without being particularly famous or heroic himself. Think of him as the Rosencrantz (or Guildenstern) of the Civil War, with Sheridan or George Armstrong Custer as Hamlet.

He left no memorable words for the history books, but he did provoke one of Sheridan's famous phrases. "Whip the Rebel cavalry or get whipped," he snarled at Torbert, who had unwisely retreated in a previous engagement. Torbert complied this time.

Sheridan had made him head of the First Division of his Virginia cavalry in May 1864 and in August made him chief of all his cav-



Left to right: Gen. Sheridan, Gen. Davies and Delawareans Gen. Wilson and Gen. Torbert.

alry there. But by September, Torbert had run afoul of the short-legged Irishman, who did not take him to Appomattox, Va., to share the glory of Robert E. Lee's surrender.

He made serious mistakes in two Virginia battles under Sheridan. At one, he failed to pursue Jubal Early's weakened troops in the Luray Valley. "To this day," Sheridan wrote 20 years later, "I have been unable to account satisfactorily for Torbert's failure . . . his impotent attempt not only chagrined me very much, but occasioned much unfavorable comment throughout the army." (This was no way to please the boss.)

Torbert then failed to press the Rebels at Gordonsville. "Sheridan placed another mark beside Torbert's name and laid his plans for replacing him," wrote a historian.

Slade believes some of the fight went out of Torbert because of Sheridan's order to burn and loot farms in the Shenandoah Valley. Torbert followed those orders, but without enthusiasm — one of several reasons his life was endearing no matter how flawed.

To Slade, Torbert's reluctance was partly due to his love of the valley's Southern way of life, so similar to what he knew in downstate Delaware. Nor was burning and looting gentlemanly in the Southern sense (though it sure helped bring the war to a close).

The flashy young Custer served under Torbert in the Shenandoah Valley, but forged an allegiance with Sheridan — they called each other Curly and Phil — and achieved a more secure place in history than his commander. Torbert, who seems to have



## IF YOU GO

**What:** Anne D. Slade signs copies of her new biography, "A.T.A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue"

**When:** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday

**Where:** The Smoke Shop, Delaware Avenue and Du Pont Street, Wilmington

**Information:** Call 655-2861

ABOVE: Alfred T. A. Torbert as colonel of the 1st New Jersey Volunteers

Photos from "A.T.A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue"

# General: Finally some fleeting fame

## FROM PAGE E1

been chosen by Sheridan for his administrative skills and ability to get along with his superiors, did not relish taking risks as Custer — or the great generals — did.

Still, Torbert could match Custer in at least one thing — his dress. Torbert, too, was a dandy. He liked to wear flared trousers, a shirt with a broad collar and a cravat. For certain occasions he wore a velvet uniform. He sometimes strutted his stuff along the skirmish line with a full entourage, which tended to draw criticism — and enemy fire.

Torbert, filled with Southern notions about hospitality, wore his finery on the social occasions he found even as war raged. Once, he led his troops through

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**He sometimes strutted his stuff along the skirmish line with a full entourage, which tended to draw criticism — and enemy fire.**

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Warrenton, Va., and decided to call on folks he had met there earlier. His orderly spotted some Rebel soldiers and warned his commander, who rushed from the house and barely got out of town alive. "Around him, thick as hornets at the nest, the brigands were pointing pistols at his head," according to one account.

Torbert also socialized on his many extended leaves. He often took leave because of malaria (the attacks often struck when he was under pressure) but sometimes to visit friends and family. This raised eyebrows. "Gen. Torbert ought to be old enough now to be over this sort of thing," said an early commander, John Sedgwick, who granted Torbert's request for time off.

Torbert sometimes used this time to jockey for promotion, which seemed a never-ending task. He was a professional soldier and West Point graduate who transferred to the volunteer army when war began. Though he quickly rose to general with the volunteers, he never got past the rank of captain with the regulars.

## TOP BRASS

Other Delawareans who served as generals in the Civil War, all on the Union side:

■ **Thomas A. Smyth.** Born in Ireland, moved to Wilmington before the war, died in 1865.

■ **George Sykes.** Born in Dover, stayed in the Army after the war, died in 1880.

■ **James H. Wilson.** Born in Illinois, moved to Wilmington in 1883, died in 1925.

— **Constance Cooper,**  
**Historical Society**  
**of Delaware**

This was a serious problem for his career at war's end. Sheridan wouldn't help, though he happily promoted Custer and others.

So Torbert retired and joined his wife, Mary, in Milford. They had no children, though distant relations include William Torbert, a Delaware state senator from Dover, and Marvin Schelhouse of Milford, whose collection of A.T.A. Torbert memorabilia was useful to Slade.

In Milford, Torbert grew fruit, ran unsuccessfully for Congress and became bored. He called on U.S. Grant, now president, to help an old war buddy. Grant made him consul to El Salvador (not the best place for a fellow with malaria). He next took a similar job in Cuba and then in Paris.

After leaving Paris, he was sent by Grant to Mexico in 1880 to negotiate for U.S. railroad rights. His ship was wrecked in a storm on the way. He rose to the occasion, according to accounts, moving "like a sunbeam" as he tried to save others. But Torbert himself drowned, his body washing up on the Florida coast.

His death at age 47 made The New York Times front page. George McClellan and other famous people escorted his coffin down Broadway in New York City. Torbert was buried in Milford.

Suddenly, Torbert was a hero, not for his war record, but for a few moments on a sinking ship. And now that the world was watching, he was dead.

Another absurdity, but no surprise to anyone familiar with his life.