



89.1963.1 Iron Brigade Commander
Wayne County
Marker Text Review Report
2/16/2015

Marker Text

One-quarter mile south of this marker is the home of General Solomon A. Meredith, Iron Brigade Commander at Gettysburg. Born in North Carolina, Meredith was an Indiana political leader and post-war Surveyor-General of Montana Territory.

Report

The Bureau placed this marker under review because its file lacked both primary and secondary documentation. IHB researchers were able to locate primary sources to support the claims made by the marker. The following report expands upon the marker points and addresses various omissions, including specifics about Meredith's political service before and after the war.

Solomon Meredith was born in Guilford County, North Carolina on May 29, 1810.¹ By 1830, his family had relocated to Center Township, Wayne County, Indiana.² Meredith soon turned to farming and raising stock; in the 1850s, he purchased property near Cambridge City, which became known as Oakland Farm, where he grew crops and raised award-winning cattle.³

Meredith also embarked on a varied political career. He served as a member of the Wayne County [Whig](#) convention in 1839.⁴ During this period, Meredith became concerned with state internal improvements: in the early 1840s, he supported the development of the Whitewater Canal, which terminated in Cambridge City.⁵ Voters next chose Meredith as their representative to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1846 and they reelected him to that position in 1847 and 1848.⁶ From 1849-1853, Meredith served as a [U.S. Marshal](#) for Indiana.⁷ He was reelected to the Indiana House in 1854.⁸ Meredith attended the [Know Nothing Party's](#) National Convention in 1856, which supported the election of former president [Millard Fillmore](#).⁹ He continued his public service as clerk of the Wayne County Court in 1859.¹⁰

After the start of the [Civil War](#) in April 1861, Meredith received a colonel's commission and command of the 19th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment.¹¹ The 19th Indiana was brigaded with the 2nd, 6th, and 7th Wisconsin, and these four regiments received the nickname 'the [Iron Brigade](#)' after withstanding a fierce Confederate attack at the [Battle of South Mountain](#) in Maryland on September 14, 1862.¹² On October 6, 1862, [President Abraham Lincoln](#) confirmed Meredith's promotion to brigadier general and on November 25, 1862, he was given command of the Iron Brigade.¹³

Alan Nolan, historian and author of *The Iron Brigade: A Military History*, argues that the [Battle of Gettysburg](#) in Pennsylvania on July 1-3, 1863 was the first full-scale battle in which Brigadier General Solomon Meredith led the Iron Brigade since his promotion the previous November.¹⁴



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While Meredith did have command of the brigade during the [Battle of Fredericksburg](#) in Virginia on December 11-15, 1862, [Brigadier General Abner Doubleday](#), Meredith's superior officer, believed that he had been slow to obey orders and had removed Meredith from command on December 13.¹⁵ According to Nolan, the misunderstanding was rectified a few days later and Meredith was then reinstated.¹⁶ Meredith had also been in command during the [Battle of Chancellorsville](#) in Virginia on April 30-May 6, 1863, but the brigade saw little combat during that engagement.¹⁷ When he finally had an opportunity to lead the Iron Brigade at Gettysburg, his command was short-lived: on July 1, 1863, the first day of fighting, shell fragments hit Meredith's head and killed his horse, which landed on him, crushing his leg and ribs.¹⁸ Meredith was technically "Iron Brigade Commander at Gettysburg," but his wounds removed him from the field early in the fighting.

After the war, Meredith returned to his farm and continued raising cattle.¹⁹ He also continued his pre-war commitments to public service and political office. In 1866, Meredith was appointed Internal Revenue Collector for Indiana's fifth congressional district.²⁰ He attended the [National Union Convention](#) in Philadelphia just before the 1866 mid-year elections, which were an attempt to bolster support for President Johnson.²¹ In 1867, the U.S Senate confirmed Meredith's appointment as Surveyor-General of Montana, a post he held through 1869.²² In 1875, he attended the Republican National Convention, which nominated [Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant](#) for President.²³

Solomon Meredith died at home on October 21, 1875 and he was buried on the farm. He was reinterred in Riverside Cemetery in Cambridge City in 1908.²⁴ In 1882, Virginia Claypool Meredith, his daughter-in-law, took over the farm and successfully grew the business.²⁵

For Further Information:

- See the [Solomon Meredith Papers](#) at the Indiana Historical Society: M 0203, F 0589-91; the collection guide is not available online, but the highlights of the typewritten version are copied in this folder. The collection includes three manuscript boxes of papers, correspondence, and diaries from Meredith from the 1830s-1870s and also includes papers from his sons Samuel, David, and Henry, and his daughter-in-law Virginia Claypool Meredith. There are also three microfilm reels which contain copies of the same information as in the manuscript boxes.
- Virginia Claypool Meredith was Meredith's daughter-in-law; she inherited the farm after her husband Henry died and made it famous. Please see the [Virginia Claypool Meredith marker \(89.2014.1\)](#) and these two blog posts: "[Help the 'Queen of American Agriculture' Receive the Recognition She Deserves](#)" and "[IHB Marker Dedication: Queen of American Agriculture.](#)"



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- See the [Iron Brigade marker](#).

¹ 1830 United States Federal Census, Center Township, Wayne County, Indiana, Roll 29, Page 163, accessed [Ancestry.com](#); 1850 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), Cambridge City, Wayne County, Indiana, Roll M432_180, Page 27B, Image 60, Family Number 393, September 20, 1850, accessed [Ancestry.com](#); 1860 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), Centre Township, Wayne County, Indiana, Roll M653_308, Page 69, Image 71, Family Number 494, June 23, 1860, accessed [Ancestry.com](#); 1870 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), Cambridge City, Wayne County, Indiana, Roll M593_370, Page 415B, Image 356, Family Number 482, accessed [Ancestry.com](#); "Solomon Meredith," accessed [Find a Grave](#).

² 1830 United States Federal Census, accessed [Ancestry.com](#).

³ "The National Cattle Show," *The New York Times*, October 28, 1854 accessed [Proquest's NY Times, Historical with Index](#); "Famous Old Meredith Homestead Farm has been Sold," *Indianapolis News*, May 17, 1902, Indiana State Library; Frederick Whitford, *The Queen of American Agriculture: A Biography of Virginia Claypool Meredith* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2008), 98-99 [Note: The marker is located on the southwest corner of US 40 and S Gay Street in Cambridge City, IN. For more information on the location of Oakland Farm, please see maps and other articles in the [Virginia Claypool Meredith Marker File](#) (89.2014.1)].

⁴ "Wayne County Whig Convention," *Richmond Palladium*, November 16, 1839, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#).

⁵ "Canal Celebration" *Richmond Palladium*, July 2, 1842, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#).

⁶ "List of Members of the Present Legislature," *Indiana Journal*, December 15, 1846, 1, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#); "The Election," *The Indiana State Sentinel*, August 12, 1847, 1, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#). "August Election – Whig Ticket," *The Cambridge Reveille*, July 25, 1848, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#).

⁷ "Marshal of Indiana," *Western Commercial*, April 14, 1849, 2, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#); 1850 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), accessed [Ancestry.com](#); *State Sentinel*, May 19, 1853, 2, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#).

⁸ "Indiana Legislature – 1855," *The Free Democrat*, October 19, 1854, 2, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#).

⁹ "The North American National Convention," *The New York Times*, June 13, 1856, accessed [ProQuest's NY Times, Historical with Index](#).

¹⁰ 1860 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), accessed [Ancestry.com](#); "Affidavit of Witnesses" to widowed state of Mary E. Lester, Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans, ca. 1861-ca. 1910, Record Group 15, National Archives and Records Administration, November 21, 1862, accessed [Fold3](#); "Marriage Certificate" of Edward Good and Elizabeth Dun, *Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans, ca. 1861-ca. 1910*, Record Group 15, NARA, December 16, 1862, accessed [Fold3](#); "Marriage Certificate" of Henderson C. Harris and Sarah A. Ford, *Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans, ca. 1861-ca. 1910*, Record Group 15, NARA, December 29, 1862, accessed [Fold3](#); "Declaration for Widow's Army Pension" of Clarence Elizabeth Dietrich, *Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans, ca. 1861-ca. 1910*, Record Group 15, NARA, February 21, 1863, accessed [Fold3](#); "Marriage Certificate" of Henry Hartup and Eliza Ann Perry, *Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Widows and Other Dependents of Civil War Veterans, ca. 1861-ca. 1910*, Record Group 15, NARA, October 9, 1863, accessed [Fold3](#) [Note: Meredith apparently continued to carry out the duties of the Clerk of the Wayne County Circuit Court while commanding the



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19th Indiana and the Iron Brigade – he finally vacated the office and supported the candidacy of 19th Indiana lieutenant Samuel B. Schlagel in 1864.]; Alan T. Nolan, *The Iron Brigade: A Military History* (Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1975), 20-21; Alan D. Gaff, *On Many a Bloody Field: Four Years in the Iron Brigade* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 19-21.

¹¹ “The News,” *The Indiana State Guard*, July 6, 1861, 2, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#); Gaff, *On Many a Bloody Field*, 19; Nolan, *The Iron Brigade*, 20.

¹² John Gibbon, “Reports of Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, U.S. Army, commanding Fourth Brigade, of the battles of South Mountain and Antietam,” *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* series 1, volume 19, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 247-248, accessed [Making of America](#); Solomon Meredith, “Report of Col. Solomon Meredith, Nineteenth Indiana Infantry, of the battle of South Mountain,” *The War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 19, part 1, 249-250, accessed [Making of America](#); “A Shell Among the Wisconsin Sixth – The Iron Brigade,” *Milwaukee Sentinel* 19: 232, September 27, 1862, accessed [Gale’s Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers](#) [Note: this article is internally dated September 25, 1862, which means someone referred to these regiments as the Iron Brigade as early as 11 days after the battle of South Mountain].

¹³ William H. H. Terrell, *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana 2* (Indianapolis, IN: W. R. Holloway, 1865), xiii, accessed [Internet Archive](#); “Nominations Confirmed,” *Boston Post*, March 10, 1863, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#); “List of general officers as arranged by the War Department,” *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 30, part 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 394-395, accessed [Making of America](#); “Special Orders No. 62,” *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 51, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897), 951, accessed [Making of America](#); Nolan, *The Iron Brigade*, 171-172; Gaff, *On Many a Bloody Field*, 206-207.

¹⁴ Nolan, *The Iron Brigade*, 232.

¹⁵ Abner Doubleday, “Report of Brig. Gen. Abner Doubleday, U.S. Army, commanding First Division,” December 22, 1862, *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 21 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1888), 462-463, accessed [Making of America](#); Solomon Meredith, “Report of Brig. Gen. Solomon Meredith, U.S. Army, commanding Fourth Brigade,” December 22, 1862, *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 21, 475-477, accessed [Making of America](#) [Note: Meredith’s report makes no mention of Doubleday removing him from command; however, the report of Colonel Lysander Cutler, who replaced him for the remainder of the battle, immediately follows Meredith’s and picks up where he left off.]; Lysander Cutler, “Report of Col. Lysander Cutler, Sixth Wisconsin Infantry, commanding Fourth Brigade,” December 17, 1862, *War of the Rebellion*, series 1, volume 21, 478-479, accessed [Making of America](#).

¹⁶ Nolan, *The Iron Brigade*, 184. [Note: In note 45, pg. 347, Nolan argues that while he was unable to discover an official order reinstating Meredith to command after Fredericksburg, it is clear from other sources that the matter was resolved a few days after the battle.]

¹⁷ Solomon Meredith, “Report of Brig. Gen. Solomon Meredith, U.S. Army, commanding Fourth Brigade,” May 28, 1863, *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 25, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), 266-268, accessed [Making of America](#).

¹⁸ William W. Dudley, *The Iron Brigade at Gettysburg: Official Report of the Part Borne by the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 1st Army Corps Army of the Potomac in the Action at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1863* (Cincinnati, OH, 1879); J.V. Wayman, “Surgeon’s Certificate of Disability” for Brigadier General Solomon Meredith,



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August 22, 1863, *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, Main Series, 1861-1870*, Record Group 94, NARA, accessed [Fold3](#); J.V. Wayman, "Surgeon's Certificate of Disability" for Brigadier General Solomon Meredith, September 19, 1863, *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, Main Series, 1861-1870*, Record Group 94, NARA, accessed [Fold3](#); J.V. Wayman, "Surgeon's Certificate of Disability" for Brigadier General Solomon Meredith, October 1, 1863, *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, Main Series, 1861-1870*, Record Group 94, NARA, accessed [Fold3](#); Abner Doubleday, "Reports of Maj. Gen. Abner Doubleday, U.S. Army, commanding Third Division of, and First Army Corps," December 14, 1863, *War of the Rebellion* series 1, volume 27, part 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), 254, accessed [Making of America](#) [Note: Doubleday states in his report that he has not received Meredith's account of the battle of Gettysburg because of his wounds.]; Nolan, *The Iron Brigade*, 243; Gaff, *On Many a Bloody Field*, 263.

¹⁹ "Short Horns: Sale of Gen. Meredith's Herd at Cambridge City," *Chicago Tribune*, May 31, 1875, accessed [Fold3](#). 1870 United States Federal Census (Schedule 1), accessed [Ancestry.com](#).

²⁰ "Washington News," *The New York Times*, August 4, 1866, 1, accessed [ProQuest's NY Times, Historical with Index](#).

²¹ "Political Affairs: Meeting of the National Union Convention," *The New York Times*, August 13, 1866, 8, accessed [ProQuest's NY Times, Historical with Index](#).

²² "News of the Day," *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, April 10, 1867, 4, accessed [Newspaper Archive](#); Charles R. Swart, "Solomon Meredith and the Initial Point of Montana," 2004, http://www.landsurveyor.info/initial_point.htm [Note: Pages on site include transcriptions of telegrams sent to and from Meredith that the author got copies of from the National Archives.]

²³ "Indiana," *The New York Times*, May 29, 1872, 2, accessed [Proquest's NY Times, Historical with Index](#).

²⁴ For some reason, various sources list different dates of his death. These sources list the correct date: "Obituary: Solomon Meredith," *Fort Wayne Daily Sentinel* 15: 252, October 23, 1875, Allen County Library, accessed [Fold3](#); Francis B. Heitman, "Solomon Meredith," *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from It's Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903* 1: 2, Internet Archive, accessed [Fold3](#); and "Obituary: Solomon Meredith – Frederick Hudson – The Hon. R.T. Davis – The Rev. Alexander K. Henly – M.S. Cox," *The Inter Ocean* 4: 181, October 22, 1875, accessed [Gale's Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers](#). "Solomon Meredith," accessed [Find a Grave](#) incorrectly gives his death date as October 2, 1875, but the image of the headstone/memorial states the true date of October 21, 1875. "Solomon Meredith," *Biographical and Genealogical History of Wayne, Fayette, Union, and Franklin Counties, Indiana* 1 (Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1899), 274 [a handwritten note on the copy of the page in the research file states that someone spoke to Virginia Claypool Meredith and she stated that the general died on October 21 (the *History* claims it was October 11) and that he was reinterred in Riverside Cemetery in 1908.].

²⁵ Please see the Virginia Claypool Meredith marker (89.2014.1) research file for sources detailing her work with the farm after her husband's (Solomon Meredith's son) death.