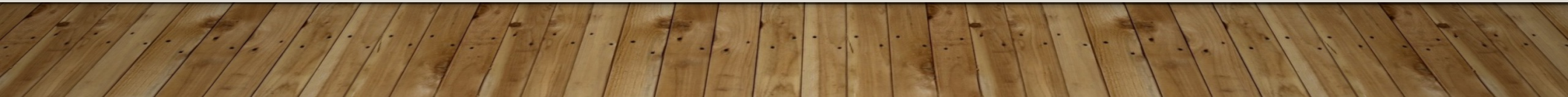


RICES IN THE CIVIL WAR

GEORGE ELDON RICE, CHARLES L. RICE, CHARLES CROCKER, CHARLES MOONEY

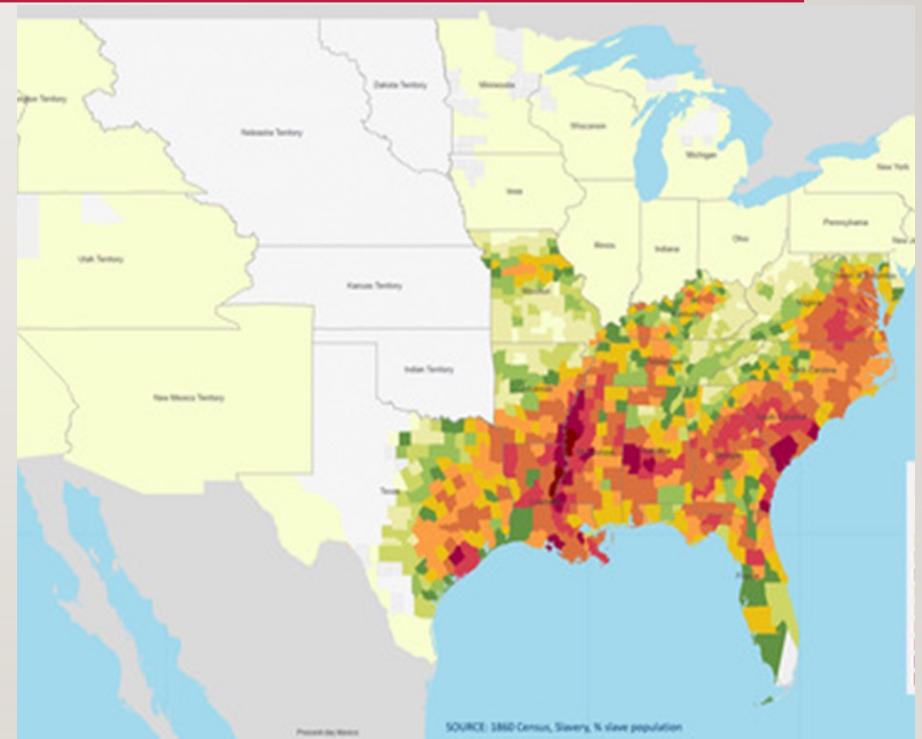
PRESENTATION BY KATHRYN WINTHROP

EDMUND RICE ASSOCIATION, 2024



THE WAR BEGINS

*The war was imminent, nearly every thoughtful American believed...Earth and air seemed to be inflammable, so much so that the merest spark were enough to start a conflagration.
(Memoir of the 5th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, April, 1861)*



WHO FOUGHT? OUR SOLDIERS UNION SIDE

George Eldon Rice—son of
Alphonso and Mary Rice

- My great grandfather

Charles L. Rice—George's
Brother

- My great, great uncle

Charles Crocker—George's
good friend and future brother-
in-law

- My great, great uncle

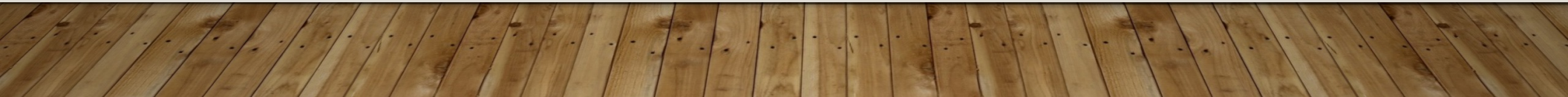
Charles Mooney—My
grandmother Rice's grandfather

- My great, great grandfather

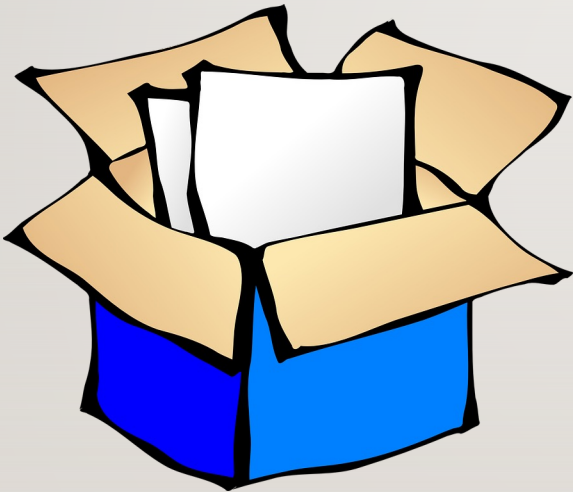
EACH WITH HIS OWN UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

- One at Appomattox for final victory
- Two in the trenches during the Siege of Petersburg
- One served as captain in the United States Colored Troops
- Two spent months sick in army hospitals
- One did not make it to the end
- Who were they?

There will be a quiz at the end!



SOURCES

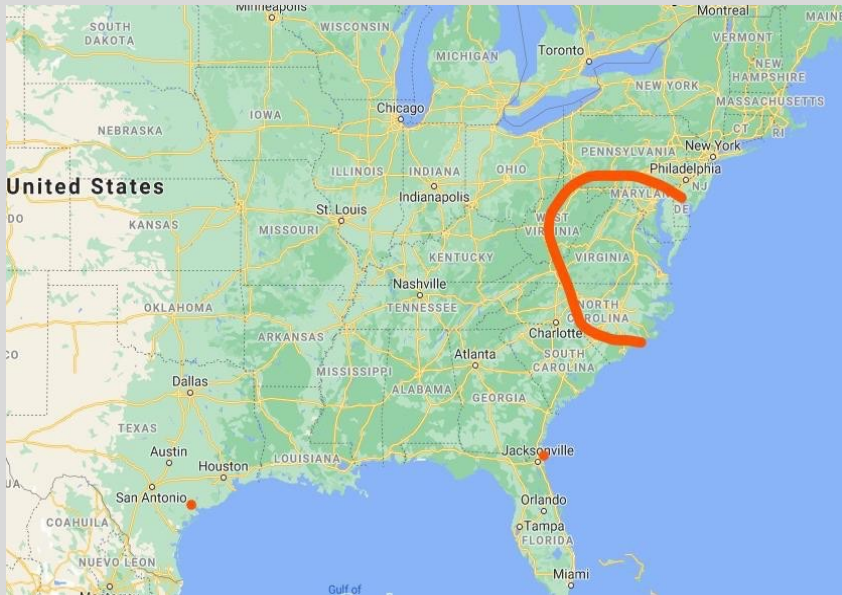


- Family papers
- Family Scrapbook
- Regimental Histories
 - 10th Regiment VT
 - 7th Regiment USCT
 - 5th Mass Voluntary Militia
 - Military Service Records
 - Many historic sources

OUR SOLDIERS

	Birthplace Date	Age	Height	Eye color	Hair Color	Complexion	Occupation	Enlistment Date	Unit	Discharge
GEORGE ELDON RICE	Brookfield, VT 1843	20	5'8"	Dark Blue	Brown	Light	Clerk	August 23, 1864	10 th Regiment, VT Volunteer Infantry Army of the Shenandoah	July 6, 1865
CHARLES H. CROCKER	Thetfield VT 1843	20	5'4"	Blue	Light	Light	Farmer	August 23, 1864	10 th Regiment VT Volunteer Infantry Army of the Shenandoah	Died in battle, Oct. 19, 1864
CHARLES L. RICE	Brookfield, VT 1841	20	5'6"	Blue	Dark	Fair	Farmer	August 8, 1862 October 27, 1863	10 th Regiment VT Volunteer Infantry Army of the Potomoc 7 th Regiment United States Colored Troops	Nov. 3, 1863 Dec. 11, 1866 Brevet Lt. Colonel
CHARLES A. MOONEY	Eaton, NH 1827/28	33	5'10"	Hazel	Brown/ Black	Dark	Painter Soldier	April 19, 1861 Jan. 19, 1862 Feb. 19, 1865, re- enlistment	5 th Mass, Regiment, MA Volunteer Militia 99 th Regiment New York State Volunteers Co. K 99 th New York Veteran Volunteers	July 31, 1861 May 12, 1865, First Sergeant

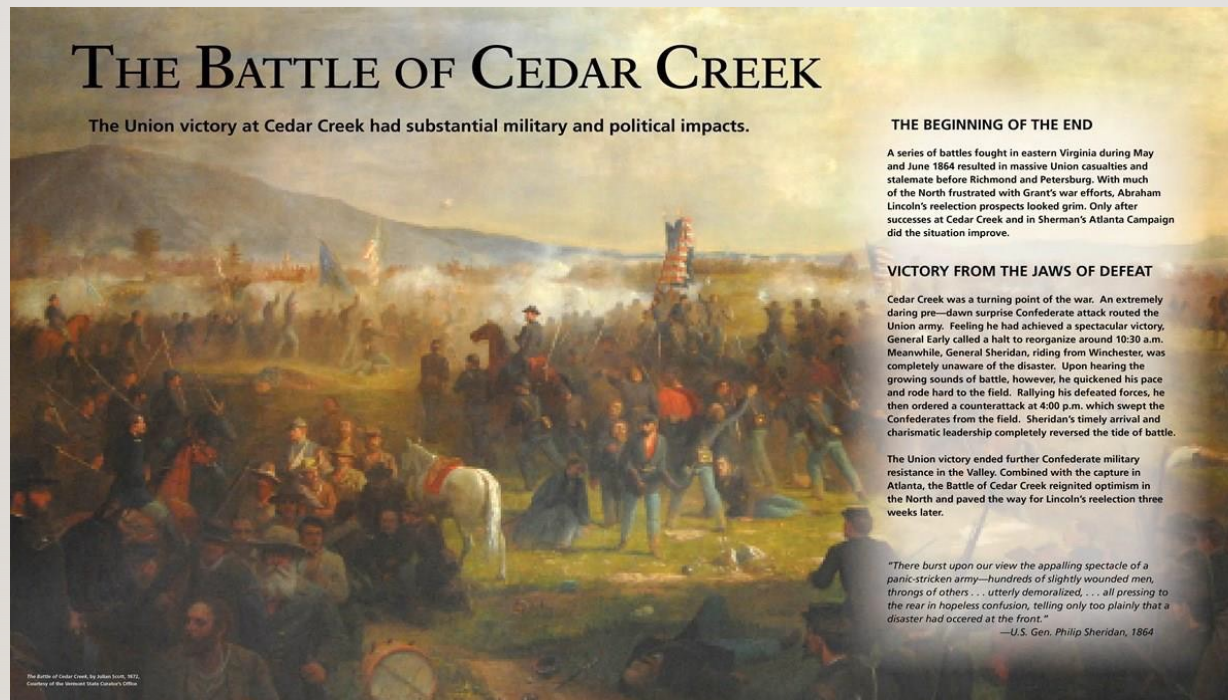
WHERE DID THEY FIGHT?



- **All fought in the Eastern Theatre: MD, VA, DC, NC, SC, PA***
- **Participated in determinative battles in the war**
- **First Bull Run (Union defeat) 1861**
- **New Bern, NC (Victory) 1864**
- **Cedar Creek, VA (Shenandoah Valley) (Victory) 1864**
- **Carolinas' Campaign (Victory) 1865**
- **Petersburg VA siege (Victory) 1864-5**

***Charles Rice: Florida, Texas**

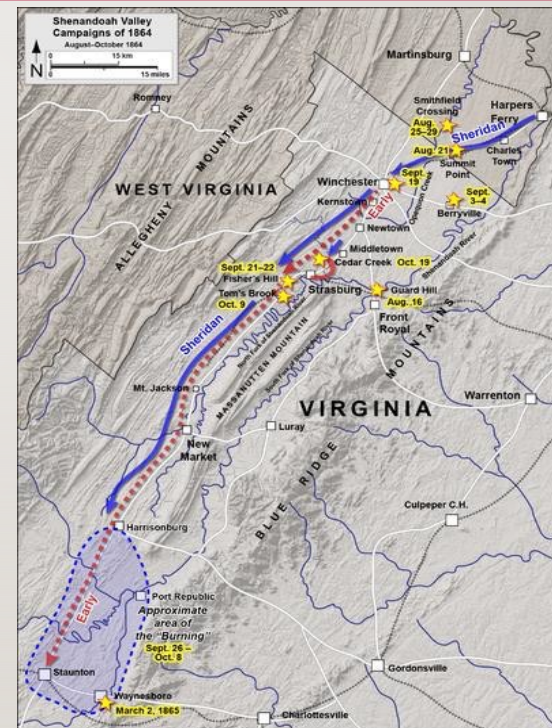
THE BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK, BY JULIAN SCOTT, 1872, COURTESY OF THE VERMONT STATE CURATOR'S OFFICE. VERMONT STATE HOUSE CEDAR ROOM



GEORGE RICE AND CHARLES CROCKER

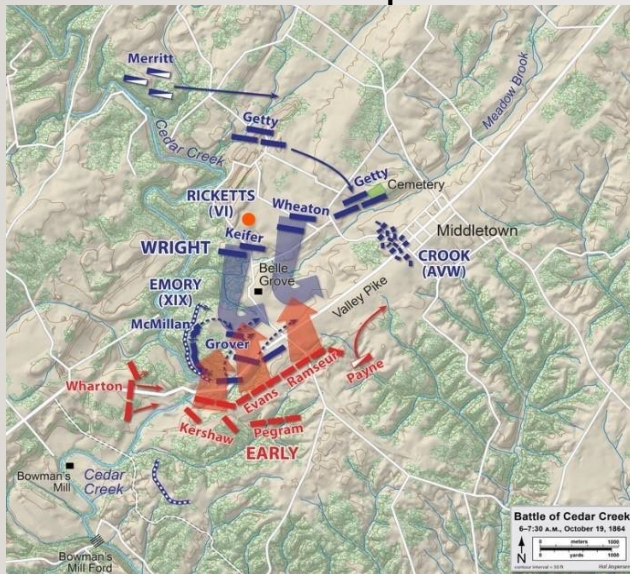
THE BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK OCTOBER 19, 1864

- George and Charles enlist in 10th VT August 1864
- Oct. 16 1864, join the 10th VT, VI Corps, Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah, at Cedar Creek, VA
- Fall 1864:
 - Union defeats leave northern morale flagging
 - Presidential elections looming
 - Confederate war of attrition; hope Lincoln loses election
 - Shenandoah Valley—still in play
 - Union victories in north valley
 - Sheridan thinks territory is won.

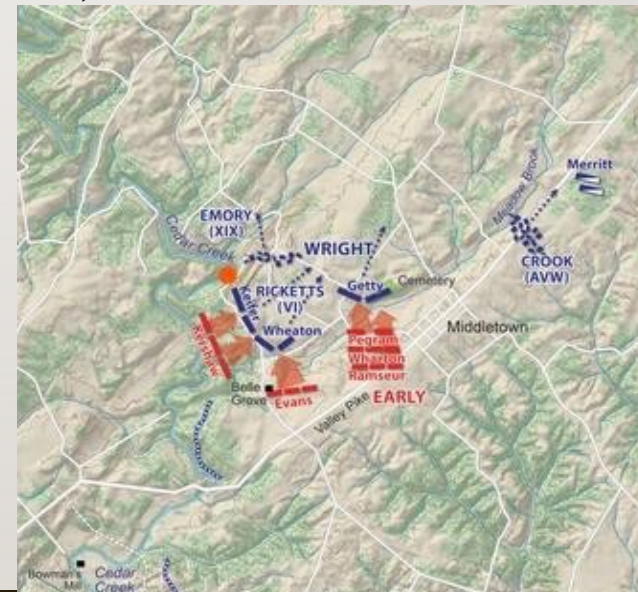


BUT—NOT OVER YET! CONF. GEN EARLY SURPRISE ATTACK. VI CORPS WITH 10TH VT HOLDS THE LINE OCT. 19

5:30 am Confederate surprise attack .
Frontline Union troops retreat.



9:30 a.m. VI Corp with 10th VT hold the line, under Col. Keifer.



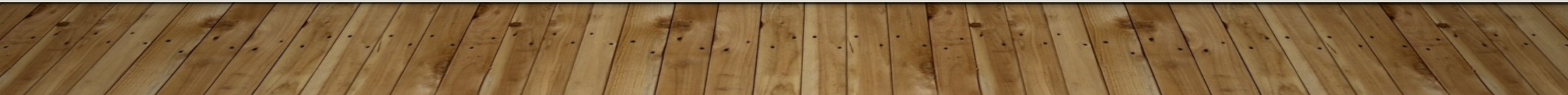
GEORGE ELDON RICE AND CHARLES CROCKER IN THE THICK OF IT

Newly arrived to the regiment, this was their first battle. Here is what happened (from the 10th VT Regimental History). George Rice marked the following passage covering his and Charles' experience during this battle:

Now it happened when we fell back that three guns [from their retreating forces] ...had been left in position. The rebels at once took possession of them and were in the act of turning them upon us, whereupon a charge was ordered to recover them...The regiment advanced swiftly through a hail of bullets...recaptured the guns...We maintained this position too long. The enemy coming up in heavier force, pouring destructive fire...we should have gone back at once...we suffered terribly in this adventure. But the enemy had met with his first repulse, and the manifest lack of confidence with which he fought afterwards, until his whole force hesitated...began to show itself at this point.

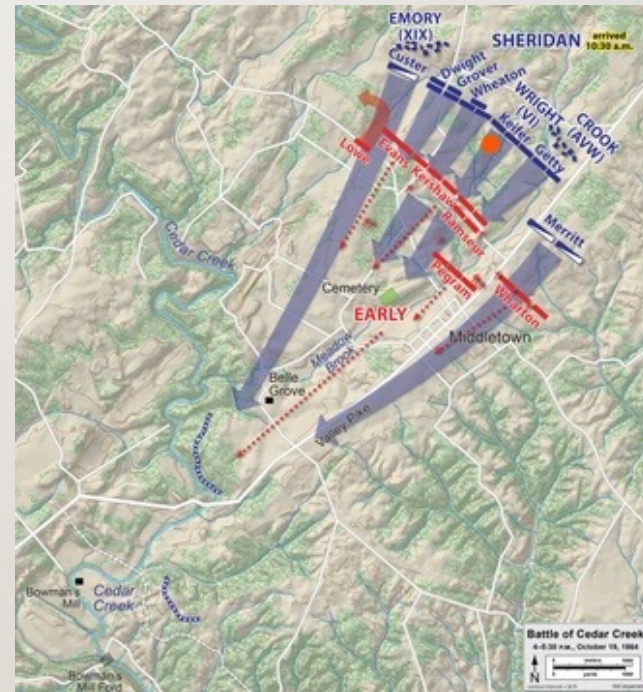
My grandmother also annotated this passage with this note:

"Father Rice fought in this battle with Charles Crocker, who was shot [in the head] down beside him. They were sharpshooters in the front ranks."



VICTORY AT THE END

- Sherman arrives mid-day
- Confederates demoralized, hungry and tired
- Union Troops regroup
 - (including Keifer's Division)
- Fight to victory
- Union Gains control of Shenandoah
- Lincoln Wins election!





- At end of that day, the 10th VT soldiers buried their fallen comrades in the corner of a local farm, marking the graves with name, company and regiment, on a piece of cracker-box with led pencil
- Soldiers later re-interred in the nearby National Cemetery in Winchester, VA
- Battle field is National Historic Park today:
- <https://www.nps.gov/thingstodo/cebe-battlefield-auto-tour.htm>

THE WAR WAS NOT OVER FOR GEORGE RICE: WITH THE 10TH VT IN THE TRENCHES AT PETERSBURG THE MISERY OF TRENCH WARFARE

[We]..moved in a terrible storm of snow and rain...to the Weldon Railroad...after standing in line of battle, in half-frozen mud and water from eight o'clock to two in the afternoon we moved...to Fort Duschane...here we remained through terrible cold weather, much exposed, and it required a great amount of grumbling to while away the very monotony of our stay...



Swampy woods near Petersburg. "The worst piece of woods I ever saw," one Union officer remarked.



SICKNESS AND THE CIVIL WAR FINLEY HOSPITAL WASHINGTON DC



Illness: major cause of death in Civil War

George sick by early April 1865, missed the end of the war.

At Finley Hospital in Washington DC

Walt Whitman quote: *That little town...off there... is indeed a town, but of wounds, sickness, and death. It is Finley Hospital...*

We are lucky George survived. Tough bunch, those Rices.

George mustered out in July, and went home and married Charles Crocker's sister, Mary.

CHARLES L. RICE –A DIFFERENT SERVICE:THE UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS

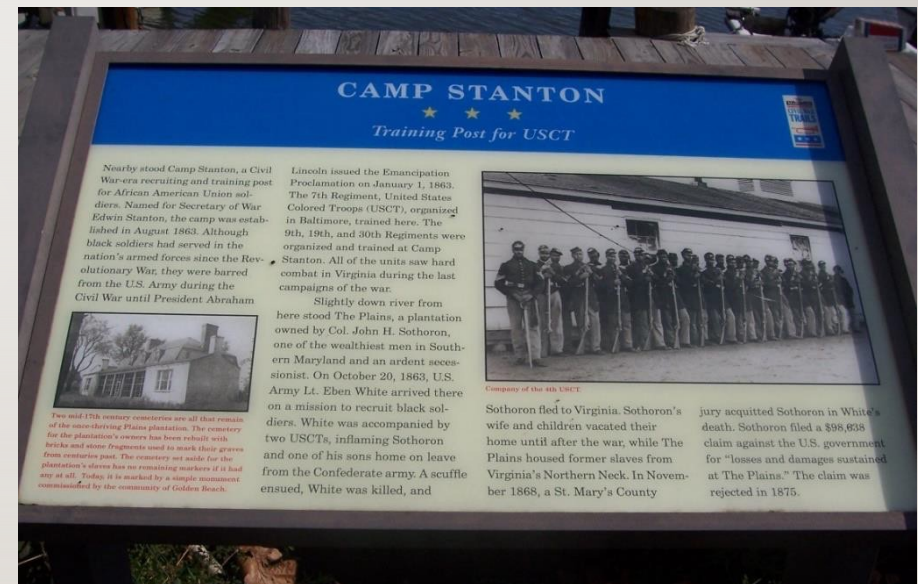
A grainy portrait of a young and earnest
Captain Charles



- 1862 Enlisted in 10th VT.
- Fall 1863 recruited to serve as Captain in the 7th Regiment USCT
- Rigorous vetting process for officers
- About 200,000 soldiers and sailors
- Huge contribution to war effort

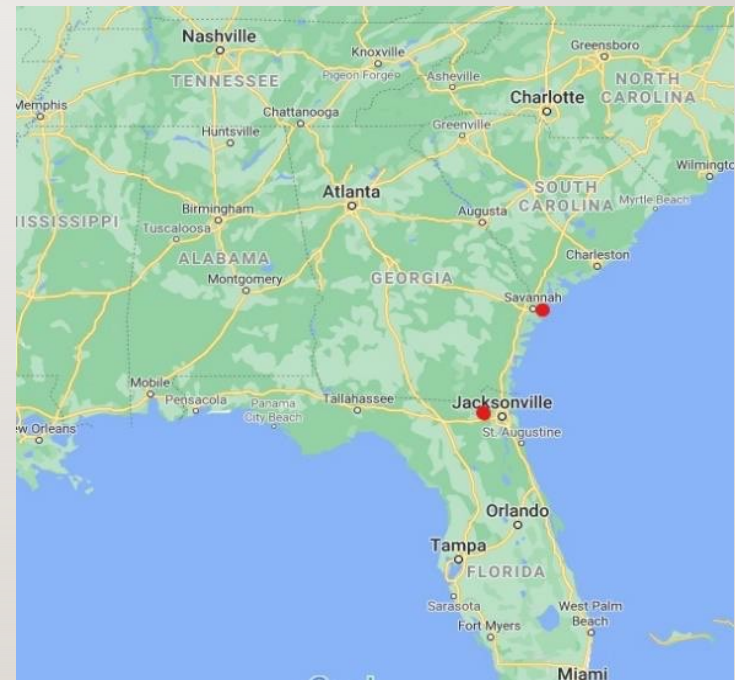
7TH REGIMENT USCT TRAINING CAMP STANTON, MD

- 7TH Regiment: Col. Shaw commander
 - Solders were slaves, from plantations in MD and VA, Baltimore jails.
 - Many had never seen the world beyond their plantation
 - None had any schooling.
- Camp Stanton Oct. 1863 – March 1864 Regimental training:
 - Military
 - Schooling
 - Citizenship
 - “The eagerness of the men to learn ...was really painful to witness...”
- Most could read and write by end of service
- The 7th became known for its courage and fighting



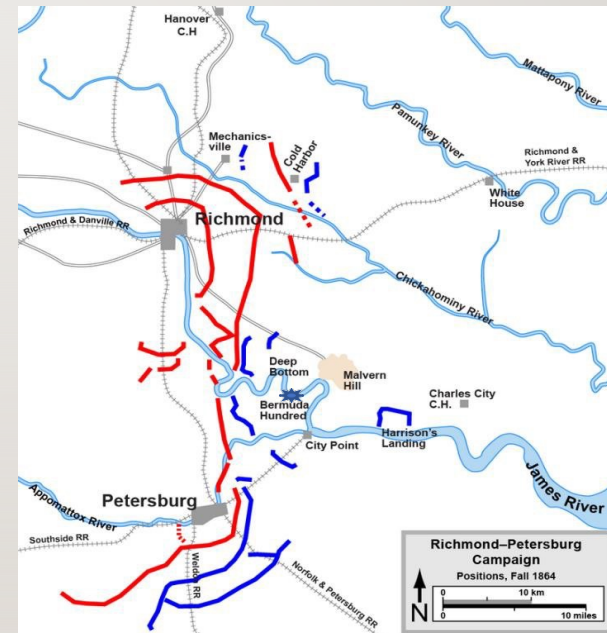
7TH REGIMENT TOUR OF DUTY

- **March 1864: Florida—Jacksonville**
 - **Support coastal blockade**
 - **Skirmishes and fights**
 - **June 14, 1863, Charles became ill, in hospital for several months**
 - **7th hailed as “best colored regiment in the service” (Gen Gordon)**



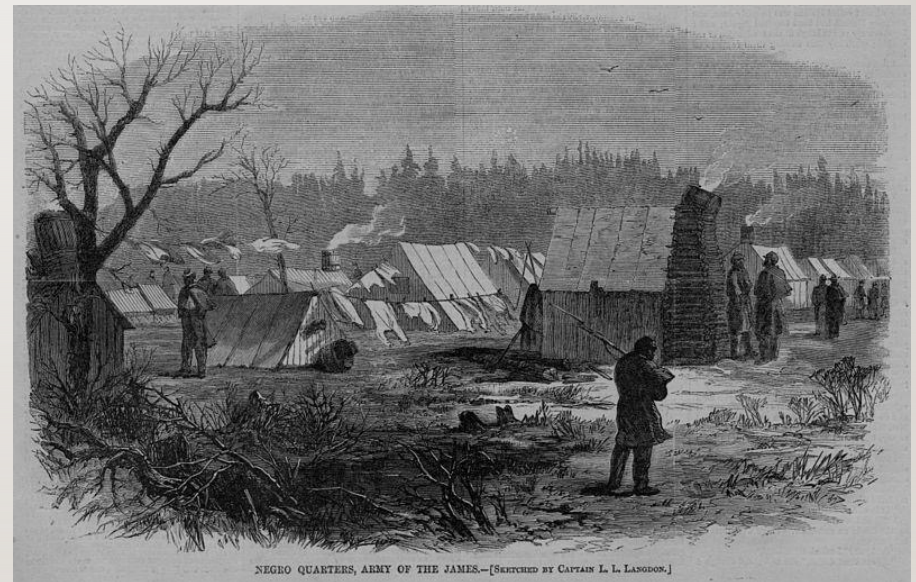
7TH IN VIRGINIA AUGUST 1864

- **August 1864 , 7th posted to VA; Charles still sick in FL**
- **Push by Grant weaken and take Richmond and Petersburg VA.**
- **7th without Charles participates in fierce fighting near Petersburg.**
- **Charles returns Oct. 6, after these battles**
- **His company eliminated a few days before his return: his soldiers killed or imprisoned, and the officers in prison**



THE FINAL ACT

- Charles rejoins 7th USCT in Petersburg trenches
- **March 1865—Gen. Grant moves in all available forces for final battles.**
- **Charles promoted to Acting Assistant Inspector General for the brigade under Col. Shaw; 7th Regiment part of the unit.**
- **April 1, 1865: Grant orders all forces at Petersburg and Richmond to begin bombardment of Confederate lines, through the night.**
- **April 3, Union takes Petersburg and Richmond**
- **April 3 – 9th: Grant Pursues Lee's armies fighting to Appomattox**
- **April 9, 1865 Confederate surrender at Appomattox**



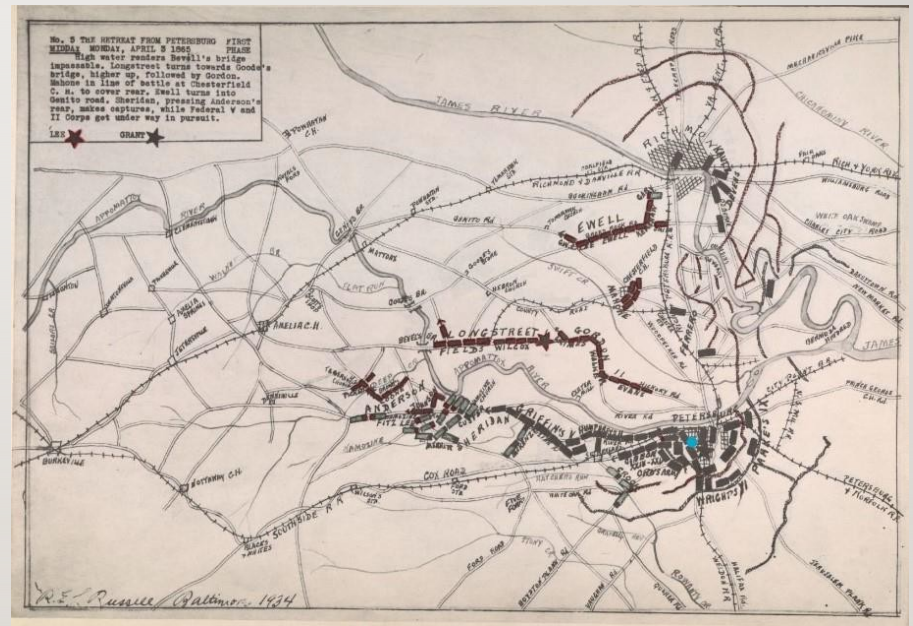


**Midnight before
Petersburg.
Sketch by Army
draftsman
April 1-2, 1865**

April 1-2 ,1865 Suddenly there burst upon the air the most terrific pandemonium of sound. From our [Union] lines in front of Richmond...to our own front, every battery and every gun opened the rebel line. No words can describe the effect..." [Califf, day-to-day diary of this week]

AFTER LONG WEARY MONTHS IN THE TRENCHES PETERSBURG FALLS!

- April 3, morning: 7th Regiment among first to enter Petersburg
- Grant and Union armies pursue Lee and Confederates to Appomattox, VA
- Map series: Russell, 1934 LOC



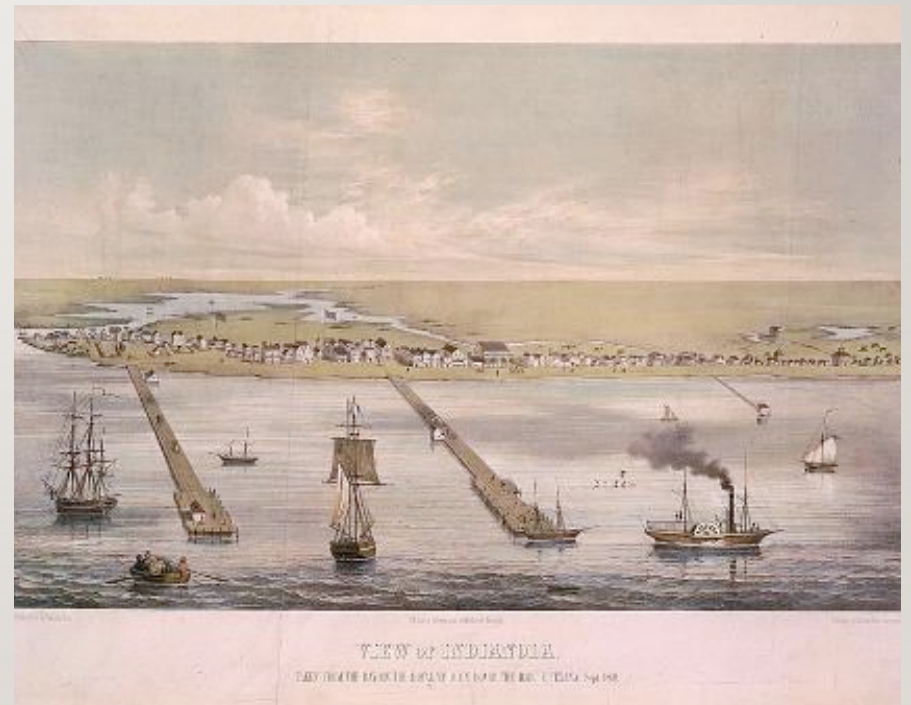
CHARLES L. RICE AT APPOMATTOX

- **April 9, 1865: By 4:00, Gen. Lee's surrender to Gen. Grant at Appomattox**
- **The 7th Regiment about 5 miles out from Appomattox.**
- **Col Shaw sends Charles: *I have sent Captain Rice, assistant inspector-general, with my report to headquarters (Appomattox Courthouse).***
- **I like to think of Charles, riding in for the final act!**

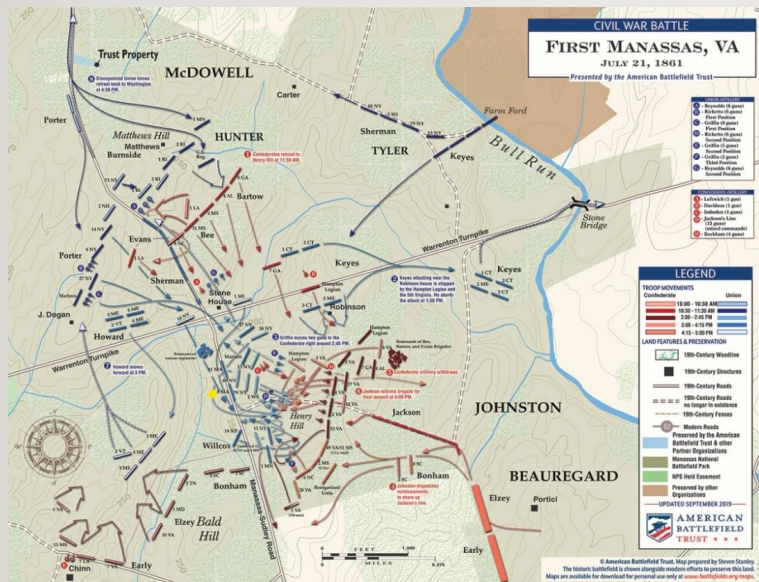


TEXAS AND RECONSTRUCTION

- Charles did not go home yet.
- The 7th was assigned duty in Texas
- Brigade HQ in Indianola with 7th Regiment
- Keeping the peace and protecting all civilians
- Charles took leave to get married.
- Went home with his troops in October, 1866
- Awarded promotion to Lt. Colonel by brevet.
- He used this title proudly for the rest of his life.



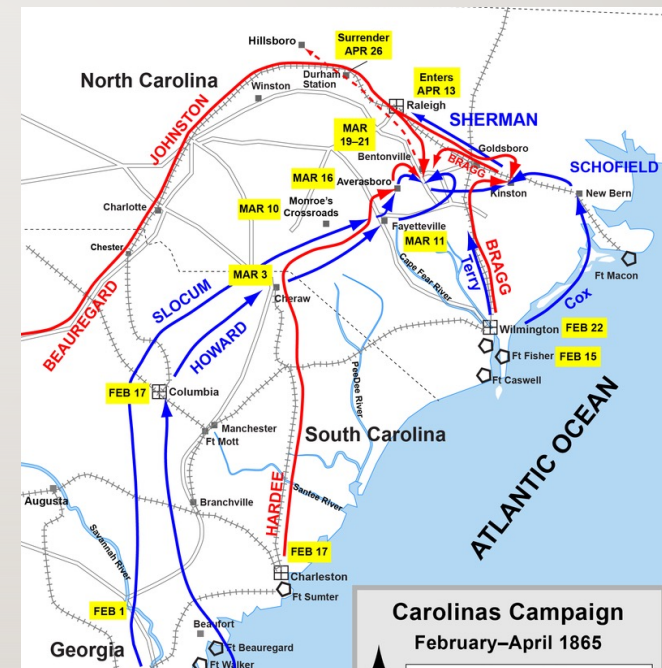
CHARLES MOONEY ENLISTED THE 1ST WEEK AFTER PRESIDENT LINCOLN ASKED FOR VOLUNTEERS



- April 19, 1861: At age 33, enlisted for 3 months in Boston in the 5th Mass. Militia, a few days after Lincoln's call for troops after attack at Ft. Sumter.
- The 5th Mass trained in Washington DC in 1st weeks of war.
- Fought at 1st Manassas (1st Bull Run), 1st major battle of the Civil War (July 1861).
- A disastrous battle due to incompetent leaders and green troops.

CHARLES MOONEY AT RALEIGH—THE LAST BATTLE

- Jan. 1862 enlisted in the 99th New York Regiment; Ft. Monroe and then the Peninsular campaign of 1862-3.
- Oct. 1863 99th at New Bern, NC, important supply area for Conf. Hold area against Conf. attacks.
- 1865 Fought in North Carolina, under General Sherman at the culmination of the Carolinas Campaign.
- Was present at the final defeat of Gen. Johnston's army--the only significant Confederate force left--at Raleigh, NC, April 13, 1865.
- Sargeant, promoted several times.



HOME AT LAST AFTER THE WAR



Eight Children of
Mary Submit & George Eldon Rice

WILL MABEL EDITH ERNST HEBERT MERTIE EUGENE
ARTHUR



Charles Rice (Brevet Lt. Colonel) returned with Hattie to Rockland MA, raised 7 children. Died 1915. He was a pillar of the community with many civic accomplishments. Yet the only thing he has on his headstone is his service in the USCT. It must have meant a lot to him.

George Eldon Rice (Private) married Mary Crocker (sister of the late Charles) 9/10/1865 (8 children); moved on to farm in Iowa, then to Malden, MA, then on to California where their children had moved. Died 1929 (Mary in 1939)

- Charles Mooney mustered out as acting Sergeant Major 7/15/1865. In 1870 he was living in Malden, MA, with his wife Louisa and daughter, working as a paper hanger. He died 1881.

IN CLOSING

- Here they are, each with a unique story:
- George Rice and Charles Crocker, with their youthful heroism and sacrifice
- Charles L. Rice and the astonishing fact that he served with an all-Black regiment
- Charles Mooney—first to enlist, and last to finish, who surely found his footing as a soldier
- Together their service gave a window into a soldier's experience—loss and triumph, death, disease, loneliness, and the long slog through months and years of marching, fighting, boredom, and victory.
- We owe them our respect, and remembrance.