

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain (1828-1914)

Here is a time-line of some events in that era

Please note especially the effect of the Bible and Gospel preaching on the soldiers during the Civil War

1830–1831: Charles Finney spurs great revival in Rochester, NY; crime drops and taverns go out of business

1830: Daniel Webster debates states' rights in Senate

1836: Martin Van Buren president

1837: Telegraph invented; Victoria queen of England

1838: Underground Railroad established

1840: Benjamin Harrison elected president; first postage stamps (3 cents). Missionary David Livingstone sails for Africa

1841: John Tyler becomes president

1844: James K. Polk elected president

1846-48: Mexican-American War

1848: Zachary Taylor elected president; Marx's *Communist Manifesto*

1850: The Compromise of 1850 enacted; Millard Fillmore president; U.S. population reaches 23 million (3.2 million slaves)

1852: Franklin Pierce elected president; Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

1855: Dwight L. Moody converted

1856: James Buchanan elected president

1857: Dred Scott decision: Supreme Court rules that a "Negro" descended from slaves is not a citizen

1858: The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

1860: Abraham Lincoln elected president; South Carolina secedes from Union (Dec. 20)

1861: U.S. Christian Commission founded; Scripture and tract distribution to soldiers begins (over 11,000,000 the first year). Fort Sumter fired on (Apr. 12); in first battle of Bull Run (Manassas), Confederates rout Union forces

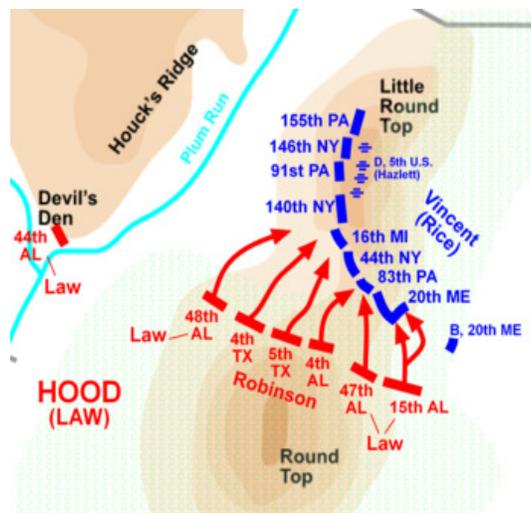
1862: Revivals begin in regiments from Georgia; Julia Ward Howe writes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Union wins control of Mississippi River;

1863: The "Great Revival" throughout the Confederate Army; revivals begin in the Union Army; U.S. Christian Commission reports over 18,000,000 tracts and Scripture portions distributed to soldiers. Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation; 50,000 casualties at Gettysburg; Gettysburg Address (Nov. 19); Lincoln proposes national day of Thanksgiving

1864: Revival in General Lee's Army of Northern VA interrupted by Grant's attack; "In God We Trust" first put on U.S. coin; Lincoln reelected; Sherman's march through Georgia

1865: Estimates of 150,000 conversions in the Confederate Army, and perhaps as many in the Union Army; Hudson Taylor begins China Inland Mission. Lee surrenders at Appomattox (Apr. 9); Lincoln dies (Apr. 15); Andrew Johnson becomes president;

1867: General Howard helps found Howard Theological Seminary for African-Americans



Battle of Little Round Top: Initial Assault

JOSHUA LAWRENCE CHAMBERLAIN was born on September 8, 1828, in Brewer, ME, the oldest of 5 children. He entered Bowdoin College in Brunswick in 1848 after teaching himself to read Ancient Greek in order to pass the entrance exam. While at Bowdoin he met many people who would influence his life, including Harriet Beecher Stowe. Chamberlain would often go to listen to her read passages from what would later become her celebrated novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. While a student in Bowdoin, Chamberlain wrote in a letter dated May 5th, 1848: **"It seems to me that engaging in God's service is a delightful employment and that my resolution to serve Him is strengthening every day."**

A member of the Phi Beta Kappa academic honor society and a brother of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity, Chamberlain graduated in 1852. Eventually he returned to Bowdoin as a professor and was there until 1862, when he was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the 20th Maine volunteers.

During the war, while leading his men in an attack against Confederate defenses outside Petersburg, he was shot through the hip. In a field hospital three miles behind Union lines, Chamberlain lay on what he thought was his deathbed. On two sides of a small piece of paper, he wrote a farewell note to his wife. The original is in the Hawthorne-Longfellow library at Bowdoin College. One can still see evidence of bloodstains on it after over 140 years. He wrote (punctuation and bold-face added):

*"My darling wife I am lying mortally wounded the doctors think, but my mind & heart are at peace. **Jesus Christ is my all-sufficient Savior. I go to Him.** God bless & keep & comfort you, precious one. You have been a precious wife to me. To know & love you makes life & death beautiful. Cherish the darlings & give my love to all the dear ones. Do not grieve too much for me. **We shall all soon meet.** Live for the children. Give my dearest love to Father, Mother, & Sallie & John. **Oh how happy to feel yourself forgiven.** God bless you evermore precious, precious one. Ever yours, Lawrence."*

Chamberlain survived these wounds and returned to command his troops. By the end of the war, this former professor of theology and logic had been wounded 6 times, promoted twice in the field for valor, commanded troops in 24 battles, 8 reconnaissance missions, and innumerable skirmishes; he had captured 2,700 prisoners and 8 battle flags. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism at Gettysburg. At Appomattox, brevet Major General Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain received the formal surrender of the Confederate infantry. To everyone's surprise, he ordered a salute of respect for his vanquished foes. This noble gesture amazed both North and South and contributed to the healing of a wounded nation.

Chamberlain died February 24, 1914. At his funeral, Dr. Jesse Hill of Portland said:

"At a recent celebration of his birthday, surrounded by a company of his choice friends, I tried to voice their congratulations as we drank to his health. The occasion stirred his fine nature to action, the fire came back into his eyes, while he repeated, in the Hebrew language, with all the majestic music and passion of that tongue, these beautiful words: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'"

Just to test your observational skills...

In a speech to veterans of 20th Maine, he said:

"This is the great reward of service, to live, far out and on, in the life of others; this is the mystery of Christ, -- to give life's best for such high sake that it shall be found again unto life eternal."

If you search hard enough you can find that quote intact. However, this is what Bowdoin College has highlighted on its web site at <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/joshua-lawrence-chamberlain/>

"This is the great reward of service. To live, far out and on, in the life of others; ... to give life's best for such high sake that it shall be found again unto life eternal."

Can you find what is missing? And why is it not there?