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Longstreet's Attack from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods

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Longstreet's Attack from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods

Abstract

This is an overview of a theoretical tour at Gettysburg focusing on Longstreet's attack on the second day from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods. The three tour stops are the Mississippi Monument on West Confederate Avenue, the Peach Orchard, and photos of dead Confederate soldiers in the Rose Woods. After a brief overview of the attack, the paper introduces several questions raised by the historical landscape concerning the sense of history it conveys, how well the landscape currently reflects the experiences of soldiers, what drove soldiers to fight, and how the landscape expresses its own changing meanings. The paper then presents four main themes that will guide the tour: the significance of the attack, the tension between the pastoral landscape and the savagery of the battle, the role of Sentimental culture, and the use of photography. An analysis of each tour stop follows, using these questions and themes to provide a new level of complexity to the interpretation of the stops and to complicate the dominant narrative of Gettysburg.

Keywords

Gettysburg, Longstreet, Mississippi Monument, Peach Orchard, Rose Woods

Disciplines

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Comments

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Longstreet's Attack from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods

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History 347

Interpreting a Commemorative Landscape

May 9, 2017

Tours are a popular form of education and entertainment at historical sites like Gettysburg Battlefield that visitors seek out in order to understand the events that took place there. At Gettysburg, one potential tour might highlight General Longstreet's attack from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods. The route of this tour would encompass the Mississippi Monument, the Peach Orchard, and finally the photos of dead Confederate soldiers in the Rose Woods. By questioning the dominant narrative of these places and focusing on the importance of this area of the assault, the savagery of the battle, the Sentimental culture of the period, and the use of photographs, this tour would help to create a more nuanced understanding of Longstreet's assault and the soldiers who fought in it.

Longstreet's assault from Seminary Ridge took place on July 2nd. The Confederate troops had fought well during the first day of the battle. The Union forces were beaten, but managed to occupy most of the high ground south of town, stretching from Little Round Top to the curve around the top of Cemetery Hill, forming the so-called "fish-hook."¹ Despite the day's success, General Lee was initially uncertain about his chances for the major victory on Northern soil that he desired.² Such a victory would require use of the high ground currently in Union hands. Longstreet's assault was an attempt to seize control of this land.

The assault itself is shrouded in some controversy. In the years after the war, Longstreet was accused by his political enemies, Jubal Early foremost among them, of having ignored a command to begin the assault at sunrise. They believed Longstreet was reluctant to attack and dragged his feet until four o'clock in the afternoon.³ Longstreet vigorously denied this. He claimed that when he left Lee on the night of July 1st, he had no orders begin the attack at a

1. Stephen Sears, *Gettysburg* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 225, 226.

2. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 229.

3. Jubal A. Early, "Reply to General Longstreet," in *Lee the Soldier*, ed. Gary Gallagher (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 416-417.

specific time. The lengthy delay, he stated, was in fact caused by an agonizingly slow march the next day.⁴ Regardless of the cause of the delay, by the time the attack began the Union positions had been reinforced. The attack was staggered, beginning in the south where the focus was on Little Round Top. As the fighting there began to reach a climax, it spread northward towards the John Rose farm and the Peach Orchard.⁵

The Peach Orchard was a serious vulnerability in the Union line that the Confederates hoped to exploit. One Union corps under Major General Daniel Sickles had moved forward into the Peach Orchard, about half a mile beyond the rest of the line on Cemetery Ridge, putting them in range of Confederate artillery.⁶ It was the site of deadly fire coming from both sides. The Confederate artillery finally ceased to allow William Barksdale's Mississippians to advance. The Union troops in his path consisted of Pennsylvania infantry and a Rhode Island battery. Barksdale and his men broke through a gap in this Union line, fragmenting the Federals and forcing them to scatter. He continued ahead northward for nearly a mile, his men sustaining heavy casualties, but he refused to turn back. His men captured several Union cannon but as they were attempting to turn them, they were caught in a fierce Union charge during which Barksdale was killed.⁷

More Confederate troops followed through the Peach Orchard, making their way as far as the Wheatfield.⁸ A Georgia brigade and a South Carolina brigade advanced through the Rose Woods into the Wheatfield, but faced intense resistance by Union troops. The Confederates were driven back across open fields, but regrouped and attempted to retake the woods, facing heavy

4. James Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," in *Lee the Soldier*, ed. Gary Gallagher (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 387-389.

5. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 283-284.

6. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 263.

7. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 298-299, 319.

8. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 302.

gunfire in the process. Eventually, however, they were able to overwhelm the Union forces here and were only pushed out on the evening of July 3rd.⁹

Fierce fighting erupted throughout the area around the woods, the Wheatfield, and the Peach Orchard, and the Confederates seemed to be gaining the upper hand. General Meade attempted to reinforce his troops here with men from his right wing, which was not under immediate threat. He hoped to prevent Longstreet from completely puncturing the already shattered Union lines.¹⁰ Union troops were stretched thinly across the gap that had opened on their front, but found themselves engaged in a slaughter with Georgian and Floridian troops.¹¹ However, the tide of the battle soon began to turn in favor of the Union. The death of Barksdale, the arrival of fresh Union reinforcements, and Longstreet's lack of reserves to hold most of what had been captured during the day finally forced Longstreet to pull his troops back.¹²

After several hours of fighting, Longstreet had lost significant numbers of men and had very little to show for it. Meade and his Union troops, on the other hand, had come perilously close to a second defeat but managed to achieve victory, giving the troops a morale-boost after the previous day's loss. This victory also kept them in a favorable tactical position as the third and final day of the battle dawned, when they would decisively defeat Lee's army and force him to retreat from Pennsylvania.

Today, the area of and around the Peach Orchard and the Rose Woods has little monumentation to mark where this brutal battle took place. This is rather surprising, given the importance of this area and that the Peach Orchard is a fairly well-known part of the battlefield. A few National Park Service waysides are provided to orient the visitor's gaze. The wayside in

9. William Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 199-200.

10. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 312-313.

11. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 314.

12. Sears, *Gettysburg*, 320-322.

the Peach Orchard gives a brief overview of the fighting there, explaining how Sickles moved his men into the Peach Orchard without orders to do so, and then making note of two Confederate attacks, the second and successful one being that of Barksdale.¹³

This wayside ultimately upholds a traditional view of the battle as heroic and glorious through nearly all of the methods J. Christian Spielvogel identifies as problematic with National Park Service waysides: condensing individual soldiers into colossal, metaphorical bodies, represented by generals or other commanding officers; framing killing as a secondary goal to some other objective, and through the lens of heroic masculinity; removing the human agents of killing; and using quotations from soldiers or officers to support these other perspectives.¹⁴ The Peach Orchard wayside identifies several officers, such as Sickles, but there is only one specific mention of the soldiers they commanded, which was that Sickles was in charge of 10,000 men. All others are simply assumed to have been there. The primary goal identified on the wayside is the defense and capture of the Peach Orchard, and where it references killing, it uses imprecise language such as “shredded by rapid rounds of Union canister.”¹⁵ Here, the wayside gives no indication of even approximately how many men were killed, and it removes the Union soldiers from the killing, giving agency to the canister rather than the men who fired it. Later, the wayside remarks that “the Rebels drove the Union defenders back toward Cemetery Ridge.”¹⁶ This removes the idea of wounding or killing altogether, suggesting that there were somehow no injuries sustained during this part of the battle. Finally, the wayside begins with a quote from General Meade remarking on the pointlessness of Sickles’s maneuver, saying that it nearly

13. “The Peach Orchard Salient,” wayside, National Park Service, April 27, 2017.

14. J. Christian Spielvogel, *Interpreting Sacred Ground: The Rhetoric of National Civil War Parks and Battlefields* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2013), 98-99.

15. “The Peach Orchard Salient.”

16. “The Peach Orchard Salient.”

destroyed his corps and gained him no benefits.¹⁷ This upholds the views presented in the rest of the wayside, identifying Sickles as the head of his metaphorical body of troops, and obscuring the human loss sustained by Sickles's recklessness by discussing the destruction of the corps as if it were not made up of individual soldiers.

For the most part, the visitor must rely on the scenery of the landscape itself, which upholds the kind of message seen on the Peach Orchard wayside by further obscuring the savagery of war. The battlefield at Gettysburg ranges from well-manicured and park-like to a more pastoral, but not wild, landscape, evoking stereotypical images of the old South and its rural lifestyle that so appealed to Northerners after the war and helped build sentiment in favor of white reconciliation.¹⁸ The Peach Orchard and the field by the Rose Woods, in particular, are suggestive of farm life. There is very little to suggest that these areas were once the grounds of such extreme violence that the Peach Orchard, with its mundane but bucolic name, would one day become synonymous with brutal fighting and death. The landscape seeks to integrate the human violence of war into the natural order of the world, and thus to tranquilize the war and deemphasize the horror of battle.¹⁹ Off in the distance a visitor might spot an observation tower, which is reminiscent of the cupolas or other structures used by generals to survey the field. These towers both invite the visitor to adopt such a perspective, and also to admire the picturesque nature of the battlefield today. All of these aspects of the landscape combine to beg a few main questions concerning the experience of visitors to Gettysburg.

One such question is, what sense of history does the historical landscape where Longstreet's assault took place convey? David Glassberg defines a "sense of history" as something that connects and locates individuals and stories in space, time, and society. This

17. "The Peach Orchard Salient."

18. Spielvogel, *Interpreting Sacred Ground*, 112.

19. Spielvogel, *Interpreting Sacred Ground*, 109, 113.

sense can be influenced by politics, pop culture, and the study of a place or environment, all of which give meaning to places, people, and events.²⁰ In Gettysburg, a visitor's sense of history is guided by monuments, waysides, and the landscape. There are a limited number of waysides and monuments around the Peach Orchard and the Rose Woods, but those that are there uphold a traditional narrative of heroic masculinity and courage in conjunction with the landscape. These ideas are further supported by popular media, such as the novel *The Killer Angels* or the movie *Gettysburg*. However, there is certainly more to the story than this. By questioning the dominant narrative that the National Park Service conveys, a different sense of history can begin to emerge, one that emphasizes rather than decentralizes the experiences and struggles of individuals engaged in a brutal battle.

At the same time, another question my concern how well the National Park Service narrative already expresses the experiences of soldiers and how they thought about the battle. Spielvogel, as mentioned before, believes that the dominant narrative at Gettysburg ignores or obscures the savage reality of the battle in favor of a more sanitized, glorified vision. Other writers, such as Drew Gilpin Faust and Gerald F. Lindermann, seem to suggest something slightly different. Both authors discuss aspects of the American Sentimental culture in the mid-nineteenth century. The idea of the Good Death, for example, emphasized the art of dying and guided how people were expected to prepare for their deaths.²¹ More than that, men within this culture held the values of courage, manliness, godliness, personal heroism, and honor in high regard and tried to live their lives by them.²² Modern visitors to Gettysburg, immersed in more

20. David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 7-8.

21. Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 6.

22. Gerald F. Linderman, *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 8-11, 16.

disillusioned and perhaps cynical culture, may find those ideas held by Civil War soldiers to be naïve or quaint, but it is important to take them into consideration. Savagery and Sentimentalism reflect two sides of the same coin, and in some cases even align. Sentimentalists viewed some deaths as Good Deaths and others as bad, while those interested in savagery no doubt view all deaths as bad. To what extent, then, is it appropriate to look for the savagery in battle, or to rely on Sentimental voices to guide us? Both must be acknowledged, but neither to the exclusion of the other.

Another question may be, what drove men to fight? The values Lindermann associates with Civil War soldiers – courage, piety, manliness, honor – offer some clues. Certainly there were men on each side who felt they were fighting for a righteous cause. Paul Jones Semmes, for example, expressed his faith, bordering on zealotry, that God supported the Confederate cause.²³ The war also offered a chance to show off one's courage and honor. But the same values could not have inspired every soldier. Many men volunteered as substitutes, intending, no doubt, to collect a bounty of three hundred dollars.²⁴ Clearly, there were many motivations to go to war.

Finally, how, if at all, does the historical landscape of Longstreet's attack from Seminary Ridge reflect its own changing purpose or message? It is easy to visit Gettysburg and think that it transitioned easily and even instantaneously from battlefield to battlefield park in the form we see it today. But Jim Weeks reveals how attitudes concerning the battlefield have been shaped and changed since 1863, going from a pleasure ground, first for the genteel elite and then the common masses, to a family vacation destination, and finally to its latest iteration as a shrine for a Civil War battle where the individual is expected to forge his or her own personal

23. Paul Jones Semmes, letter to Emily J. Semmes, June 11, 1863.

24. Eugene W. Berwanger, *The British Foreign Service and the American Civil War* (University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 125.

connection with the past.²⁵ When visitors and interpreters ignore the changing face of Gettysburg, it allows them to draw the false conclusion that the modern meanings of landscapes and monuments were the same ideas and values that inspired their creation. For example, modern visitors might consider Confederate monuments that express Lost Cause sentiments as solely political statements directly related to the defeat of the Confederacy in both the battle and the war, ignoring the racial implications such sentiments had in the post-war decades and in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. From these questions, four main themes emerge to guide this tour.

One major theme is the significance of Longstreet's attack from Seminary Ridge to the Rose Woods. It was the largest assault of the battle, and success on the northern end hinged on the exploitation of Sickles's blunder in the Peach Orchard. Though it ultimately failed, Confederate forces led by Barksdale were able to break through Sickles's line and threaten the Union position, in the process causing thousands of deaths and injuries. This makes it an important area for visitors in understanding the course of the battle.

Another theme is that which is brought up by Spielvogel, the tension between the pastoral landscape, with its association of heroism, and the savagery of the battle. The monuments, the National Park Service waysides, and the landscape present a tamed and romanticized vision of the battle and its principal actors as heroic and larger-than-life. A careful analysis can, however, reveal the savage aspect of war, which focuses on individual soldiers and their real experiences fighting, killing, and dying within the confusing and chaotic heat of battle.

A third theme is the role of Sentimentalism. As Linderman pointed out, courage was a major part of the ideology of the soldiers, touching on further ideas of personal heroism,

25. Jim Weeks, *Gettysburg: Memory, Market, and an American Shrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 218-222.

manliness, and godliness. It was central to the way they wanted to be remembered, as reflected in the Good Death described by both Linderman and Faust. Despite the savagery of the battle and growing disillusionment, overall the men seemed to have continued to carry the basic Sentimental values as essential to their self-perception and the way they thought of others and the world around them.²⁶ Sentimentalism presents a view of the battle filtered through a cultural lens that can allow us to better understand how soldiers felt about themselves and Gettysburg.

Finally, a fourth theme, relating to the photos of the Confederate dead at the Rose Woods, is how photos were used and what messages they conveyed, intended or otherwise. Alan Trachtenberg highlights a few major points concerning the photos taken at Gettysburg, including the fact that most were staged and so do not offer a transparent window into the past, while at the same time they could reveal certain harsh truths about battle.²⁷ The photos from the Rose Woods mostly show anonymous dead, highlighting the pain and isolation of death on the battlefield which was the antithesis of the Good Death.

This tour begins at the Mississippi Monument on West Confederate Avenue. The monument marks where, or near where, Barksdale's brigade began their charge into the Peach Orchard, reflecting the significance of this attack and its impact on the memory of the battle for Mississippians. It is dominated by a statue of two soldiers. One, the color-bearer, has been wounded and is fallen, dramatically draping one arm over a tree branch or stump. His companion stands above him, one foot braced on the tree, preparing to swing his rifle like a club at an unseen enemy.

The imagery of the monument reveals an overt message about the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause consists of set of ideas that arose in the former Confederacy in the decades after the end of

26. Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, 255-256.

27. Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History: Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 83.

the war which assert that the Confederate soldiers had fought honorably but had never stood a fair chance at victory. The Confederates, therefore, were not defeated, but merely overwhelmed by superior Northern resources. Other components of the Lost Cause include the deification of Robert E. Lee, the downplaying of slavery as a catalyst of the war, and the insistence that secession was a Constitutional right. Overall, the Lost Cause offers an alternative to secession: cultural distinctiveness that, unlike political independence, could not be destroyed by superior Northern resources.²⁸ The monument clearly touches on this sentiment. The standing soldier has one broken shoe, his toes sticking out. This is the foot he props up on the tree, drawing the viewer's attention to it. In addition, his use of the rifle like a club rather than a firearm perhaps suggests that he has run out of ammunition. Both elements support the notion that the Confederates were plagued by insufficient supplies. Artilleryman Edward Porter Alexander noted several times in his personal recollections that the Confederates' supply of ammunition was always inadequate and inferior to that of the Union.²⁹ Moreover, the statue's dedication in 1973 coincided with the height of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. The sculptor, Donald DeLue, had also been commissioned to sculpt several other Confederate monuments during the 1960s.³⁰ The Mississippi Monument's explicit Lost Cause symbolism could hardly fail to evoke the racial tensions of the time, hiding a contemporary narrative of white heroism and superiority within the more acceptable narrative of heritage and the Confederacy. This Lost Cause message suggests a lingering rejection of reconciliation between the states, even one century later.

28. Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 134, 136.

29. Gary Gallagher, ed., *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 261, 266.

30. "Senator Eastland Dedicates Monument to Mississippi Men Who Fought Here in '63," *Gettysburg Times*, October 19, 1973.

The monument's inscription also resonates with the Lost Cause, as well as Sentimentalism. It refers to the "brave" soldiers as giving their lives for a "righteous cause," and uses language such as "glory," "valor," "courage," "duty," and "honor." All of these words uphold the Lost Cause's romanticized vision of Confederate soldiers as morally superior to the Union troops.³¹ There is a suggestion here that Confederates, particularly Mississippians, were the only soldiers who really embodied these values. They are also nearly all things Linderman points to as components of American Sentimentalism during the Civil War. These are values that the soldiers themselves prized, meaning this monument reflects fairly well how the men probably would have wanted to be remembered.

The second stop of the tour is the Peach Orchard, where the Mississippians in Barksdale's brigade broke through the Union soldiers' defenses. The Peach Orchard wayside focuses mainly on Sickles. Curiously, despite the significance of this area for Longstreet's assault, the Confederate officer who led the first attack, Kershaw, is given less attention than Sickles, though his photo does adorn the wayside, and Barksdale is mentioned only in passing.³² The wayside thus indicates that the narrative being told in the Peach Orchard is from the Union perspective, not the Confederate. On this tour, the Peach Orchard wayside may serve to refute the victimized message of the Mississippi Monument by emphasizing Union defeat and Confederate victory.

On a somewhat different note, the Peach Orchard upholds a narrative of courage and heroism that obscures and is at odds with the savagery of this part of the battle. As noted before, the Peach Orchard wayside gives little indication of the common soldier's experience, instead presenting the battle from a sanitized, bird's-eye view. The landscape does not offer any more

31. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 147.

32. "The Peach Orchard Salient."

clues; there are few monuments there, and the orchard evokes agrarian life rather than battle. This is perhaps an effort to keep the area visibly similar to the way it looked in 1863, though of course during the battle it was not the peaceful orchard visitors see today, but filled with smoke and running men, and the sounds of gunshots, shouting, and the cries of the wounded. William W. Hewell, a Georgia infantryman who participated in Longstreet's assault, suggested the chaos of the battle, writing that during a charge he fell to the ground to let the artillery shells go over him, and that two "wente some two or thee feate a buve my head and hite the ground some five or six feate frome me," adding, "I dinten no whate minit I would bestruck and kild."³³ Hewell did not present a particularly glorious vision of war. His experience seems chaotic and terrifying, and the risk of random, instantaneous death threatened his prospect for a Good Death. He did, however, express some Sentimental values when he attributed his survival of the battle to his faith in God.³⁴ Hewell here provides an example for the coexistence of savagery and Sentimentalism in the interpretation of the Peach Orchard. This complication of the straightforward narrative suggested by the wayside and the landscape can allow visitors to achieve a better understanding of the men who fought in the assault.

The final stop on this tour is the photos of dead Confederate soldiers taken at the Rose Woods after the battle. These photos, taken by Alexander Gardner, Timothy O'Sullivan, and James Gibson on or around July 5th, show the bodies of the soldiers laid out in a grassy area before burial. Many of these photos were originally identified as Union dead in the Wheatfield, McPherson's Woods, or by the location of Pickett's Charge, but after an extensive survey of the battlefield in the 1960s, William Frassanito determined that the photos actually reveal a field on

33. William W. Hewell, letter, July 9, 1863, Drawer 283, Box 28 (microfilm), Georgia Archives.

34. William W. Hewell, letter, July 9, 1863.

the southwestern side of the Rose Woods.³⁵ The men in these photos, from South Carolina and Georgia, had sought cover behind a stone wall. They then clambered over the wall and attempted to attack the Rose Woods, only to be shot by the Union soldiers defending the woods as they stormed over the open field.³⁶

Beyond these initial misidentifications, the pastoral landscape of the Rose Woods today obscures the context of the photos for modern visitors. The area where the photos were taken is somewhat off the road, and visitors must cross over a fence in order to access the area. As a result, most people probably never see the exact location of the photos, and those that do are greeted with a picturesque but unextraordinary landscape; it could be any field in any countryside. There are no markers in this area to indicate its significance, though there is a wayside on the other side of the fence somewhat up the road, which further obscures the precise location of the dead Confederates. As a result of these factors, the photos become unattached to the land, and the land, with its bucolic scenery, gives no indication of its violent past.

The photos themselves also conceal the reality of the battle. They carry the implication of Union victory and the sensational value of revealing to audiences at home the new experience of bearing witness to the physical results of a battle immediately after it was over.³⁷ Gardner, the main photographer, was passionately dedicated to the Union and its cause, and he intended his photographs to show unquestioning support for the Union and hatred of the Confederacy.³⁸ However, they convey little beyond that. Gardner's original captions were vague and evocative, such as "A Harvest of Death," intended to shock rather than inform.³⁹ Two considerations that must be taken into account are the context of the photos, and the photographer's intentions

35. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time*, 198-199.

36. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time*, 200.

37. Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 83.

38. Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 94.

39. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time*, 199, 203.

behind the images. For example, one photo was originally labeled “War, effect of a shell on a Confederate soldier.” It depicts a man who was gruesomely disemboweled by artillery fire.⁴⁰ To heighten the impact of the photo, Gardner placed an artillery shell near the man and laid a rifle across his knees. Gardner gives no indication of who the man was or where he died.⁴¹ The public often took these photos at face value, believing them to represent the “truth” of war, but in fact these photos were “staged compositions” that not only reveal certain unstated messages but could also present contradictory messages, showing the mundane aspect of war – tired men, dead bodies – while asserting heroism.⁴² Viewers of these photos must consider both what they are meant to see, and what they are not meant to see.

One other significant aspect of the photos is the sight of death itself. American culture during the Civil War emphasized the Good Death, which dictated the right way to die. According to this idea, the way a person died reflected both the way they lived their life and their experience after death, making the observation of their death extremely important.⁴³ The two biggest threats to the Good Death during the Civil War were soldiers dying far from their families, and the suddenness of death which was common on the battlefield.⁴⁴ The photos of the dead Confederates at the Rose Woods, such as the man killed by an artillery shell, illustrate the antithesis of the Good Death. The men are nameless and undifferentiated; there is no suggestion here of the courage, heroism, manliness, godliness, or honor that Linderman points out was so important to soldiers’ conceptions of themselves and each other. The viewer sees the soldiers not as heroes, but as ordinary men.⁴⁵ Moreover, images of so many young men killed on the field

40. Figure 1, Appendix.

41. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time*, 216.

42. Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 83-84.

43. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 8-9.

44. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 9, 18.

45. Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 83; Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, 8, 10, 11.

may have prompted the dangerous question of whether or not the cause of either side was worth the horrific loss of life.⁴⁶ These photos thus serve both as an affirmation of Union victory and as a question posed to the cost of that victory through their challenge to the Good Death.

Hopefully, this tour encourages a more complex understanding of Longstreet's attack from Seminary Ridge by posing questions and challenging accepted narratives. Most visitors guide their visits to the battlefield using National Park Service brochures and waysides, monuments, photos, pop culture, and the landscape itself. Many bring with them memories of past visits that color their understanding of the battle. Most of these guides combined to tell an incomplete story that focuses on Sentimentalism, the Lost Cause, or the pastoral setting, and this tour has sought to complicate that story in several ways. In the broadest sense, it encourages visitors to challenge the sense of history these narratives and materials present. In part, this requires them to question the ideas that shaped the monuments, waysides, landscape, and other aspects of the dominant narrative, and how these ideas have changed over time. Does the Mississippi Monument, for example, mean the same thing to a Northern visitor in 2017 that it did for a Mississippian in 1973? Furthermore, does the modern visitor understand that the monument was shaped by the politics and culture of the mid-twentieth century, not those of the immediate post-war period? A further complication requires the visitor to look past the peaceful, park-like atmosphere of modern Gettysburg in order to understand that, in July of 1863, this was a place of chaos, fear, suffering, and death. Finally, this tour attempts to aid visitors in considering the culture in which the soldiers lived. Ideas such as courage, honor, duty, godliness, and the Good Death drove men to fight and helped to shape the way individuals perceived themselves, others, and the world around them. Overall, this tour represents an effort to complicate the traditional narrative of Longstreet's assault in order to give visitors a more complex sense of history.

46. Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 92.

Appendix



Figure 1. Alexander Gardner, "Effect of a Shell on a Confederate."

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