

Sidney E. Griswold played a crucial part in the Civil War for his regiment, the Fourteenth Vermont Infantry. He enlisted as a drummer. Drummers, in the army of 1861, were more than just musicians provided to entertain soldiers sitting around campfires. Their drum beats on the field of battle were used to communicate orders for troop movements during combat when the human voice could not be heard above the din of cannon, musketry and screams of the wounded. He wasn't exactly a "boy" by most standards since he was nineteen at the time he donned on a uniform for the Union. Although he served in a unit from Vermont that saw critical service in the battle of Gettysburg, it was not entirely clear if Private Sidney was present for duty on that crucial third day to participate in the famous "Pickett's Charge" episode.

Sidney was born about 1843 in Orwell, Vermont son of Marvin Griswold (1799-1854) and Rosealine Abell (1813-1847).^[1] He came from an extremely small family compared to most in the 1860's. He had only two brothers; Henry (1835) and Charles (1842).^[2] These two were inseparable for their entire lives even though Charles married. Sidney and his brothers lost their mother, Rosealine, early in their childhood. She died on September 22, 1847. Sidney, the youngest boy, was only four years old.^[3]

In 1850, Sidney was living in Orwell with his widowed father and his two brothers, Henry and Charles. Chloe Thomas, a twenty year old female, also lived in the household. She probably had been hired by Marvin to be housekeeper and surrogate mother to the three boys. A hired man named George Ham worked with Marvin and Henry to keep the farm running. It was worth \$9,000. It was not a huge sum, but a good sized operation none the less. Samuel Griswold, grandfather to the boys, aged ninety-one, also resided in the house in 1850. He was obviously too old to be very involved in the farm, but he could be an extra pair of eyes on two young boys who were, undoubtedly, full of vim and vinegar. There was another mystery person living with the Griswold's who appeared unrelated by blood. Her name was Maria Stiles and she was only fourteen. No occupation was assigned to her in the 1850 Federal Census. So what role she played in the family was not clarified.^[4] The angel of death spread her wings over the Griswold family again in 1854. Marvin, Sidney's father, died at the early age of fifty-five on November 30, 1854

in Orwell. He left the farm to his sons; Henry, age 19, Charles, age 12 and Sidney, age 11.
[5]

By 1860, the orphaned boys ran a farming operation worth \$8,000. Henry was credited with personal property valued at \$4,000. The brothers had hired a forty-three year old woman with a daughter to keep the house and prepare the meals. The woman was Elizabeth Fifield and her daughter was named Abbie or Abba. [6] These two were the only females in the household at the time since none of the boys had yet married. Elizabeth Langley Fifield had been born in Chittenden, Vermont in 1838. She had married one William Fifield of Brandon and was living in that town in 1850 with her husband and their five children. In 1857, William, a wheelwright by trade, died leaving Elizabeth a widow with five children to provide for. By 1860, she had found work as a domestic for the bachelor Griswold boys. Elizabeth's older children were females and so they had married off. She had a nineteen year old son living with another family in Orwell in 1860 while she and her daughter, Abbie, assisted the Griswold boys with maintaining their farm. Her youngest son, fourteen in 1860, was also hired out to a farmer in Orwell. [7]

The Civil War was only about one year old when President Lincoln's call for additional troops resounded off the hills of the Green Mountain State again. Being the youngest of the eligible Griswolds at nineteen, Sidney launched into a military career on August 29, 1862. Although born and raised in Orwell, Sidney declared for Shoreham, probably because that neighboring town was offering a higher bounty for volunteers. The five feet nine and one half inches tall drummer boy with the grey eyes, light hair and complexion must have made a dazzling sight in his new blue uniform. [8] His term of service commenced on October 21, 1862 for nine months when his company (Company D) of the Fourteenth Vermont Infantry was mustered-in officially at Brattleboro, Vermont. [9]

The Fourteenth Vermont only existed for a short time (they were "Nine Months" men), but they saw hard service during their term of enlistment. At first, the Regiment was attached to those units making up the defenses around Washington, D.C. After December

11, 1862, the Fourteenth was placed on guard duty in and around Fairfax Court House where it was engaged in the repulse of Jeb Stuart's cavalry raid. From March to June, 1863, the Vermonters were stationed at Wolf Run Shoals along with other Vermont troops to guard the vital river ford on the Occoquan River.

On the 25th of June, the Fourteenth was attached to the Third Division of the First Corps and began its march northward towards Gettysburg. It was a grueling march sometimes covering twenty miles a day for consecutive days at a time. Over two hundred of the Regiment were forced to drop out before every reaching Gettysburg because they could not keep up the pace. The Fourteenth arrived at Gettysburg too late to take part in the first day's action. It bivouacked in a wheat field to the left of Cemetery Ridge. Late on the second day, the Regiment was called into action to help the Thirteenth Vermont repel an attack by General A.P. Hill on the left center of the Union line.

After the tremendous opening cannonade of July 3, during which several men of the Fourteenth were killed by an explosion of a battery caisson, the left flank of Pickett's long grey line could be seen advancing towards the concealed Vermonters. At less than one hundred yards distance from the enemy, the men of the Fourteenth rose at command and delivered a devastating volley into the Confederate columns. The Thirteenth and Sixteenth changed fronts and added their fire to that of the Fourteenth. The result was that Pickett's right wing was caught and crushed. After the main charge was halted and Pickett's divisions were streaming back towards Seminary Ridge, four companies of the Fourteenth, A, F, D, and I, captured most of Confederate General Wilcox's Brigade as prisoners. This independent action taken by the Vermont troops, perhaps including Sidney E. Griswold, was credited by the Union high command as being crucial to the turning of Pickett's Charge. The Fourteenth was also part of the Union's pursuit of Lee's forces following the three day battle. It was during this pursuit that, on July 18, 1863, the Fourteenth was released and sent home. The Fourteenth was mustered-out on July 30, 1863.^[10]

Except for the forced march to Gettysburg and the action of the third day of that battle against Confederate General Pickett's Division, Private Griswold saw little memorable duty as a soldier in the Union Army. Like hundreds of thousands of other former soldiers, he picked up life as a civilian in the best way he could. In 1866, Sidney married Mary A. Buell (1845-1929). He was twenty-three and she was twenty-one. ^[11]

When Sidney returned from the war, he did not go back to the old family farm that his two brothers, Henry and Charles, were operating in Orwell. Instead, he started his own farm right next door to them. In 1870, he and Mary had a farm valued at \$4,000 and personal property valued at \$400. There were no children, nor would there be any during their married years. Brothers Henry and Charles still operated the original farm still valued at \$8,000. However, their combined personal value had grown to \$2,000 , perhaps partly due to the fact that Charles had taken a wife. Her name was Ellen. She, Henry and Charles also had a domestic living with them. Her name was Agnes Lyons and she was fifteen. There was a hired man on the brothers' farm as well. His name was William Campbell and he was only fourteen. Sidney and Mary also had a domestic servant in their household. Her name was Julia Brown and she was eighteen. ^[12]

Ten years later, in 1880, Sidney and Mary still owned a farm in Orwell. They had a new house servant - Ellen Jones, twenty. The old hired man, William, had been replaced with a new hired man, William Bruer. The couple was still childless and Henry and Charles (with Ellen) still lived on the old homestead, three houses down (or up) from them. ^[13] In 1888, Sidney filed for a pension, which the Government granted to him. ^[14]

At the turn of the century, Sidney remained in agriculture. He and Mary had been wed for thirty-four years, all of it while living in Orwell next door to Sidney's two brothers who were now sixty-five and fifty-seven. Sidney and Mary had another married couple living with them in 1900: Clinton Mallory (23) and his wife, Lucy (27). Clinton was a hired man while Lucy was a house servant. These two people showed up again interconnected with Sidney and his wife twenty years down the road. In the brothers' household, there was another woman besides Ellen (Charles' wife) living with them. She was Mary, age

sixty-four. She was identified as a sister-in-law. With her was a fourteen year old boy named Edward, designated as a nephew and a student. Mary was not given any occupation. ^[15]

At sixty-six in 1910, Sidney owned his farm free and clear. He was still listed in the census as a general farmer. When the census was taken, brother Henry (now seventy-four) was still working the old homestead next door with his younger brother, Charles, now sixty-eight. Later that same year, Henry died. Also, Ellen, Charles' wife, was not listed in the census as a member of the household, so she was probably deceased by 1910. Edward Lyons, at the time of the census, was also living on the brother Griswolds' farm, helping the elderly brothers run the business next door to Sidney and Mary. ^[16]

By 1919, Sidney had lost his other widowed brother, Charles. Clinton and Lucy Mallory, who had lived with Sidney and Mary in 1900, owned the farm that once belonged to Henry, Charles and Sidney. Sidney and Mary, now in their mid-seventies, lived on their farm in Orwell located on the Abell's Corner Road. They no longer were active in farming. ^[17] In 1922, on January 18, Sidney died in Orwell. He died of chronic endocarditis, arteriosclerosis, and acute dilatation of the heart. ^[18] That same year, Mary filed for a widow's pension which she received until her death on June 26, 1929 at the age of eighty-three. She passed away of chronic myocarditis and arteriosclerosis. ^[19]

NOTES

1. Ancestry.com, Vermont, Vital Records, 1909-2008 for Sidney Erwin Griswold; Ibid., Lentz Frye Family Tree for Henry E. Griswold.
2. Ibid., 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney Griswold; Ibid., Lentz Frye Family Tree for Henry E. Griswold.
3. Ibid., Lentz Frye Family Tree for Sidney E. Griswold.
4. Ibid., 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney Griswold.
5. Ibid., Lentz Frye Family Tree for Sidney E. Griswold.
6. Ibid., 1860 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney E. Griswold.
7. Ibid., 1860 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney E. Griswold; Ibid., 1850 U.S. Federal Census for Hiram Fifield; Ibid., Cameron-Welton 2015 Family Tree for Elizabeth Langley Fifield.
8. Fold3.com, Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Vermont, p. 3, image 312196595. Herein-

- after referred to as Compiled Service Records....
9. Ibid., Compiled Service Records..., p. 4, image 312196598.
 10. Ancestry.com, U.S., American Civil War Regiments, 1861-1866, 14th Infantry Regiment Vermont.
 11. Ibid., 1900 U.S. Federal Census for S. Griswold.
 12. Ibid., 1870 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney Griswold.
 13. Ibid., 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney Griswold.
 14. Ibid., U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934 for Sidney E. Griswold.
 15. Ibid., 1900 U.S. Federal Census for S. Griswold.
 16. Ibid., 1910 U.S. Federal Census for Silbey E. Griswold; Ibid., Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008 for Henry Griswold.
 17. Ibid., 1920 U.S. Federal Census for Sidney Griswold.
 18. Ibid., Vermont, Death Records, 1909-2008 for Sidney Erwin Griswold.
 19. Archives.com, Death Records for Mary A. Griswold.