

JP #6 For Poor Palatine Georg Account:

Re: Summer of 1862, Hunterdon County, NJ, & the German-Americans living in a nation touched with fire

In the opening months of 1862, Union forces won a series of battles as they moved west, taking control of Kentucky and most of Tennessee, including the state capital of Nashville. This string of victories culminated in the Battle of New Orleans in April of that year.

The bustling port of New Orleans was the South's largest and wealthiest city - and the gateway to the Mississippi River. Its capture, made possible by the bold action of veteran naval officer David G. Farragut, was the U.S. Navy's first significant achievement of the war and a major victory for the Union. It dealt with a severe blow not only to one of the Confederacy's key economic assets, but also its efforts to win diplomatic recognition and material aid from Britain and France.

Nevertheless, the South rallied from this setback during the summer. After Confederate forces won a major battle in Northern Virginia at the Second Bull Run, in late August, General Robert E. Lee decided to keep up the momentum by invading the North. He hoped a victory in Maryland would rally southern sympathizers in the state to his side and move the battlefield away from war-ravaged Virginia.

On September 17, 1862, Lee's forces confronted those of Union General George B. McClellan along the banks of Antietam Creek, near Sharpsburg, Maryland. The Battle of Antietam was the bloodiest day of the Civil War and one of the most important military operations of the conflict. Lee was forced to retreat back to Southern soil, giving timely boost to Northern morale and emboldening Lincoln to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation announcing his decision to free the slaves in areas of rebellion.

The Battle of New Orleans and the Battle of Antietam stamps - the second in a series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War- are part of efforts across the country to pay tribute to the American experience during the tumultuous years from 1861 to 1865.

As we know many of our grand, great, and great great grandfathers served in the Yankee Army and that our grand, great great and great great grandmothers stayed in Hunterdon County, New Jersey working our family farms and raising their children as single parents while our cousin men marched thru the South to defend and preserve our nation. Time to bring their 1862 stories to our family reunion.

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"The shrieks of the wounded and dying was terrible, but they rallied and came at us again and our men again awaited until they came in range and again arose and mowed them down...but they came again."
James C. Steele, 4th North Carolina

"...the density of the smoke from our guns and fire rafts, the scenes passing on board our own ship and around us...it was as if the artillery of heaven were playing upon the earth."
David G. Farragut, USS Hartford

"Future years will never know the seething hell and black infernal background of countless minor scenes...and it is best they should not- the real war will never get in the books."
Walt Whitman

*"Oh! how proud you stood before me,
In your suit of blue,
When you vow'd to me and your country,
Ever to be true."*
"Weeping, Sad and Lonely"
Lyrics by Charles C. Sawyer

"Mr. Brady has done something to bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war. If he has not brought bodies and laid them in our door-yards and along the streets, he has done something very like it."
New York Times

