

= Hugh Boyle Ewing =

Hugh Boyle Ewing , (October 31 , 1826 ? June 30 , 1905) , was a diplomat , author , attorney , and Union Army general during the American Civil War . He was a member of the prestigious Ewing family , son of Thomas Ewing , the eldest brother of Thomas Ewing , Jr. and Charles Ewing , and the foster brother and brother @-@ in @-@ law of William T. Sherman . General Ewing was an ambitious , literate , and erudite officer who held a strong sense of responsibility for the men under his command . He combined his West Point experience with the Civil War system of officer election .

Ewing 's wartime service was characterized by several incidents which would have a unique impact on history . In 1861 , his political connections helped save the reputation of his brother @-@ in @-@ law , William T. Sherman , who went on to become one of the north 's most successful generals . Ewing himself went on to become Sherman 's most trusted subordinate . His campaigning eventually led to the near @-@ banishment of Lorenzo Thomas , a high @-@ ranking regular army officer who had intrigued against Sherman . He was present at the Battle of Antietam , where his brigade saved the flank of the Union Army late in the day . During the Vicksburg campaign , Ewing accidentally came across personal correspondence from Confederate President Jefferson F. Davis to former President Franklin Pierce which eventually ruined the reputation of the latter . Ewing was also present in Kentucky during Major General Stephen G. Burbridge 's " reign of terror " , where he worked to oppose Burbridge 's harsh policies against civilians , but was hampered by debilitating rheumatism . He ended the war with an independent command , a sign he held the confidence of his superiors , acting in concert with Sherman to trap Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston in North Carolina .

After the war , Ewing spent time as Ambassador to the Netherlands and became a noted author . He died in 1905 on his family farm .

= = Early life and career = =

Hugh Ewing was born in Lancaster , Ohio . He was educated at the U.S. military academy , but was forced to resign on the eve of graduation after failing an engineering exam , which was a major embarrassment to his family . While a member of the cadet corps , he was close friends with future Union generals John Buford Jr . , Nathaniel C. McLean , and John C. Tidball . His father appointed Philip Sheridan to the open seat .

During the gold rush in 1849 , Ewing went to California , where he joined an expedition ordered by his father , then Secretary of the Interior , to rescue immigrants who were imprisoned in the Sierra by heavy snows . He returned in 1852 with dispatches for the government .

He then completed his course in law and settled in St. Louis . He practiced law there from 1854 to 1856 , when he moved with his young brother , Thomas Jr . , and brothers @-@ in @-@ law William T. Sherman and Hampden B. Denman to Leavenworth , Kansas , and began speculating in lands , roads , and government housing . They quickly established one of the leading law firms of Leavenworth , as well as a financially powerful land agency .

In 1858 , Ewing married Henrietta Young , daughter of George W. Young , a large planter of the District of Columbia , whose family was prominent in the settlement and history of Maryland . He soon afterward took charge of his father 's salt works in Ohio .

= = Civil War = =

In April 1861 , Governor William Dennison appointed Ewing as the brigade @-@ inspector of Ohio volunteers . He served under Rosecrans and McClellan in western Virginia . Ewing became colonel of the 30th Ohio Volunteer Infantry in August 1861 .

In November 1861 , when his brother @-@ in @-@ law William T. Sherman was relieved of his command in disgrace , Ewing aided his younger sister Ellen Ewing Sherman in making the rounds of Washington D.C. , denying sensationalist media claims that Sherman was insane , and personally

lobbying the President for Sherman 's reinstatement . Ewing and his sister argued that Sherman 's requests for men and material in Kentucky had been denied in Washington , and that the charges of insanity had been part of a conspiracy orchestrated by Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas . Eventually the political influence of the Ewing family persevered , and with the assistance of Henry Halleck , Sherman was returned to command . President Abraham Lincoln praised Sherman 's " talent & conduct " publicly to a large group of important officers , and later banished Thomas to a meaningless post on recruiting duty in the Trans @-@ Mississippi Theater .

Under McClellan , Ewing commanded a regiment and then a brigade in the Kanawha Division in the IX Corps . In the Battle of South Mountain , he led the assault which drove the enemy from the summit ; and at midnight of that day , he received an order placing him in command of the brigade of Colonel Eliakim P. Scammon , who was in temporary command of the Kanawha division after its commander Major General Jacob D. Cox had been elevated to command of the IX Corps , replacing the fallen Major General Jesse Lee Reno who was killed earlier that day . At Antietam his brigade was placed upon the extreme left of the army , where , according to the report of the commander of the left wing , General Ambrose Burnside , " by a brilliant change of front he saved the left from being completely driven in . "

After Antietam , Ewing was placed on sick leave because of chronic dysentery , and was promoted to Brigadier General on November 29 , 1862 . He transferred West and served throughout the campaign before Vicksburg , leading the assaults made by General Sherman ; and upon its fall was placed in command of a division in the XVI Corps . At Chattanooga , he was given command of the 4th Division of the XV Corps , which formed the advance of Sherman 's army and carried Missionary Ridge . Prior to the Battle of Chattanooga , Ewing 's command led a diversionary raid that resulted in the destruction of the Empire State Iron Works in Dade County , Georgia , which was being refurbished to increase the South 's manufacturing capability . Sherman considered Ewing his most reliable division commander .

In the aftermath of Vicksburg , Ewing 's command wrecked Confederate President Jefferson Davis 's Fleetwood Plantation , and Ewing turned over Davis ' personal correspondence to his brother @-@ in @-@ law , Sherman . However , Ewing also sent copies of the letters to a few people he had known in Ohio , which , after the documents were published , permanently sullied the reputation of former President Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire . Their release coincided with that of Pierce 's book , *Our Old Home* . As early as 1860 , Pierce had written to Davis about " the madness of northern abolitionism " , and other letters uncovered stated that he would " never justify , sustain , or in any way or to any extent uphold this cruel , heartless , aimless unnecessary war " , and that " the true purpose of the war was to wipe out the states and destroy property . "

In October 1863 , Ewing was placed in command of the occupation forces in Louisville , Kentucky . He was unfortunate enough to serve during Maj. Gen. Stephen Gano Burbridge 's " reign of terror , " where martial law was declared several times . On August 11 , 1864 , Burbridge ordered soldiers from the 26th Kentucky to select four men to be taken from prison in Louisville to Eminence , Kentucky , to be shot for unknown outrages , and on August 20 , several suspected Confederate guerrillas were also to be taken from Louisville and executed . General Ewing declared their innocence and sought a pardon from Burbridge , but he refused to give the pardon and the men were shot .

In his autobiography , Ewing describes an incident in October 1862 with Colonel Augustus Moor , who had struck a member of Ewing 's regiment with his sword when the enlisted soldier had fallen out of a march . Ewing immediately confronted Moor . In his own words :

He was at the table with his Staff and Colonels , drinking Ohio wine from long @-@ necked bottles , and smoking , and presented quite an old @-@ time German scene . I Told him I would not tolerate the German custom of treating common soldiers , if applied to my men , by any officer . I preserved discipline by taking care of my troops , collectively and individually .

Colonel Moor quickly apologized . While General Ewing respected the discipline of the German regiment , he preferred a different atmosphere in his own command , better suited to Americans . He was capable of recognizing the military tradition of other units while accommodating the unique needs of his own . General Ewing was ordered to North Carolina in 1865 , and was planning an

expedition up the Roanoke river to co @-@ operate with the Army of the James , when Lee surrendered .

In 1864 , Ewing suffered an attack of rheumatism , and received treatment several times thereafter , often being confined to his chair . He was likely prostrated with illness as Commander of Louisville during Burbridge 's madness in Kentucky . He was made a brevet major general on March 13 , 1865 . After leaving the Army , he experienced painful attacks for the rest of his life , often bedridden for periods of up to forty days .

= = Postbellum career = =

President Andrew Johnson appointed Ewing as U.S. Minister to Holland , where he served from 1866 to 1870 . This appointment may have drawn the ire of the Radical Republicans , for Speaker of the House James G. Blaine urged President Ulysses S. Grant that Ewing be recalled and replaced with his brother , Charles Ewing . Blaine told the President that Hugh was ' acting badly ' . Blaine himself was disingenuous , having represented to prominent politicians in Ohio including Senator John Sherman that he was doing everything possible to nominate his close personal friend , former Ohio General Roeliff Brinkerhoff , for the post . Nonetheless , Blaine 's request to recall General Ewing was never acted upon , possibly due to the influence of his sister , whose husband General Sherman was a very close friend to President Grant .

Upon his eventual return to the United States , Ewing retired to a farm near Lancaster , Ohio , where he died of old age .

He was the author of : The Black List ; A Tale of Early California (1887) ; A Castle in the Air (1887) ; The Gold Plague , and other works .