

COLONEL DAVID IRELAND



As Portrayed by Roger Lalonde



Born in Forfar, Scotland in 1832, David Ireland and his family immigrated to America in 1840. After school, he worked with his father in a Manhattan tailor shop. From his father, the young David learned patience, attention to detail, disciplined work habits, and responsibility. These traits served Ireland well in later life. Ireland always strove to maintain an immaculate appearance befitting of a man of strong character and bearing.

Ireland served as a captain in the 79th New York Infantry, the Cameron Highlanders. Ireland was promoted to captain 15th U.S. Infantry, and trained raw recruits in drills, tactics and discipline. Ireland then recruited and trained new volunteer regiments, including the 137th NY Volunteer regiment. Ireland was promoted to Colonel in August 1862 and took command of the 137th NYV regiment.

In battle, Colonel Ireland was a determined fighter and led his men by example and daring. At Chancellorsville, Ireland led the 137th in distinguished action on the left flank as part of Gen. George Sears Greene's brigade. However, it was Ireland's heroic defense of Culp's Hill at the battle of Gettysburg that would define his iron determination, courage and valor.

Late in the afternoon of July 2, 1863, General Meade ordered most of the XII Corps to abandon Culp's Hill and support the Union left and center positions on Cemetery Ridge. Only Gen. George Sears Greene's brigade was left to defend Culp's Hill using entrenchments and breastworks constructed that

morning. Ireland's 137th NY regiment was stretched to the right and formed a thin blue line on the extreme right flank of the Union army.

During the night time battle of Culp's Hill, Ireland's regiment defended the extreme right flank against the six regiments of Gen. George Steuart's brigade. Attacked from the front, right flank and rear, Ireland ordered a wheel right

and the regiment returned to a traverse breastwork constructed during the day. The dogged determination of Ireland and his men prevented the confederates to roll up the Union right flank. On the following morning, Ireland's regiment along with the rest of the XII Corps defended Culp's Hill for seven straight hours until the confederates stopped their attacks.

In August 1863, Ireland married 20 year old Sarah Phelps in the home of her uncle Judge Sherman Phelps in the town of Binghamton, NY. In the fall of 1863, the XI and XII Corps were merged together and formed the XX Corps under Gen. Hooker and sent to Tennessee to rescue the troops besieged at Chattanooga. Near Lookout Mountain, TN, Ireland led the 137th to victory while defending the left flank in another night battle at Wauhatchie. He then took command of the 3rd Brigade after Gen. Greene was severely wounded.

Ireland then led the brigade at Resaca, GA, where he was wounded, and led the brigade through several battles culminating in the victory at Atlanta in September 1864. Shortly upon entering Atlanta, Ireland fell ill and died of dysentery on September 10, 1864.



Colonel David Ireland is portrayed by *Roger Lalonde* who resides in Woonsocket, RI.