



GENERAL GEORGE CROOK



As Portrayed by Richard L. Byrd

George Crook was born Dayton, OH on September 8, 1830 and graduated from West Point in 1852. Crook was a career United States Army officer, most noted for his distinguished service during the American Civil War and the Indian Wars.

In September 1861, Captain Crook was offered the command of the 36th Ohio as its Colonel and sent to Western Virginia. The following year, Crook was appointed Brigadier General of Volunteers and was put in command of an Ohio brigade that fought at South Mountain and Antietam. He was then transferred to the western theater and placed in command of the 2nd Cavalry Division in the Army of the Cumberland. Crook's division fought in the Chickamauga campaign and Cloyd's Mountain.

In April 1864, Crook was brevetted as a Major General of Volunteers, and then in July 1864 he was given the command of the Army (Dept.) of West Virginia. The Army of West Virginia (be-

ing Corps strength) was attached to the Army of the Shenandoah, in September 1864. General Philip Sheridan referred to the Army of West Virginia as the VIII Corp during his 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign.

In October 1864, Crook's promotion to the rank of Major General of Volunteers became official. However, he was captured in February 1865 along with General Benjamin Kelley in Cumberland MD. Crook was exchanged in March 1865 and with his return he was put in command of the 2nd cavalry division in the Army of the Potomac attached to the Army of the Shenandoah during the Appomattox campaign.

Crook was promoted to Brigadier General and Major General in the U.S. Army on the same day, March 13, 1865. After the war, Crook was sent to the western frontier to fight in the Indian wars. There he commanded various military departments/districts until his death in 1890.



Richard L. Byrd from Petersburg, WV has been re-enacting for over 30 years. He is the founder of the First Regiment West Virginia Cavalry, Inc., which is a living history-educational, non-profit re-enactment organization. He also formed and recruited for the Sons of Union Veterans Camp "Abraham Lincoln GAR Post 1 Camp 1863, Department of the Chesapeake, for which the camp was named for the 1st and last camp to exist in the state of West Virginia located in Martinsburg, WV. Byrd is also a charter member of the SUVCW camp, Camp # 7 Seventh West Virginia Infantry in Petersburg, WV and is the commander of Company A West Virginia Home Guard - Sons of Veterans Reserve unit based in Petersburg, WV. It is the only SVR unit in the state of West Virginia. He has now added to his list of interpretive impressions, his ancestor by marriage, the persona of Major General George Crook, the commander of the Army of West Virginia.