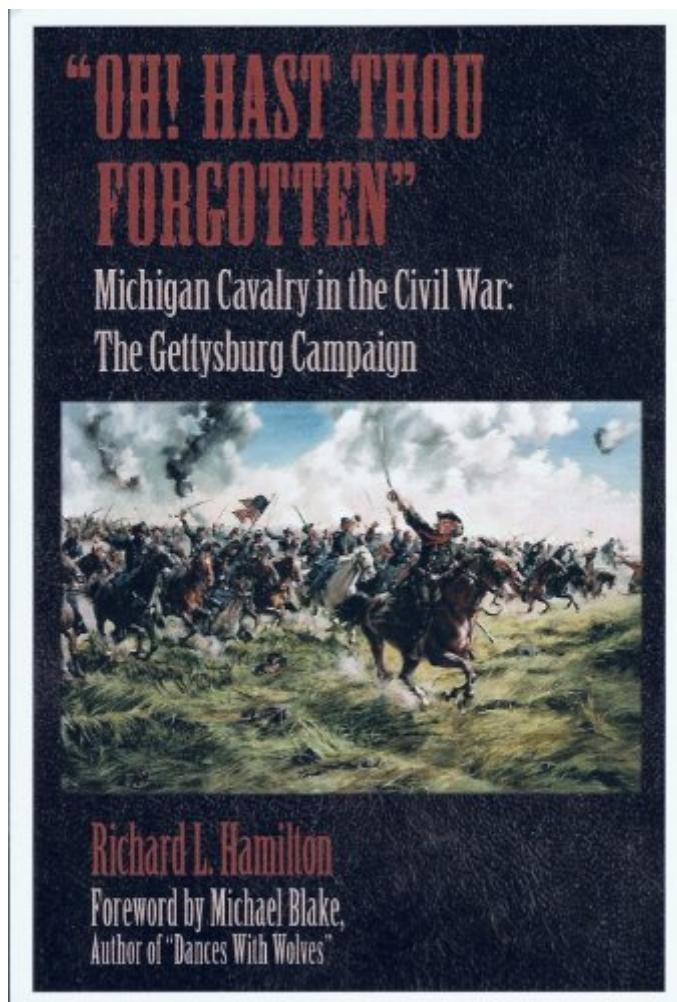


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# "Oh! Hast Thou Forgotten": Michigan Cavalry In The Civil War: The Gettysburg Campaign



## **Synopsis**

The story of "Oh! Hast Thou Forgotten" begins in the summer of 1862 in Kent County, Michigan, and it ends with the close of the Gettysburg Campaign in mid July 1863. It is the story of George Thomas Patten, a young husband and father who wrests with his conscious over what could, and will be his part in defense of the Union in the Civil War. Over the objections of his father, who has grown weary of burying many young West Michigan men under the sod in local cemeteries, and who fears for the life of his only son, George Thomas Patten enlists in the 6th Michigan Cavalry Regiment. The regiment is mustered into the United States Cavalry, and departs Grand Rapids, Michigan on a cold blustery winter day for Washington City on December 10, 1862. In April 1863 Sgt. Patten, while posted on the defense perimeter of the Capitol, learns of the death of his wife, leaving behind a young son. His regiment is dispatched to the Gettysburg Campaign, under the command of Brigadier General George Armstrong Custer. The campaign culminates at the Battle of Falling Waters, where Sgt. George Thomas Patten pays the ultimate price of liberty. "Oh! Hast Thou Forgotten"™, unlike conventional written history, has uniqueness that is rare. As a non-fiction novel its blend of reality and heartfelt fiction is distinctly uncommon.™

[Excerpts from Foreword by: Michael Blake, Author of Dances With Wolves and The Holy Road]

## **Book Information**

File Size: 5948 KB

Print Length: 390 pages

Publisher: BookSurge (April 21, 2008)

Publication Date: April 21, 2008

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B002WYJFZ8

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #523,768 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #236 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields > Gettysburg #1123 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Americas > United States > 19th

## Customer Reviews

Richard L. Hamilton, author of three unpublished books of Patten-Hamilton genealogy, calls this book a work of historical fiction, but it reads like the real thing. Primarily written in the first person, it is the tale of George Thomas Patten, who enlisted in the 6th Michigan Cavalry in the autumn of 1862. The book follows his military experiences and personal tragedies through his death in combat at Falling Waters, West Virginia July 14th 1863 while engaging Lee's retreating army. The 6th Michigan Cavalry was commanded at the battle of Falling Waters by 22 year old Brigadier General George Armstrong Custer. which should help sales. What makes "Oh! Hast Though Not Forgotten" a good read is the honest story of George Thomas Patten. He just feels like the real McCoy. I think you will like him too. Several of his relatives also served in the 6th Michigan Cavalry, which remind us that families often served together in these volunteer state regiments. They lived as neighbors, enlisted together, suffered together, faced the reality of combat together and took care of their own dead. Plenty of pictures are present, and an index which helps keep the characters straight. The editing could have been stronger, eliminating some duplicate pictures and lengthy narrative. Richard N. Larsen Reviewer

This is a wonderfully vivid recollection of a 6th Michigan Cavalryman's journey from Grand Rapids, Mich., to his untimely death at Falling Waters, W. Va., in 1863. The story is written by the descendant of George Thomas Patten using his journal and historical records from many sources. The story brings a human element into the stark reality of the Civil War and the fighting in the Gettysburg Campaign in the summer of 1863. The author did a wonderful job of weaving the recollections of his relative into the thread of the history of the events surrounding the Union cavalry actions that have been much overlooked as an important part of the three-day battle at Gettysburg, Pa., July 1-3, 1863. As one who has been researching the cavalry actions of the Civil War this book was a great reminder of the changing world of the mounted soldier and how the Confederacy and the Union forces evolved throughout the war to find themselves facing each other many times and on many battlefields. My family has a personal connection with my mother's family coming from Grandville, Mich., a suburb of Grand Rapids. It was with that in mind I read the deeds of those who came from Kent County and rode into history with their young general George A. Custer.

I bought this book directly from the author. He had set up a booth at the 2009 Jackson MI Civil War

reenactment. I chatted with the author who seemed nice enough. He had written a book based on letters written by his ancestor Sgt. George T Patten who served in the 6th Michigan Cavalry. As Michigan in the Civil War is one of my main interests, I bought the book and I eagerly started reading as soon as I arrived home. The book turned out to be a confusing mixture of historical fiction and an account of the Gettysburg Campaign. Neither approach works. The imagined conversations do not ring true. The historical account bounces around and contains information not related to Michigan Cavalry Brigade. (Such as an account of Joshua Chamberlain and the 20th Maine on Little Round Top.) Mr. Hamilton states more than once that 51,000 were killed on both sides at Gettysburg. Total CASUALTIES of killed, wounded and captured were about 51,000. The number of killed at Gettysburg will never be known but estimates range between 6,000 and 8,000. The maps are OK and were obtained from the National Park Service. The photos are a mixed bag. I liked the photos of the flags carried by the Michigan Brigade. However, the same photo of Sgt. Patten is placed on four different pages. There are also four photos of Gen. Custer, three of Gen. Kilpatrick, three of Maj. Weber, and multiple photos of others as well. I have never seen this in a book before. Toward the back of the book there is a list of the officers of the 6th MI Cavalry totaling 71 pages. It appears this was added simply to lengthen the book. With proper editing and a complete rewrite, this could be an adequate article for a magazine such as Civil War Times. This is a disappointment as a book. I would only buy this if it was in the bargain bin.

This is a very personal look back at the author's great great grandfather, George Patten, who at age 28 in the summer of 1862 joins a cavalry unit from his home state of Michigan to do his part in the American Civil War. He leaves behind his parents, a beloved wife and a young child to fight for a cause in which he deeply believes. Through the eyes of Quartermaster Sergeant Patten we follow his journey from Grand Rapids, Michigan, where his company is trained to the long train journey to Washington City where he sees action in the battle of Gettysburg and a few days later in the battle of Falling Waters in West Virginia. His company, decimated by the Gettysburg battle, is ordered to charge a rebel position defended by hundreds of soldiers. Great great grandfather Patten writes a touching letter home before the battle and as he feared he is killed in a hopeless charge. Author Richard Hamilton uses letters from Patten along with dozens of primary sources to flesh out the story of this union farmer in his last year of life. Through Patten we see the horror of our nation's most awful war and the effect it had on one man's family. The troop maneuvering of generals, the political machinations of politicians are all there but it is the foot soldiers, George Patten and his comrades in arms, who do the dying and suffering. Hamilton never loses track of this and "Oh! Hast

"Thou Forgotten" is never far from this truth of war.

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