

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

The 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry

By **Timothy J. Orr**, Old Dominion University

Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Desjardin, Thomas A.	<i>Stand Firm Ye Boys From Maine: The 20th Maine and the Gettysburg Campaign</i> . New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Books and Articles

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Engert, Robert M.	<i>Maine to the Wilderness: The Civil War Letters of William Lamson, 20th Maine Infantry</i> . Orange, VA: Publishers Press, 1993.
Gerrish, Theodore	<i>Army Life: A Private's Reminiscences of the War</i> . Portland, ME: Hoyt, Fogg, and Donham, 1882.
Pullen, John J.	<i>The Twentieth Maine: A Volunteer Regiment in the Civil War</i> . Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1957.
Spear Ellis, and Abbot Spear, ed.	<i>Civil War Recollections of General Ellis Spear</i> . Orono, Me: University of Maine Press, 1997.
Styple, William B., ed.	<i>With a Flash of his Sword: The Writings of Major Holman S. Melcher, 20th Maine Infantry</i> . Kearny, NJ: Belle Grove Publishing Company, 1994.
Trulock, Alice Rains.	<i>In the Hands of Providence: Joshua Chamberlain and the American Civil War</i> .

	Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992.
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Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
20th Maine Volunteers	20 th Maine Volunteers is a website dedicated to the regiment and its re-enactor companies. Their website is: http://20thmainevolunteers.com/

Web Resources

URL	Name and description
http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/gettysburg/gettysburg-history-articles/defense-of-little-round-top.html	This is the Civil War Trust page: James R. Brann, “Defense of Little Round Top,” in <i>America’s Civil War</i> Vol. 12, No. 5 (November 1999): 34-43.
http://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/union-monuments/maine/20th-maine/	The Battle of Gettysburg website includes a page on the role of the 20 th Maine and a description of its monuments on the battlefield.

Other Sources

Scholars

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Précis

The 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry was a three-year regiment that fought with the Army of the Potomac. It served between autumn 1862 and spring 1865, fighting at Shepherdstown Ford, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, the Overland Campaign, Peebles Farm, Hatcher’s Run, and Five Forks. Altogether, 1,621 men served in the regiment, of whom 293 died (146 by disease or accident and another 147 by combat). The regiment was created in the summer of 1862, put together from volunteers recruited across several counties in central and

southern Maine. The 20th Maine's most famous action came on July 2, 1863, when it helped defend Little Round Top on the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. At a critical moment, the regiment swept down the hill in an exciting bayonet charge, driving away two regiments of attacking Confederate infantry. The battle cost the 20th Maine 129 officers and men, including nineteen killed, 106 wounded (twenty-one of whom later died), and four captured. The next year, the regiment was heavily engaged in Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign, losing another 265 officers and men killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. For the next nine months the regiment participated in the siege of Petersburg, and then in March and April 1865 the regiment fought in the series of battles culminating in the capture of Richmond and the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Courthouse. The 20th Maine mustered out in two sections, one group on May 8, 1865, and the rest on July 16. Although the 20th Maine was never singled-out as an exceptional regiment during the war, after 1865, it rose in popularity due to writings by veterans, historians, and filmmakers. The 20th Maine Regimental Association, the political career of its former colonel, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, and even a Turner Pictures movie released in 1993 propelled the 20th Maine and its members to pseudo-stardom, making it, perhaps, the most remembered Union regiment from the Civil War.
