

Colonel George Duryea - Obituary

New York Times, April 2, 1897

Birth: Jun. 30, 1832

Death: Apr. 1, 1897

Col. George Duryea died from the effects of old wounds at 2:30 o'clock yesterday morning in St. Vincent's Hospital. He was taken to the hospital from his home in Glen Cove, L. I., on Fed. 8, and had since been confined there. The funeral will be held at St. Paul's Church, Glen Cove, tomorrow at 3:30 P.M.

George Duryea was born June 30, 1832 in the old mansion of the Duryea family at Great Neck, Long Island, which has been the family home for seven generations. He was a lineal descendant of the old French Huguenot family, the first one of the name in this country being Joost Duryea, who came to Long Island with a party of Dutchmen in 1675. When in France, Joost was known as Joseph, but leaving France and going to Mannheim, in the Rhein Palatinate, he gave his Christian name in the Dutch spelling. Col. Duryea's father was Hendrick Vanderbilt Duryea, who died at Glen Cove, April 1, 1891, and his mother before her marriage was Miss Wright, a descendant in direct line of Peter Wright, who emigrated from Norfolk, England, to Massachusetts in 1635, and in 1653 removed and settled on Long Island at Oyster Bay.

Col. Duryea was never engaged to any extent in active business, for the war broke out just about the time when he should have been at his best, and a wound received at the engagement at Gaines's Mill, Va., practically invalidated him for life. He was mustered into the service of the Union as a First Lieutenant of the Fifth New York Volunteer Infantry Zouaves, May 9, 1861. The command was actively engaged from the very moment it reached the front, and the Lieutenant was made a Captain on Aug. 7 of the same year. He obtained a Major's commission on Dec. 4, 1862. He was made a Lieutenant Colonel Dec. 31, 1862, and was brevetted Colonel for gallant conduct on the field at the battle of Gaines's Mill on March 13, 1865. He was present with his command at Big Bethel, at the siege of Yorktown, Chancellorsville, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and during the seven days' operations. His regiment belonged to the Fifth Army Corps, Sykes's Division, (regulars,) and at Gaines's Mill it had to bear the brunt of the assault of Lee's massed forces.

General Hiram Duryea was in the same command. He said that after the fight was he missed his brother, and for three days was unable to learn anything about him. Then he found Col. Duryea's servant who led him to an old stable used as a temporary hospital. A glancing bullet had struck the Colonel in the lower part of his body, and had passed upward into the abdomen. It was nearly ten days before he was finally given expert medical treatment at Washington. He recovered apparently and returned to his command, but some time thereafter, while in front of his men, fell from his horse, hopelessly paralyzed. The supposition was that the ball, which had never been taken out, had moved and come in contact with a nerve. For two year Col. Duryea was as helpless as an infant, but rallied and so far

recovered his health that he was able to engage in outdoor recreations. He then bought a yacht and spent his Summers cruising about the waters of New York. He owned a number of boats at different time, and his last possession was the schooner Carlotta, which he sold last Fall. It was his intention to have built a schooner for this own use next season. He had remained single. He was one of a family of nine children, seven boys, and two girls.