

BENJAMIN LLOYD GOULDING



Benjamin Lloyd Goulding was born near Augusta, Georgia, Feb. 19, 1844, the son of Dr. Francis Robert Goulding, who is credited with designing the world's first sewing machine. He was about to enter college when the war broke out.

Volunteered in Company A, First Georgia Regiment when 17 years old. This was the first GA regiment to see action and it captured Ft. Pulaski at the mouth of the Savannah River.

May, 1862, transferred to Signal Corps and assigned to the SC coast. After the Atlanta campaign, he was on leave and was captured near Ft. McAllister. He was placed in a federal prison at Port Royal Island (Hilton Head area), SC.

Meanwhile, U.S. Major General John G. Foster had artillery positions on the coast near Charleston, SC. Controversy arose over Union prisoners who had been moved to hospitals and prisons within Charleston. Foster sent for 600 Confederate prisoners, mostly junior officers, and placed them in stockades directly in front of Union positions as human shields against Confederate bombardment. For forty-five days Confederate batteries at Ft. Sumter and Ft. Moultrie did not slacken their fire. 18 shells exploded over Goulding's stockade. Dud shells fell into the stockade. But no Confederates were killed or injured due to the bombardment.

At the end of the 45 days, the Union prisoners were moved to Columbia, but the "Immortal 600" (as they became known) were detained for two more weeks while Foster reinforced his batteries.

Goulding was later sent to Point Lookout Prison, Chesapeake Bay. While he was in prison, he was not fed much and upon release, he weighed 81 pounds. He was 5'-10" tall. He was the only member of his original company to survive the war.

After the war, he spent three years in England with family. In 1878 he settled in Chattanooga. His first employment here was as head of the first U.S. Weather Bureau office in Chattanooga. He did that for 7 years. In 1880, with Reverend Jonathan Bachman, of First Presbyterian Church, and Allan Burns he organized for Chattanooga the first Early Flood Warning System in the U.S. This became a regular feature of the Weather Bureau in 1883.

He moved to Little Rock for a few years as Professor of Meteorology at the University of Arkansas, but returned to Chattanooga in 1887. He became an organizer for the growing city. He organized Chattanooga's original Chamber of Commerce and was its secretary for 16 years. He also organized: the Chattanooga Real Estate Exchange; the Chattanooga Land, Coal, Iron and Railway Company; the Chattanooga Library Association; the Chattanooga Art Association; the Chattanooga Historical Association; and founded the

Essex and Smith Engine Company which manufactured the first engines in Chattanooga.

Goulding was vice president of the Howard Hydraulic Cement Company from 1892 until 1913. He was on the board of the first Chattanooga Cotton Factory and was VP of the Southern Brownstone Company from 1892 until 1910. He helped organize the Georgia Society in 1895. He was a member of First Presbyterian Church. He served as an officer in several positions for the Chattanooga United Confederate Veterans. He was President of the Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Auditorium in 1925.

He never married. His habit was to rise at 5 am and go to bed at 10 pm. He took a long walk daily and a nap for one hour each day at noon. He was seriously injured in May of 1929 as a pedestrian spun around by an automobile, caught on its door handle. He died five years later on May 21, 1934, at age 90.


