

Jacob Closs/Glass

The third child of John Adam Gloss/Closs and Barbara Dittweiler was Jacob or Jake as his friends called him. He was born on October 21, 1840 in Sharpsburg, PA.

As a teenager, Jacob lived with his sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Quiren Lutz in Glenshaw. He married Josephine about 1863 and they had one son, John. At that time, the family lived in the 15th ward near Homestead.

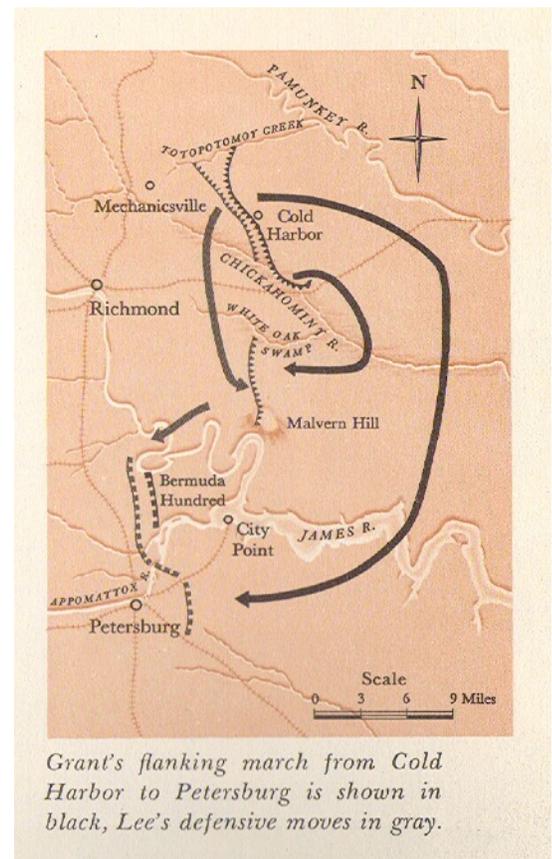
Jacob followed President Lincoln's request to defend the Union. He served in the Civil War along with his cousin Ben Milheizler and George Glass who was killed in the service of his country.

Jacob Glass served in the 211th Regiment, Pennsylvania Infantry, Company D. The 211th was organized at Pittsburgh on September 16, 1864. Jake enlisted on September 2, 1864 for one year. ¹Immediately after its organization, the troops left for the front and were assigned to Potter's provisional brigade on the Bermuda front (Bermuda Hundred, VA). As soon as they reached their position in the entrenchments, it was ordered to appear upon the parapets in full range of the enemy's guns in order to create a diversion in favor of the storming party about to move on Fort Harrison. Jake quickly experienced the horrors of war.

On November 27, the regiment joined the Army of the Potomac where it became part of the 9th corps. During the winter of 1864, the 211th camped between Fort Howard and Fort Alexander Hayes on the Army Line Railroad. During the harsh winter they drilled and made occasional expeditions with the troops of other corps. They did not engage in any battles until spring.

On March 25, 1865, the confederates attacked the line to take Fort Stedman. A large part of the line was captured. Most of the other regiments quickly became part of the battle. The 211th Camp was four miles away and was not yet bogged down in the battle. Their commander, Gen Hartranft, ordered the 211th to position themselves on high ground behind Fort Stedman. Gen Hartranft had a brilliant but deadly plan of attack. He would use the gallant men of the 211th as a diversion.

This large regiment would attract the fire of the enemy so the other regiments could be free to rush the enemy and overpower him. Since he felt as though he was sacrificing his men, he knew he had to personally lead the 211th and share in its peril so as to win the battle.



The 211th on high ground could be seen by all the other regiments and knew when the line moved forward they were to engage the enemy. It was said that the 211th had 600 muskets in line and that they moved forward *On a gallant manner* and *On most perfect order*. When the Confederates saw this large body of men, their resolve began to waver and they had little heart to further engage in battle. As a result, many prisoners were quickly taken and a very bloody battle was avoided. The battle to take Fort Stedman was successfully captured with only a loss of one and 10 wounded.

The final assault on Petersburg, VA on April 2, 1865 began with the order from Gen Grant. The VI Corp, which the 211th joined, broke through the entire Confederate right flank. While the Rebels retreated, the Union army turned the Rebel's own guns on them. The Confederates did not give up and made several attempts to regain their ground, but to no avail. On the evening of April 3, the Rebels rapidly retreated from Petersburg. The following morning, the Union Army enters Petersburg without any opposition.



Breaking the line at Petersburg was the worst battle for the unit. The regiment lost 4 officers and 17 men. 4 Officers and 89 men were wounded with 21 men missing. Since so many officers were wounded or died, it shows that they were fighting right along with their men.

The capture of Petersburg was important because it connected the railroads to Richmond, VA. Once, the North controlled all the railroads, than the South would be without any food, supplies or ammunition. The end of the war would be near. In fact, if the North had captured Petersburg in 1864, the war would have ended much sooner and Jake would not have volunteered.

After this battle, the 211th was ordered to the Appomattox to save the railroad and foot bridge. Both were on fire when they arrived. They managed to save the Railroad and only part of the footbridge. The village of Appomattox Court House was the scene of Lee's surrender.

Petersburg was the last hostile fighting the 211th were involved in. The regiment followed along the South Side Railroad, until they reached Nottoway Court House. It was there that Jake and his fellow soldiers heard the great news that on April 9, 1865, Palm Sunday, General Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia to General Grant.

It was in Nottoway that they also heard about the assassination of their Commander in Chief, Abraham Lincoln. It must have been received with great shock and remorse.

The 211th proceeded to Alexandria, VA on April 20th. They remained in Alexandria until June 2, 1865, when the regiment was mustered out.