

WINTER HEADQUARTERS



Longstreet in Greeneville



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On February 28, 1864, Confederate Gen. James Longstreet established his headquarters here in the house of Judge Samuel Milligan, a Unionist. The Greeneville Town Hall now occupies the site.



Samuel Milligan House

All images courtesy Tim Massey

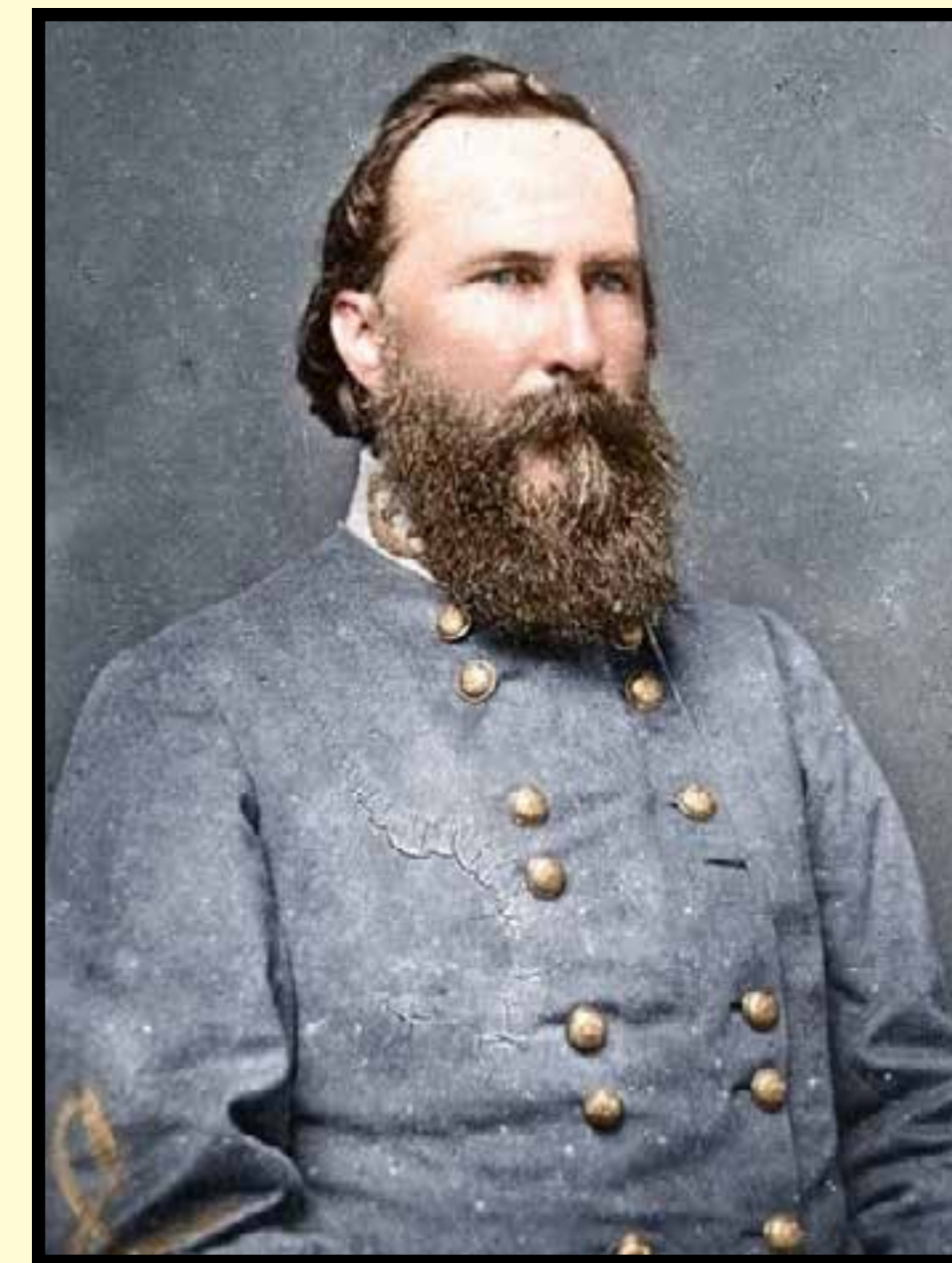
Gen. Robert E. Lee had detached Longstreet's First Corps from the Army of Northern Virginia in August 1863 to reinforce Gen. Braxton

Bragg's army. Longstreet arrived just in time to take part in Bragg's victory in the Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia. Longstreet later marched north to drive Union Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's forces from Knoxville but failed in the bloody assault on Fort Sanders on November 29. Longstreet blamed a division commander, Gen. Lafayette McLaws, for the defeat and relieved him of command.

Longstreet's 20,000-man corps camped about twenty-five miles west of Greeneville late in December before moving to Lick Creek Valley,

about ten miles west of here. His staff occupied Joseph R. Brown's Greenville house, Boxwood Manor, and other nearby dwellings. As Longstreet's men foraged in the countryside during the bitterly cold winter, they clashed with Union

patrols. Gen. John Hunt Morgan joined Longstreet's command while the headquarters was here. Longstreet's adjutant general, Lt. Col. G. Moxley Sorrel, and his staff telegraphed constant requests to the Confederate government in Richmond for clothing, shoes, grain, and fodder for the horses. Beginning March 11, 1864, Longstreet held McLaws's court martial at Mrs. Jane West's house, the headquarters of Gen. Edward Porter Alexander, Longstreet's artillery commander. McLaws was later acquitted. Longstreet and his corps rejoined Lee in Virginia in mid-April.



Gen. James Longstreet

Gen. Longstreet has fallen back to Greenville, Tenn. The country should give way to no improper excitement on account of this movement, as we are satisfied the wisest counsels determine every movement of Gen. Longstreet. Speculations though, are rife as to the cause of this "retrograde." To be nearer his base of supplies, and to watch the enemy's movements at the Gap, may be the causes. We don't know.

Abingdon Virginian, Feb. 26, 1864

