

Brevet Brigadier-General Augustus Moor
Delivered at Spring Grove Cemetery,
Cincinnati, Ohio, June 15, 2002.

By David L. Mowery

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“His coolness and courage were equal to the task. . . . His soldierly bearing, his nice sense of honor after the fight, and his devotion to the interests of the wounded, all attracted attention, and drew forth praises from the officers and men upon the field. Each of the regiments engaged were earnest in their expressions of praise of his valor and courage.” A northern correspondent wrote these words of a Union officer whose actions in battle he had “personally witnessed.” That officer was Colonel Augustus Moor, the first commander of the 28th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. (1)

Augustus Moor was born March 28, 1814, in Leipzig of the state of Saxony, Germany. He was educated at the Royal Saxon Academy of Forestry in Leipzig, a school founded on military principles. It was here that his interests in the military began. At the age of 16, Moor was involved in a minor German revolt that occurred in Leipzig in the fall of 1830. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to eight months imprisonment. After serving his sentence, he decided it was best to “try his luck in the free States of America.” (2)

Moor landed in the port of Baltimore, Maryland, in November 1833. He found work in Philadelphia, but his love for the military soon prompted him to join the city’s Washington Guard, of which he gained promotion to lieutenant. In 1836, during the height of the Second Seminole War, Moor joined as a first lieutenant in a company of the 1st Pennsylvania Volunteer Dragoons. He served with distinction in the Florida War, eventually earning the rank of lieutenant-colonel by the time his enlistment expired in 1838. On his way home from the war, his ship was wrecked off the coast of Haiti. He survived this ordeal and within a few months arrived in New Orleans. However, instead of returning to Philadelphia, Augustus Moor moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he started a bakery. His bakery was very successful, allowing Moor to expand his business into a restaurant, coffeehouse, and beer garden. Moor’s beer garden at the northwest corner of Main and Liberty Streets became a well-known haven for the German residents living in the Over-the-Rhine district of Cincinnati. (3)

While tending his bakery, Augustus met a 17-year old girl named Anna Maria Henn, the daughter of Bavarian immigrants John and Doretha Henn. Augustus and Anna Maria (“May”) were married in Cincinnati in 1839, and May Moor bore their first and only child, Louisa C. Moor, on July 26 of the following year. The family settled into their home at 116 13th St. (4)

When the Mexican War broke out in May 1846, August Moor immediately volunteered as captain of a company of Ohio infantry. The 32-year old veteran distinguished himself in several battles, especially during the campaign led by General Joseph Lane. Moor

steadily rose in the ranks until he became colonel of his regiment by the time the war ended in October. (5)

Moor once again returned to civilian life, but he could not deny his fervor toward military activities. In 1852, Moor accepted an appointment from the governor as Major-General of the 1st Division of Ohio Militia. He resigned this post after a couple of years due to his dissatisfaction over the organization of the militia. Moor decided to devote his life to running his beer garden and coffeehouse. (6)

It was not long, however, before the military would call upon his name once more. After the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861, Augustus Moor once again showed his patriotic spirit and determination to defend his state and country. On April 17th, a community meeting was called at Turner Hall in Cincinnati to begin the formation of an all-German company of volunteers. "Too much patriotism" filled the room, and when the attendees were asked who they wanted to lead the unit, the capacity crowd eagerly responded with the chant, "Moor! Moor!" However, Moor declined the position, saying, "If a thousand men have not signed up by tomorrow evening, the regiment is an idle dream!" He did not think that his fellow Cincinnatians would rise to the occasion; but Moor was to be proven wrong – in less than 24 hours, the full complement of men were signed into the service. This regiment was designated the 1st German Regiment, later renamed the 9th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Reluctantly, the crowd at Turner Hall elected Robert L. McCook instead of Moor to lead the first all-German unit in Ohio. Though not a German himself, McCook was an ally of the Cincinnati German Democrats, who were considered political outcasts at the time. (7)

During the whole month of May, Moor worked tirelessly to rally the Cincinnati German community to take up arms for the Union. His efforts paid off when a second all-German regiment was raised within a month. It was named the 2nd German Regiment. Though 47 years old and suffering from poor eyesight, Augustus Moor readily accepted the commission as its colonel. On June 10, 1861, his regiment was officially designated the 28th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. (8)

Colonel Augustus Moor was known to be a strict disciplinarian. Jacob D. Cox described him as a man with a "square head, with a dark, smooth shaven face, and rather stern expression, and [who] inspired his troops with something like awe, insuring prompt obedience of his commands." Moor showed great bravery and aptitude for his position throughout the war, but his career was often scarred by events out of his control. During the dark night following the Battle of Carnifex Ferry, (West) Virginia, in September 1861, Moor was badly injured by a fall off a rock ledge as he attempted to secure the safety of his troops from friendly fire. He recovered from his wounds, but after the war he blamed his chronic rheumatism on his slip off the "cliff" at Carnifex Ferry. (9)

When Robert L. McCook left in December to take command of a brigade in Kentucky, Brigadier-General William Rosecrans gave August Moor leadership of the brigade that contained the 28th Ohio. In this capacity, Moor did well in directing his soldiers in the action at Princeton, (West) Virginia, and in the summer campaigns throughout the central portion of that region. At the Battle of Frederick, Maryland, on September 12, 1862,

Moor's bravery was tremendous to the point of being foolhardy. His familiarity with the cavalry from his Seminole War days gave him the urge to lead a Union cavalry charge into the city of Frederick, which was defended by Confederate cavalry under Brigadier-General Wade Hampton. "Come on, boys, come on, let's give 'em hell," Colonel Moor yelled as they dashed across the National Pike bridge east of town. Things were going well as Moor's Illinois troopers successfully drove the Rebel defenders into the city limits. However, Hampton had laid a trap for the attackers. The resulting Confederate counterattack took Colonel Moor and his cavalymen by surprise, and during the ensuing melee, a South Carolina soldier pulled the portly Moor off of his black horse. The Union cavalymen fled the scene, leaving Moor to be captured. Afterwards, he was taken to Boonsboro, Maryland, where he was paroled the next day and was later exchanged. Moor would receive much criticism for this attack, especially from the non-German officers involved. Nonetheless, his superiors, George Crook and Ambrose Burnside, maintained their confidence in this courageous German. (10)

When Augustus Moor returned to active duty in January 1863, he took command of his old brigade in (West) Virginia. Throughout the coming year, Moor sent his troops on many forays and scouting expeditions, and by doing so, he effectively quelled the Confederate resistance in his department. Yet, the defining moment of August Moor's career came on November 6, 1863, at the Battle of Droop Mountain, West Virginia. Moor skillfully led his 4th brigade on a 9-mile detour over rough terrain that took them just behind the left flank of Brigadier-General John Echols's Confederate army. The surprise was complete, but the Confederates put up a fierce resistance. Moor described the action:

Now rising and yelling like Indians, they poured a tremendous fire into the Twenty-eighth, advancing rapidly at the same time. This was the critical moment of the day. I ordered the Twenty-eighth Regiment to lie down and fire by file. The sudden disappearance of the regiment and the increasing fire through the underbrush had an almost stunning effect upon the enemy. They hesitated. Colonel Harris, who had great difficulty to extricate his Tenth [West] Virginia Regiment through cavalry horses and other obstacles, now came up, just in the nick of time. I ordered the colonel to front the regiment by inversion and form on the right of the Twenty-eighth, which was promptly executed. (11)

This effective maneuver, combined with his subsequent charge upon the Confederate line, caused the Confederate flank to crumble, and the enemy retreated in disarray. Moor became the hero of the battle, and it would be the crowning point of his career. The Union victory at Droop Mountain ended the last major Confederate resistance in West Virginia. (12)

At the Battle of New Market, Virginia, on May 15, 1864, August Moor commanded the 1st Brigade of Major-General Franz Sigel's army. During the attack of Breckinridge's Confederates at the beginning of the battle, Colonel Moor's regiments on Manor's Hill disintegrated when the Rebel line overlapped their flanks. Moor tried to rally the soldiers, but the men would not re-form their lines. Moor later blamed the defeat of his brigade on the fact that Sigel had ordered two of his regiments, the 28th

Ohio and 116th Ohio, to the rear and had not recalled them soon enough to participate in the battle. (13)

August Moor retained control of the 1st Brigade when Major-General David Hunter took command of the Army of the Shenandoah later in May. Moor exhibited great courage and coolness during the June 5th Battle of Piedmont, Virginia, where he sent his brigade into a firestorm of shot and shell in three separate charges of the Confederate line. Moor's keen eye on placement of the artillery turned the tide of the fighting in this part of the field, and his troops successfully carried the Rebel works on the third attempt. After the battle, both Moor and his beloved 28th Ohio received the personal commendation of Major-General Hunter for conspicuous gallantry. (14)

On June 9, Moor began the march to Cincinnati. He dropped off the 1,000 prisoners from the Battle of Piedmont at Camp Morton, Indiana, and then he moved to Cincinnati, where he and most of the 28th Ohio mustered out of the service on July 23, 1864, with the expiration of their enlistments. Moor's military career had come to an end. On March 13, 1865, the army awarded Moor the rank of brevet brigadier-general for "gallantry at the battles of Droop Mountain and Piedmont, Va." Many believe he did not receive the rank earlier in the war due to "the jealousy which existed in higher military circles against foreigners." However, Moor was a modest man, and he never let rank affect his character. He always enjoyed being in the military, whether as a private or as a general. Nothing could change that in him. (15)

August Moor retired from military life for good this time. He returned to Cincinnati to manage his beer garden at Main & Liberty Streets. Besides being a member of the Pioneers' Association and being elected the first president of the Deutsche Verein of Cincinnati, Augustus quietly lived out the rest of his life with his wife, May. On October 11, 1883, at the age of 69, Augustus Moor died at his home at the corner of 13th & Race Streets in Over-the-Rhine. A writer for the *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette* summed up Moor's character with one sentence: "He was a man of deeds, not of words, boasting little of his adventurous life, but respected by all who knew him." (16)

Persons buried in Brevet-Brigadier General Augustus Moor's plot at Spring Grove Cemetery (Section 30, Lot 91):
(17)

- **Augustus Moor**, Brevet Brigadier-General U.S. Volunteers. Born Mar. 28, 1814, in Leipzig, Germany; died of disease of the bowels on Oct. 11, 1883 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Parents: unknown.
- **Anna Maria ("May") (Henn) Moor**, wife of Augustus Moor. Born in 1821 in Rheinland Bavaria; died of liver cancer on Aug. 6, 1896 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Parents: John & Doretha Henn.
- **Louisa C. (Moor) Weitzel**, daughter of Augustus & Anna Maria Moor, and first wife of Major-General Godfrey Weitzel. Born July 26, 1840, in Cincinnati, Ohio; died of severe burns after her dress caught on fire as she passed a fireplace on

Nov. 24, 1859, in West Point, New York. She was 3 weeks into her honeymoon when the tragedy occurred. Parents: see above.

Note: Godfrey Weitzel lived in the same house as Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Moor when he stayed in Cincinnati in 1860.

- **Friedrich Henn**, brother-in-law to Augustus Moor. Born Jan. 4, 1818, in Germany; died of typhoid fever on July 20, 1888. Parents: John & Doretha Henn.
- **Carolina Henn**, cousin of Augustus Moor's wife. Born Nov. 5, 1845 in Newport, KY; died May 23, 1888, at Longview Asylum in Cincinnati, Ohio. Parents: Charles & ? Henn.
- **Johann (John) Henn & Doretha Henn**, father-in-law and mother-in-law of Augustus Moor.
- **Ludwig ("Louis") Weitzel, Sr.**, father of Major-General Godfrey Weitzel. Born Apr. 1, 1807, in Bavaria; died of a heart attack on Aug. 29, 1861, in Mill Creek Township, Hamilton County, Ohio.
- **Susanna ("Susan") (Krummel) Weitzel**, mother of Major-General Godfrey Weitzel. Born Apr. 13, 1814, in Germany; died July 5, 1896, in Wichita, Kansas.
- **Lewis Weitzel, Jr.**, Colonel, U.S. Army, and brother of Major-General Godfrey Weitzel. Born in 1838 in Cincinnati, Ohio; died of a heart attack on Nov. 28, 1896, in Wichita, Kansas. Parents: Ludwig & Susanna Weitzel.
Note: During the Civil War, Louis Weitzel, Jr., became a Captain in the 1st U.S. Volunteer Infantry. He later served as a member of Major-General Godfrey Weitzel's staff, earning the rank of brevet lieutenant-colonel of volunteers.
- **Godfrey Weitzel, Jr.**, son of Godfrey & Louisa Weitzel. Born Sep. 26, 1865, in Cincinnati, Ohio; died at childbirth. Parents: see above.
- **Blanche Celeste Weitzel**, daughter of Godfrey & Louisa Weitzel. Born Feb. 16, 1868, in Cincinnati, Ohio; died of measles on Apr. 5, 1868, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Parents: see above.



Brevet Brigadier-General Augustus Moor. Moor was the first colonel of the 28th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. [From U.S. Army Military History Institute, Mollus Collection.]

Footnotes:

- (1) Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), p. 188.
- (2) Roger D. Hunt and Jack R. Brown, *Brevet Brigadier Generals in Blue* (Gaithersburg, Maryland, 1990); Henry A. Ford and Kate Ford, *History of Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881), p. 137.
- (3) *Ibid.*, p. 137; James Barnett, *Forty For the Union: Civil War Generals Buried in Spring Grove Cemetery* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1981); *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883; Roger D. Hunt and Jack R. Brown, *Brevet Brigadier Generals in Blue* (Gaithersburg, Maryland, 1990); Robert J. Wimberg, *Cincinnati: Over-the-Rhine – A Historical Guide to 19th Century Buildings and Their Residents* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1987), p. 60.
- (4) *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio*; Spring Grove Cemetery Office, *Records of Burials in Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 2001); C. S. Williams, *Williams' Cincinnati Directory, City Guide & Business Mirror* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1861), p. 253.
- (5) *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883; Henry A. Ford and Kate Ford, *History of Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881), p. 137.
- (6) *Ibid.*, p. 137; Robert J. Wimberg, *Cincinnati and the Civil War: Off to Battle* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992), p. 101; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio*.
- (7) Robert J. Wimberg, *Cincinnati and the Civil War: Off to Battle* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992), pp. 13-17; Henry A. Ford and Kate Ford, *History of Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881), pp. 138-139.
- (8) Robert J. Wimberg, *Cincinnati and the Civil War: Off to Battle* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992), pp.13-14, 67, 101;); *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883; Henry A. Ford and Kate Ford, *History of Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881), p. 137; Roster Commission of Ohio, *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion – 1861-1866*, vol. 3 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1888), pp. 303-305; Whitelaw Reid, *Ohio in the War*, vol. 2 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1868), pp. 192-194.
- (9) Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), p. 26; United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (OR), I, vol. 5, pt. 1, pp.143-144; United States Census Bureau, *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio*.
- (10) Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. 1 (Secaucus, New Jersey, 1887), p. 397; OR, I, vol. 15, pt. 1, pp. 504-508; Whitelaw Reid, *Ohio in the War*, vol. 2 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1868), pp. 194-196; John Michael Priest, *Before Antietam: The Battle for South Mountain* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 91-97, 132.
- (11) OR, I, vol. 21, pt. 1, pp. 964, 976-977; OR, I, vol. 25, pt. 1, pp. 11-12, 96-97; *Ibid.*, pt. 2, pp. 145, 164; Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain*

- November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), pp. 104, 125, 128-129, 136, 140-143, 188; OR, I, vol. 29, pt. 1, pp. 504-508, 510-512; *Ibid.*, p. 511.
- (12) Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), pp. 136, 140-143, 188; OR, I, vol. 29, pt. 1, pp. 504-508, 510-512.
- (13) William C. Davis, *The Battle of New Market* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1975), pp. 75-78, 96-108, 113; OR, I, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 79-81.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 602, 606; Scott C. Patchan, *Forgotten Fury: The Battle of Piedmont, Va.* (Fredericksburg, Virginia, 1995); Francis H. Kennedy, *The Civil War Battlefield Guide*, 2nd Edition (New York, 1998), pp. 301-303; Gary C. Walker, *Hunter's Fiery Raid Through Virginia Valleys* (Roanoke, Virginia, 1989), pp. 64-137, 156; Whitelaw Reid, *Ohio in the War*, vol. 2 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1868), p. 196.
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 196; Roster Commission of Ohio, *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion – 1861-1866*, vol. 3 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1888), p. 303; Roger D. Hunt and Jack R. Brown, *Brevet Brigadier Generals in Blue* (Gaithersburg, Maryland, 1990); Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), p. 228; Henry A. Ford and Kate Ford, *History of Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881), p. 138; *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883.
- (16) United States Census Bureau, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio*; Terry Lowry, *Last Sleep: The Battle of Droop Mountain November 6, 1863* (Charleston, West Virginia, 1996), p. 26; Spring Grove Cemetery Office, *Records of Burials in Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 2001); Robert J. Wimberg, *Cincinnati: Over-the-Rhine – A Historical Guide to 19th Century Buildings and Their Residents* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1987), p. 60; *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, October 12, 1883.
- (17) Spring Grove Cemetery Office, *Records of Burials in Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 2001); *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, November 25, 1859; *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, November 25, 1859; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio*; Janet B. Hewett, *The Roster of Union Soldiers 1861-1865: Regular Army*, vol. 2 (Wilmington, North Carolina, 2000), p. 367; Maj. Godfrey Weitzel, "Entry of the United States Forces Into Richmond, Virginia, April 3, 1865. Calling Together of the Virginia Legislature and Revocation of the Same," *Letter Press of Correspondence, Official Reports, Financial Statements, &c.*, (Detroit, 1881).

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