

Hidden Gems and Forgotten People

NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY LISBURN BRANCH



ST. CLAIR MULHOLLAND

St. Clair Augustin Mulholland, soldier, pension agent, author, lecturer, artist and traveller, was born 1st April 1839 and was the eldest child of Henry Mulholland [1796 – 1856], a Lighter Owner and Coal Merchant of “The Quay”, Lisburn, and his second wife, Georgina Hester Agnes Sinclaire [1803 – 1871]. Henry’s first wife was Anne Turtle and by her he had 14 children before she died in 1835. He married Georgina in 1838 and by her had four surviving children. Henry and Georgina took their family to the United States of America just after the Famine, about 1849, settling in Philadelphia.

During the American Civil War, at the age of 23, St. Clair was commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel of the Sixteenth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers being assigned to the Army of the Potomac and joining up with General Meagher’s Irish Brigade. He took part in the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, fighting on the Union side. He is said to have been a brilliant, capable and reliable officer and, despite receiving wounds several times during the war, he distinguished himself, being commissioned first Brevet Brigadier-General and then Major-General in 1864, being one of the youngest Major-Generals created during the Civil War.

He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery at the Battle of Chancellorsville in 1863, although not receiving his medal until 1895. The citation reading “In command of the picket line held the enemy in check all night to cover the retreat of the Army”

After the war he was appointed Chief of Police for Philadelphia and later Pension Agent. He had fine literary tastes, was a noted lecturer and a painter of repute. He was widely known as an author writing accounts of the battles of Gettysburg and Fredericksburg, a history of the life of General Hancock and “The Irish Brigade in the War for the Union”.

He died 17th February 1910 and is buried in the Old Cathedral Cemetery, Philadelphia.