

A.P. Hill

Ambrose Powell Hill was born in Culpepper, Virginia. He was the youngest of six children. He went to the U.S. Military Academy, and though he made a lot of friends with young men who would eventually become generals, there was a great deal of tension between him and his future commander, Thomas J. Jackson. Hill graduated in 1947 and fought in the Mexican War as it came to a close. He was then sent to the Seminole wars. He made the rank of first lieutenant, but spent the next several years working on a coastal survey.

Hill resigned from the U.S. military in 1861, when Virginia seceded from the Union, and joined the 13th Virginia Infantry Regiment. A year later he held the rank of Colonel and was serving with Robert E. Lee. In Hill, Lee saw aggressive leadership skills and much bravery, and Hill was put in command of a division of soldiers that Hill dubbed the “Light Division.” Though he was apparently prone both to great excitement and to illnesses, Hill quickly became one of the highest ranked Confederate generals. He led troops in the Peninsula Campaign (1862) and the Battle of Williamsburg. When Stonewall Jackson was killed in 1863, Hill took over command of his soldiers. After being promoted to lieutenant general he was placed in command of the just created Third Corps of Lee’s Army, which he led at Gettysburg in 1863, and at the Siege of Petersburg (1864-1865), where he was killed in action by a Union Soldier, a few days before Lee’s surrender to U.S. Grant.

How did the events of his time influence A.P. Hill’s military career?

