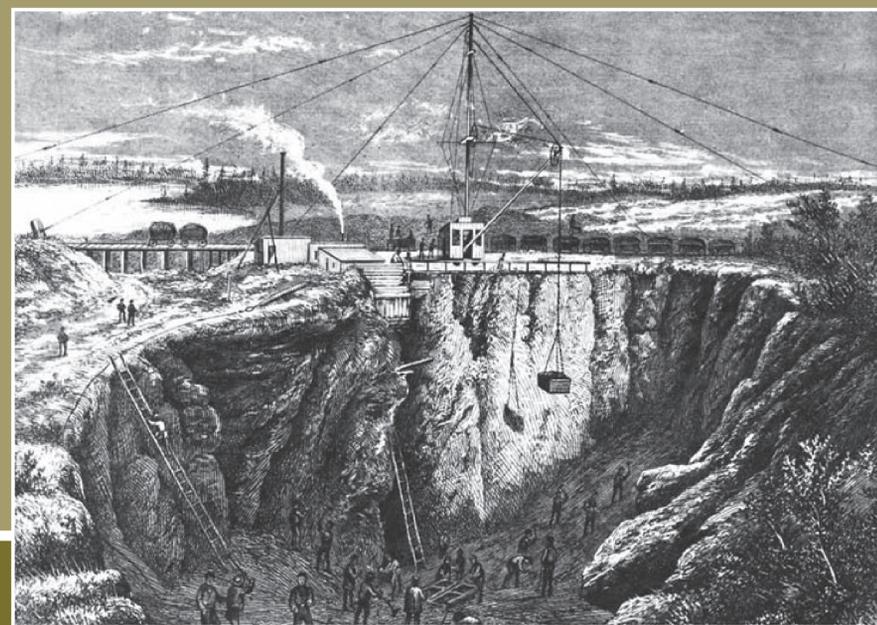


# American's Taking Over Cobourg

Looking back 100 years, to the early days of Confederation, we might be justified in wondering whether the good citizens of Cobourg had any concerns **about being taken over by the Americans!**

- 1867** They take over the defunct Cobourg and Peterborough Railway and form the Cobourg, Peterborough & Marmora Mining & Railway Company
- 1868** Retired Tennessee legislator and Cavalry veteran, William T Chambliss joins the Board of "the Company"
- 1874** Chambliss opens his new hotel, *The Arlington*, with a grand ball
- 1879** He builds a grand mansion and plans to stay forever.

**It sounds like a one-man takeover, but really it was a family affair and the good citizens of Cobourg did not seem to mind at all.**

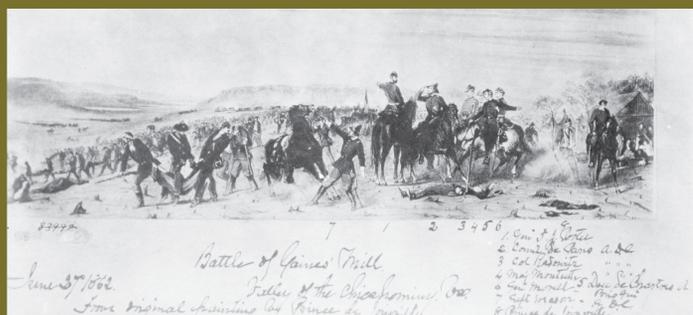


Marmora Mines

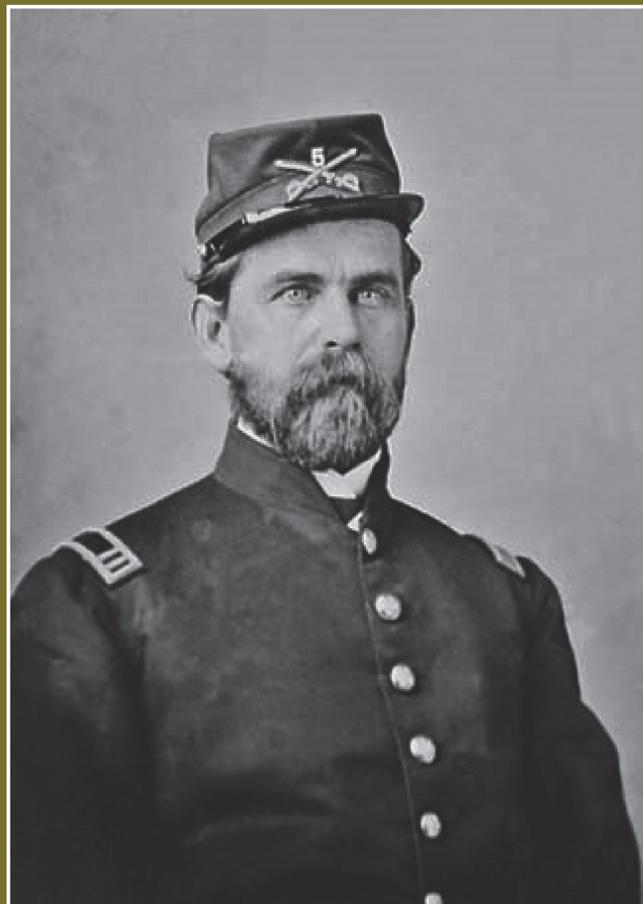
## William P. Chambliss

William P. was already a man of wide experience before ever arriving in Canada. Born in Virginia, he moved with his family to Tennessee in his youth. During the Mexican War he fought as a lieutenant with the Tennessee volunteers. He next served as a member of the Tennessee legislature and practiced law before receiving his appointment in the 2nd U.S. Cavalry in 1855.

He remained with the Union Army during the American Civil War and was **wounded at the battle of Gaines Mill**. On recovering from his injuries, Chambliss rejoined the army and in 1864 was promoted to major in the 4th U.S. Cavalry. After the Civil War he served with his regiment until resigning in November 1867.



Battle of Gaines Mill – June 27, 1862



**But it was Chambliss' family life which brought him to Canada.** In 1863 he married Sallie Shoenberger, daughter of the wealthy Pittsburg industrialist Peter Shoenberger. Sallie's brother, George, was looking for a steady source of iron ore for their growing iron and steel mills. So he bought the Blairton Mine near Marmora, Ontario, about 50 miles north-east of Cobourg. To bring the ore to market they bought the old C&PR and created **the Cobourg, Peterborough & Marmora Mining & Railway Company**. That was in February 1867.

William Chambliss soon moved his family to Cobourg where they **became active in the social and political life of the town** and entertained many out of town guests including the wealthy Pittsburg industrialists.

In 1872 William Chambliss and George Schoenberg, proposed the building of a new hotel in Cobourg. They cited increasing travel for business, the healthy location, cheapness of living and general pleasant surroundings, as reasons for visitors to come and spend time in Cobourg. In addition the location of Cobourg, in close proximity to the industrial cities of the northern states with rail and shipping links, made the journey a relatively easy one.

**The Arlington Hotel opened in June 1874 with a grand ball**, given by the stockholders, in honour of the event. The Cobourg Sentinel's report on the evening said:

*"It was the most brilliant and the most fashionable assembly that has ever met in this Town upon an occasion, and all seemed to enjoy themselves in the highest degree".*

**William Chambliss became a tireless promoter of Cobourg** as a summer resort for Americans from both the northern and southern states. After a fire at his residence in 1878, he built a grand mansion called "*Hadfield Hurst*" on Green St. This residence was later bought by the Cornell family and later still used as a private residential school for girls. Its current use is as an apartment building.

William continued to live in Cobourg until his death in February 1887.

Hadfield Hurst on Green St.



The Arlington Hotel

