

DR. GEORGE E. PLASTER'S
CIVIL WAR SERVICE

George E. Plaster enlisted on 24 July 1861 at Union (Unison), Virginia for one year. He was mustered in as a 2nd Lieutenant and put in command of Company A, the Loudoun Dragoon, 6th Virginia Cavalry, which was under Colonel Charles William Field, an 1840 graduate of West Point. Lt. Plaster left Welbourne, the home of Colonel Richard Henry Dulany, on 25 July with his Company and arrived in Ashland, 17 miles north of Richmond, on 29 July. On 30 July, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. He was with Colonel Dulany at Centerville in February 1862 when his horse, "one of the best in the regiment", was killed when someone struck him with a spear. On 14 March 1862, he was captured near Upperville and taken to the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, DC. On 1 August 1862 he was exchanged. He then was put in command of Company D, 6th Virginia Cavalry. While on picket near Culpeper he checked the advance of the enemy until his company could rally, engaging in a hard to hand conflict with Colonel Davis of the 8th Pennsylvanians. Lt. Plaster fought in all the important cavalry battles under Generals JEB Stuart and Fitzhugh Lee. On 13 September 1863 he took 30 days leave. On 20 October he became the Acting Regimental Adjutant. On 23 July 1864 he was recommended for promotion by General Lunsford L. Lomax for "valor and skill." Although wounded on 9 October 1864, he was promoted to Captain and took command of Company H, 6th Virginia Cavalry on 27 October 1864. While holding the temporary rank of major, he was captured on 1 April during the Battle of Five Forks near Dinwiddie Courthouse, after the fall of Richmond and

Petersburg and just eight days before General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Dr. Plaster's comrades loved to tell the following story as characteristic of him.

He and his troops, greatly fatigued after an all night march, were surrounded by fresher Union soldiers. A futile attempt was made by them to retreat and escape capture. Major Plaster's horse was shot from under him. As he crept along through the woods trying to escape, a Yankee soldier on horseback spied him. "Hey, double time there!" "Double time, hell," Major Plaster retorted. "If I could do that, I wouldn't be in the fix I'm in now."

He was sent as a prisoner of war to Johnson's Island, Ohio. On 19 June 1865 he took the Oath of Allegiance and was released. He walked back to Snickersville (Bluemont). He attended, at 81, the "Richmond Reunion 1907" of Confederate Veterans. He died in 1925, just two months before his 99th birthday.