



The Railsplitter

The Newsletter of the Department of Illinois
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Fall 2021

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DC Hutchinson's Message

Brothers,

2021 has been another year of uncertainty. If 2020 wasn't bad enough, the COVID pandemic reached unexpected new heights with the Delta variant causing reinstatement of more stringent precautions in Illinois, and many places around the country. The United States reached a milestone that no-one wanted or expected, with over 700,000

Americans dying from the disease, or complications since the beginning of the pandemic.

Many of our Camps were able to hold in-person meetings again, and some held simultaneous online meetings allowing those Brothers who live at a distance or have health issues, to participate. Several Camps were able to continue their projects and also participate in special memorial ceremonies. I had the privilege in attending a couple of them.

It was hoped that the Midterm Department Bivouac would have been an opportunity for us to gather for lunch, enjoy some entertainment, conduct a bit of limited business, and learn more about Central Illinois, specifically McLean County in the Civil War. But due to low reservations, it had to be cancelled. An online meeting to conduct a few items of business is scheduled for November 13. The link has already been sent out.

"Please consider stepping up and taking an office in your Camp".

With fall upon us, it is time to think about upcoming Camp office elections. Brothers, Camps are the backbone of the SUVCW, and without the participation of all, nothing is accomplished toward our mission as Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. All Camps have a core group of Brothers who are enthusiastic, and many have been the backbone of the organization by taking the same positions year in, and year out. Sometimes these individuals risk burnout. Please consider stepping up and taking on an office in your Camp. None of the jobs are very difficult or take a lot of time. You get out what you put in.

Remember what your Civil War ancestor did. He left his farm or business, kissed his family goodbye and enlisted, not knowing if he would ever return home to his family. He experienced many hardships, including exhaustion from long marches, malnutrition, disease, and wounds from battle. Over 650,000 never returned. We can step up ourselves to preserve the memory of what they did by being an active participant. It's the least we can do. So when it comes time for your Camp to elect

officers, raise your hand and say, **“YES, COUNT ME IN!”**

Also, don't forget the Veterans of later conflicts this fall and winter. Veterans Day is on a Thursday this year so if you have the day off, march in a parade, attend a ceremony, visit a cemetery and place a flag. Fly your flag at home.

Participate in Wreaths Across America by purchasing a wreath, or ten, and participate in a ceremony near you at noon on December 18. Visit <https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/> for all the details about ordering and to find a location near you.

Submitted in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,
Joseph M. Hutchinson, Commander
Department of Illinois
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

AN APOLOGY

For the Summer 2021 Railsplitter, Brother Joe Hutchinson submitted stories and several treasured pictures of the DEPARTMENT'S ENCAMPMENT, and the MEMORIAL SERVICE for Brother Terry Dyer. His submissions were exceedingly well done, very much appreciated, and enjoyed by the entire Department. Brother Chuck Murphy extends apologies to Department Commander Hutchinson for inadvertently failing to credit him as the source of these two excellent articles.

CHAPLAINS CORNER



Many Years ago, while conducting a Sunday Morning Church Service at General/President Grant's home Church in Galena, Illinois, I spoke to the congregation about the importance of young children having a PET. A dog, a cat, a bird - anything, so that they learn when their pet dies, they will have experienced the emotion of saying "Good Bye" to someone they have been close to. Grandparents, relatives - all of us die, and if the child has never experienced a Loss, they will not handle it well.

Today my 50-year-old Son had to put down his companion, friend and treasure - Chopper. He had the pooch for 17 years and saying so-long was very difficult. The belief is that the pets we have loved in this life will be waiting for us at the "Rainbow Bridge", when we cross over into the Promised Land.

So, you're probably wondering what this has to do with a Chaplain's Corner? Well, there is Noah - and lots of animals entrusted to him. There is the Good Shepherd - who watches out for us. (Sheep are the dumbest animals in the barnyard. Just ask anyone who has any.) Then there were the oxen and camels at Bethlehem, and shepherds too.

Still my son cried, because he had lost something he loved dearly.
Can you identify with him?

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty
Chaplain Jerry

“Can You Identify with him?”
Chaplain Jerry

PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION

Music has been a very important part of my life starting when Sister Mary Deofilia, asked me to stay a minute after school to tell me something. I thought, “What have I done now”? She said, “Michael, you are going to join the ladies' choir on Sunday for the choir mass”. I was eight, and never looked back.

There have been many diverse subjects written by me for the *Railsplitter*, so why not an article about the top songs of the Civil War?

It would be hard to overestimate the ubiquity and importance of music during the Civil War. In the camps of both North and South, regimental bands regularly inspired, amused, and consoled soldiers. On a daily basis they faced the threat of death borne by bugs they could not see, and from bullets and cannon-shot of the enemy - they saw ever so clearly -

given the close-quarters combat of the era. Far from their homes, music provided a diversion from both loneliness and terror. On the march and in battle, music infused the men with a spirit of elan and commitment to the cause.

Let's highlight some of the most popular songs of the era, in no particular order of importance.

“John Brown’s Body” (words by various authors; music from the hymn “Say Brothers Will You Meet Us on Canaan’s Happy Shore”).

One of the most difficult developments for historians of the Civil War to explain was the widespread adoption of the abolitionist agenda by Northerners mid-way through the war. At the beginning, Lincoln and the Republican party were careful to frame the conflict as a war to preserve the Union, as the vast majority of Yankees held what we would today call “racist” views of Africans. Abolitionists were seen as fanatics and kooks: after all, their idea of political action included things like holding meetings during which they burned copies of the Constitution. John Brown himself was viewed as a wild-eyed, murderous ruffian who deserved his execution by Virginia authorities in 1859. Few Union Soldiers would have marched south to free the black man. This song changed that. Originating in 1861, as a camp song meant to tease a soldier named John Brown, it was transformed into an anthem honoring the memory of John Brown, the abolitionist. Union soldiers embraced it in 1862 and sang it often to irate Southern soldiers and civilians. Soon, the song set the stage to change opinions, and made the Emancipation Proclamation more acceptable. It then changed the war into a crusade to free the slaves.

“The Bonnie Blue Flag” was a song of the South (words by Harry McCarthy; music from “The Irish Jaunting Car”).

The Confederacy felt the need to reject traditional anthems like “The Star-Spangled Banner”, “Hail Columbia”, or “Yankee Doodle”, and develop songs emblematic of their cause. “Dixie”, which originated as a minstrel ditty of the eve of secession, was highly popular from the war’s outset, but many felt that its quaint lyrics lacked the requisite nobility of a proper National song. The opening stanza of The Bonnie Blue Flag is:

“We are a band of brothers, And native to the soil, Fighting for the property, We gained by honest toil. And when our rights were threatened, The cry rose near and far-“Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag, That bears a single star! Yes. Property was not their land and personal wealth; it was their slaves.”

“The Battle Cry of Freedom” (words and music by George Frederick Root; Southern version with words by William H. Barnes).

This anthem proved to be the second most popular song of the North. Indeed, among the civilian population it likely even surpassed the soldiers’ favorite, “John Brown’s Body”. It was an instant hit upon creation in July of 1862. Its stirring music combined with lyrics that were considered more high-toned than other ditties. It was a powerful song that served as a rallying cry among both the troops and civilians, especially as the war seemed to drag on. The South adopted the melody and replaced the lyrics “The Union Forever” with “Our Dixie Forever”. There were no copyright laws at that time.

“We Are Coming Father Abraham” (Words by James Sloan Gibbons; music by Luther O. Emerson).

James Sloan Gibbons, a Quaker and abolitionist, wrote this song in response to Lincoln’s call for 300,000 volunteers in July of 1862. It was soon set to several different



“A RALLYING CRY”

FROM MORT KUNSTLER’S “RAISE THE COLORS AND FOLLOW ME”, THIS SCENE IS AN IDEAL CARICATURE OF THE BOYS EXHORTING A RALLYING CRY WHILE ENGAGED IN MORTAL COMBAT FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM.

melodies, the most successful of which was that by Luther O. Emerson. The song encouraged Northern enlistment and ranked just behind “John Brown’s Body” and “The Battle Cry of Freedom” in popularity during the first half of the war.

“Grafted into the Army” (words and music by Henry Clay Work).

There were plenty of cynics who mocked the patriotic call to arms of “Father Abraham.” Like most wars, the Civil War was a rich man’s war, but a poor man’s fight. In the North, a draftee could pay a fee of \$300 to avoid conscription and his place was filled by some unknown poor soul, who could not afford to pay the exemption. A draftee could also hire a substitute for a lesser amount than \$300. Many poor Northern men were persuaded in this way to put their lives at risk for cash. The songwriter poked fun at the system in a song that describes a poor man, Jimmy, who is “grafted” into joining the army in this way.

“Our Jimmy has gone for to live in a tent, They have grafted him into the Army; He finally puckered up his courage and went, When they grafted him into the army. I told them the child was too young, alas!” “Oh, Jimmy, farewell! Your brothers fell Way down in Alabarmy; I thought they would spare a lone widder’s heir, But they grafted him into the army.”

“That’s What’s the Matter” (words and music by Stephen Foster).

The “Father of American Music” wrote several songs about the war - the end of which he would not live to see. He died in 1864, penniless. This song, written in 1862, is typical of so many of Foster’s works: a lively, catchy tune combined with simple, yet memorable, lyrics. This song takes a lighthearted look at the conflict between North and South, in this case upbraiding the “rebel crew” for “storming the red, white, and blue”, and reassuring nervous Northerners that “secession’s dodge is all played out.”

“We live in hard and stirring times, Too sad for mirth, too rough for rhymes; For songs of peace have lost their chimes, And that’s what’s the matter! The men we held as brothers true, Have turned into a rebel crew; So now we have to put them through; And that’s what’s the matter! That’s what the matter. The rebels have to scatter; We’ll make them flee, by land and sea, And that’s what’s the matter!”

“Tenting on the Old Campground” (words and music by Walter Kitteridge).

Melancholy songs about the life of the soldier were popular around both campfire and fireplace. This song was composed by a New Hampshire native who never actually served as a soldier. The song recounts the hardships of army life: separation from loved ones, the fatigue of marching and combat, and the death of comrades. The climax of the song, which never fails to pierce the soul of the listener, comes when the final two lines of the chorus are jarringly altered, from “*Tenting tonight, tenting tonight/Tenting on the old campground*” to “*Dying tonight. Dying tonight/Dying on the old campground.*”

“Weeping Sad and Lonely” (words by Charles C. Sawyer; music by Henry Tucker).

Known also as “When This Cruel War is Over”, this might have been the most popular song in all of America during the war. It was so deeply moving that several Union generals banned its performance in camp, lest it demoralize the troops and encouraged desertions. The narrator of the song is a wife or girlfriend who mournfully bids farewell to her beloved: “*Oft in dreams I see thee lying on the battle plain, Lonely, wounded, even dying, calling but in vain.*” More than a million copies of sheet music for this song was sold in the North.

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” adapted from (John Brown’s Body) by Julia Ward Howe.

A song that has been adapted to various themes over 150 years, this song was originally a religious camp meeting song. When John Brown was finally caught and executed, the song’s lyrics were changed and replaced to a marching style song. When the war started, the version we know today is that which the Union army clung to. The verse below is usually sung quietly and with great reverence;

“In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea. With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me. As he died to make men holy let us die to make men free. His truth is marching on.”

The meaning of “*let us die to make men free*” was not a theme for American’s freedom, but an acknowledgment that slaves were persons and not property, and that it was a right cause to lay down our lives for their freedom. This verse has always touched my heart.

To close, let me quote General Robert E. Lee. “I don’t believe we can have an army without music.” In this same vein, a Confederate army officer quipped to a Union counterpart at Appomattox that, “If we’d had your music, sir, we’d have whipped you out of your boots”.

“This verse has always touched my heart.”

Michael Zafran

Respectfully submitted in F. C. L., Michael Zafran, C.C. and P. I., Department of Illinois

CAMP NEWS

Custer Camp #1 - Wilmette

On Saturday, August 14th, George A. Custer Camp #1, Department of Illinois, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, honored fifteen unknown Union soldiers by replacing their broken and illegible markers with new marble headstones. The camp was joined by two artillery groups, SVR unit Battery L, 1st Illinois Light Artillery Volunteers, and Battery A, 1st Illinois Light Artillery Volunteers (Chicago Light). Also in attendance was the Regimental Volunteer Band of Wisconsin. They provided musical interludes, concluding with a short concert. Our program began with a parade composed of all Union units including color guard, SVR personnel, marching band and battery members. National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski offered the Invocation. Sheridan Camp #2 CC Michael Zafren provided vocals, including our National Anthem. Speakers included remarks by PNC Steven Michaels, Illinois DC Joe Hutchinson, PCC Mark Braun, PI Noel Jackson and Cemetery Director, Michael Weidman. Keynote speaker was Brother Rob Girardi of Camp #6165, and Camp #1’s Father Robert Miller highlighted the event with a very moving benediction. PDC CC Nick Kaup MC’d the program. Wreath presentation, cannon salute and Taps were performed, and our Colors were thereafter retired.

TO THE RIGHT IS THE 4TH MILITARY DISTRICT COMMANDER, LTC TOM BROWN, AND ON HIS RIGHT, RETIRED MAJOR TOM HAUFF, PCC.

BELOW IS THE REGIMENTAL VOLUNTEER BAND OF WISCONSIN, WITH PDC NICK KAUP STANDING ON THE FAR RIGHT.

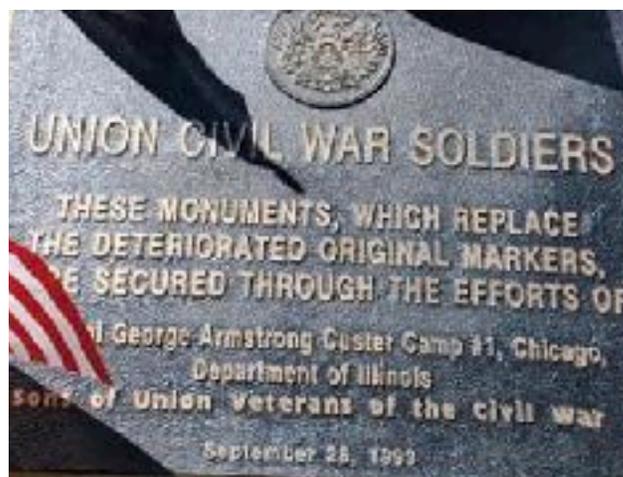




SPEAKERS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT INCLUDE PI NOEL JACKSON, FATHER ROBERT MILLER, NATIONAL CHAPLAIN JERRY KOWALSKI, AUTHOR ROB GIRARDI, CAMP HISTORIAN MARK BRAUN, MC, PDC NICK KAUP, AND DC JOE HUTCHINSON.



THE PHOTO ON THE LEFT IS THE COLOR GUARD ON THE MOVE LEADING THE PROCESSION THROUGH CHICAGO'S ROSEHILL CEMETERY TO THE SITE OF THE CEREMONY. ON THE RIGHT IS THE HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATED BY CAMP #1 TO INTERPRET THE SITE FOR ALL THOSE WHO FOLLOW IN OUR FOOTSTEPS, AND FOR INTERESTED PASSERS BY.



PDC JOHN BIGWOOD IS THE DEPARTMENT'S EAGLE SCOUT CHAIRMAN AND ACTIVELY REPRESENTS US WITH THE BSA AND ROTC PROGRAMS. HE ALSO REPRESENTS AND HOLDS OFFICES IN THE CHAPEL OF FOUR CHAPLAINS AND MARINE CORPS LEAGUE. IN THE PHOTO ON THE RIGHT BROTHER BIGWOOD IS PRESENTING OUR SUVCW EAGLE SCOUT CERTIFICATE TO EAGLE SCOUT PETER G. MARS OF TROOP 13, BOLINGBROOK, IL





IN AUGUST GEORGE A. CUSTER CAMP #1 INITIATED TWO NEW MEMBERS, BROTHERS CHRIS FOLEY AND STEVEN FRATT. OUR DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN, JERRY KOWALSKI, DOING THE HONORS.

OUR SEPTEMBER CAMP MEETING FEATURED A GUEST SPEAKER AND INITIATION OF THREE NEW MEMBERS. BROTHER PCC/CS DON SHERMAN DID THE HONORS. BROTHERS CHARLES RYAN, LARRY AMIDEI, & GENE SALECKER ARE OUR NEWEST ADDITIONS.



Respectively Submitted
PDC CC Nick Kaup

Old Glory Camp # 6165 - Chicago



CC JEFF KAUP AND UNION RIDGE CEMETERY DIRECTOR, BROTHER DAVE TOTSCH, RECEIVED THE CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION FROM "CHICAGO'S OWN YOUNG MARINES" UNIT FOR THE CAMP'S SUPPORT AND AWARDS PROGRAM. EACH YEAR OLD GLORY CAMP #6165 PROVIDES THE AWARD WHICH IS GIVEN TO THE UNIT'S BEST YOUNG CADET.

OLD GLORY CAMP #6165 ATTENDED THE YOUNG MARINES AWARDS CEREMONY. THEIR UNIT PARTICIPATES IN OUR CAMP'S MEMORIAL DAY AND VETERANS DAY PROGRAMS. IN THE PHOTO ON THE RIGHT, PDC JOHN BIGWOOD PRESENTS THE OUTSTANDING YOUNG MARINE AWARD TO YM/PFC MARCUS L. REGALADO. UNIT COMMANDER LEN JAKUBIAK IS CENTER. PFC REGALADO'S PLAQUE IS PICTURED ON THE RIGHT BELOW. AND IMMEDIATELY BELOW IS THE YOUNG MARINES COLOR GUARD, SQUARED AWAY AND DEMONSTRATING AN EXCELLENT MILITARY BEARING. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHICAGO'S OWN YOUNG MARINES, GOOGLE SAME.





PRESENTED TO

YM/PFC MARCUS L. REGALADO
CHICAGO'S OWN YOUNG MARINES

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR
OUTSTANDING MILITARY BEARING

OLD GLORY CAMP # 6165
SONS OF UNION VETERANS
OF THE CIVIL WAR
JEFF KAUP, CAMP COMMANDER

JUNE 19, 2021

Fraternity Charity Loyalty

Respectively Submitted
PDC Nick Kaup



Just a reminder, submission dates for Railsplitter articles and photos will continue to be January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15. Please email items for the newsletter to Brother Chuck Murphy at murphy2067@comcast.net. After working-up each issue, he'll forward to DSVC Gary Gunderson for editing.



Bryner Camp #67 - Peoria

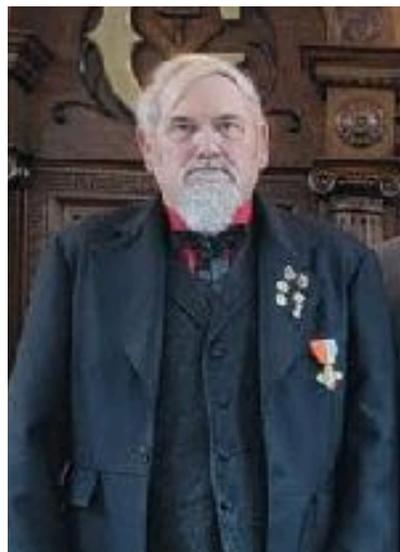
CC Ron Kirchgessner has been busy presenting on Civil War medicine at re-enactments and local festivals. The following pictures provide an overview of some of his activities.

CC RON SNAPPED THIS PHOTO OF HIS BROTHER, DICK, BY THEIR MEDICAL EXHIBIT AT THE MARBOLD MANSION NEAR PETERSBURG ON SEPTEMBER 11.



THE PHOTO ON THE LEFT IS OF CC KIRCHGESSNER'S SET UP AT SHADOWS OF BLUE AND GRAY AT THE MORTON CIVIL WAR DAYS ON OCTOBER 1 & 2. ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL ILLINOIS CIVIL WAR DANCE SOCIETY, DC HUTCHINSON PRESENTED A PARTICIPATORY PROGRAM WITH MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ON CIVIL WAR DANCING FOR A SCHOOL DAZE PROGRAM.

ON THE RIGHT IS A PHOTO OF CC RON AS HE RECEIVED THE DEMOLAY CROSS OF HONOR AT THE GRANDVIEW MASONIC LODGE IN PEORIA ON SEPTEMBER 26.





ON THE LEFT IS A PICTURE OF RON (ON THE LEFT), AND HIS BROTHER DICK, AT THE WHEELS OF TIME MUSEUM JUST NORTH OF PEORIA ON AUGUST 8. THEIR LAYOUT IS MUCH LARGER COVERING SEVERAL TABLES BUT IN THE INTEREST OF SPACE, IT WAS NECESSARY TO EDIT MUCH OF IT OUT.

Respectfully Submitted
DC Joe Hutchinson

Reed Camp #24 - Tuscola

The Camp, and two members in particular, has been working with the Douglas County Museum on a permanent display of firearms that were used by Illinois troops during the Civil War. It was highlighted by a local television station broadcasting the special spots of interest in Douglas County. The project displays approximately 85 firearms, both long guns and handguns, that were used by Illinois men during the war. Most are original examples of functioning weapons and some are actually attributed to known individuals. It also includes private purchased handguns known to be available during the time of the conflict. In addition, the display has other items of interest including a drum used by the 39th Illinois, identifiable swords, bayonets for all the shoulder firearms, medical items, musical items and much more. The military artifacts are on temporary loan by the Camp to the museum.



Respectfully Submitted
 DC Joe Hutchinson
 On behalf of CC Hales
 Camp #24

Sheridan Camp #2 - Aurora

Over the past 20 years Sheridan Camp #2 has continued working at replacing headstones at the Root Street Cemetery in East Aurora. Along with sister Pamela Nila, this summer our research Brothers, David Bailey and Roger Knigge, completed additional research which involved replacing a headstone having an incorrect name and service/unit. In addition, they concluded that four other CW Veterans had been interred, but were without headstones. Those headstones were ordered, but since the few members of Camp 2 were already committed to work on resetting 6-7 headstones in Bluff City Cemetery in Elgin, IL, setting them would have to be delayed.

As it happened, in early October Scout Master, Darren McArdle, from Troop 28 in North Aurora, had contacted me and offered to put together a team to help with setting the Root Street Cemetery headstones. We certainly enjoy our association with Troop 28, and Mr. McArdle. Their first project with Sheridan Camp #2 was in May 2016, when on a cold Saturday in May, his Troop showed up in Elwood, Illinois with 5 boys and several fathers and, despite the cold weather, worked all day on not only resetting 7 new markers, but straightening another 3 and cleaning all of the remaining CW headstones.

One of the Scouts, Mario Hernandez, earned his Eagle Badge for completing this project. Since then, Scout Master McArdle has assisted our Camp in projects at Calvary/Aurora, East and West Batavia, and several project days at West Aurora cemetery. They have assisted in the setting of at least 20 headstones. Without their help, mounting these headstones would have had to be deferred. We appreciate their invaluable assistance and their loyal patriotism.

ON THE RIGHT IS A PHOTO OF A NEW, SHARP LOOKING REPLACEMENT HEADSTONE. STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE PICTURE BELOW ARE SVC LEE LASSEIGNE AND SECY./TREAS. ROBERT ROGERS. KNEELING IN THE FIRST ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE SCOUTS HARVARD PIKE, DANIEL LUMPOS, MICHAEL RAMOS, AND SCOUT MASTER DARREN McARTLE.

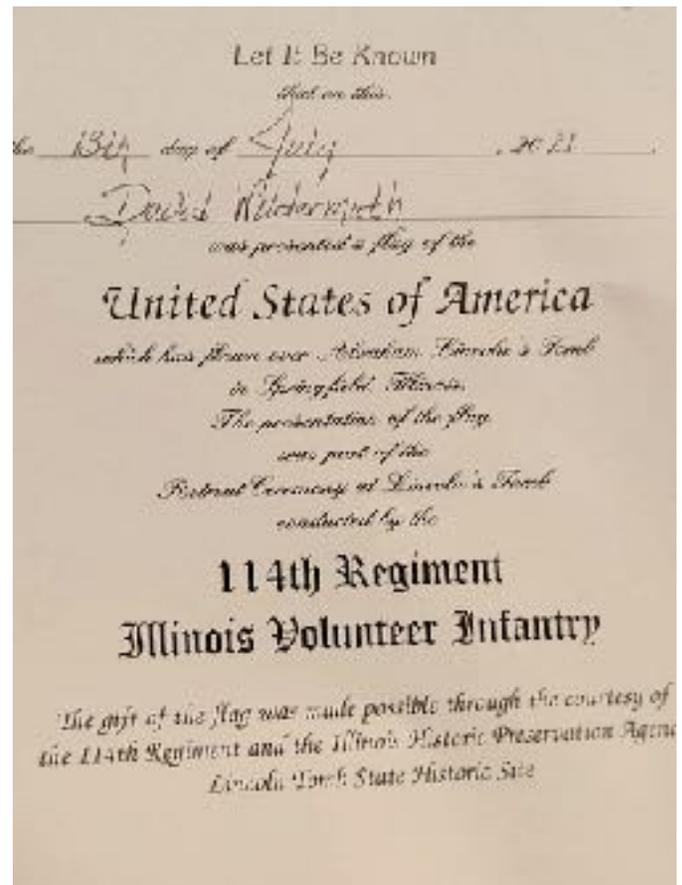


Respectfully Submitted
 Secy./Treas. Robert Rogers
 Camp #2

Hecker Camp #443 - Belleville & McClernand Camp #4 - Springfield

CC Dave Wildermuth happened to be in the Springfield area (Petersburg) on Sons business and he attended flag retreat ceremonies at Lincoln's Tomb on Tuesday evening, July 13, 2021. Anywhere from 100 to 150 tourists and locals attend the ceremony as it is repeated weekly on the twelve Tuesdays of summer. As attendees walk from the parking lot to the tomb area, they are asked to sign up for the drawing, and a chance to win the U. S. Flag which has flown over the 16th President's Tomb during the previous week. Wouldn't you know Dave's name is the one that was drawn. He was asked to step forward and was awarded the flag, and a certificate. Dave was tickled pink and he sent me an email plus we talked on the phone. There wasn't room in the Summer Railsplitter, but I told him that I would make sure and include his story in an upcoming edition of the *Railsplitter*. Here's to you, Brother Dave.

THE LOWER RIGHT PICTURE IS DAVE'S CERTIFICATE. IN THE PHOTO IMMEDIATELY BELOW IS DAVE HOLDING HIS CERTIFICATE IN FRONT OF THE 114TH ILLINOIS VOLUNTEER INFANTRY REGIMENT, REACTIVATED. DAVE TOLD ME LATER THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE 114TH'S COLONEL, FACING HIM IN THE LOWER LEFT PICTURE, IS BROTHER RICHARD SCHACHTSIEK, OF CAMP #4.



Respectfully Submitted
CC David Wildermuth, Hecker Camp #443
PI Chuck Murphy, McClernand Camp #4