



The Railsplitter

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



Fall 2022

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COMMANDERS CORNER

The Brothers of the Department had a wonderful chance to visit the Illinois Military Museum while at the Midterm encampment in Springfield on October 8th. It had exhibits from the Revolutionary War, Civil War and others up until the current conflicts. Docents also gave the brothers a tour of the Illinois Civil War Battle Flags. It was quite the collection in a private building at Camp Lincoln stored in individual drawers in more than 50 cabinets.

We covered a great deal of important business during our Midterm meeting. The Department and the various camps have many ongoing projects to promote the SUVCW. The Department had the honor of recognizing and signing the charter for a new Camp, Hardenberg #39 in Tinley Park.

Please see the minutes of the Midterm meeting

for details of all our activities. As most of the

Brothers know, there is a dues increase coming in January. The main reason for the increase is to cover ever-rising postage costs associated with mailing hard copies of the Banner to Brothers nationwide. Still another increase is set for January 1, 2023.

As COVID is beginning to wind down for most of us, I hope you can gather with your Brothers at camp meetings and enjoy Thanksgiving and Christmas with your family and loved ones. Brothers, as the cold weather bears down on us I hope you will all stay safe and well and may God bless us all.

Gary Gunderson, Department Commander,
Department of Illinois

"... I hope you will all stay safe and well and may God bless us all".



CHAPLAINS CORNER

At the last Department Encampment in Illinois, the Commander in Chief instructed me to tell the Brothers attending that **"They Should Play Nice in the Sandbox"**. Right now I am sitting in a cemetery waiting for a grave dedication to begin. My Invocation and Benediction will both deal with this topic - Pride being one of the Capital/Daily Sins, and one with which we are all faced. You see, I am right and you are wrong - so change your thinking! Isn't that how the Recent Unpleasantness began, with both Parties in Congress shouting at each other? We pray that this does not happen again.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty
Chaplain Jerry



PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION “The Graybeards”

While working with the list of names of the 501 Civil War Veterans buried at Bluff City Cemetery in Elgin IL for a rededication ceremony - held on October 15, 2022 sponsored by P. H. Sheridan Camp #2 - it was hard not to be curious about each of the people behind the names. I noticed the veteran Richard Martin's birth date of 1795. I wondered how this senior gentleman could serve in the Civil War at such an advanced age. The answer to my question was his regiment: the 37th Iowa Graybeards.

In January of 1863, a new regiment of 914 men left the state of Iowa traveling to St. Louis for duty in the 37th Iowa Infantry. Although every member of this regiment was exempt from military service, they freely enlisted and took the oath of allegiance to the Union.

It was a unit like all others except for one consistent difference. Every man from Colonel to drummer boy was past the maximum military age of 45. Many were over 60. Some were in their 70's. The most senior member was Curtis King, who at 80 was the oldest soldier to serve in the Civil War. One of the youngest in the group was the Chaplain, James H. White. He was only 48.

The now famous “Graybeard” regiment was recruited by special arrangement with the War Department as a means of showing that there was still plenty of able-bodied citizens (not subject to conscription) who were willing to go to war. The Graybeards were to

perform guard and garrison duty. The regiment was never intended to engage in combat.

More than 1300 sons and and grandsons of the 37th Iowa, the Graybeard Regiment, also served with Union forces during the Civil War.

pay after four months of service an Iowa newspaper editor wrote, “The old heroes do not grumble yet many of them have large families dependent upon them and the failure to receive any pay must necessarily cause considerable suffering.” By then, after only four months of service the eldest member, Curtis King, was discharged for physical disabilities.

Guarding captured soldiers at Alton and Rock Island, Illinois occupied the regiment for over a year. The only action for them was when guerrillas ambushed a train on which they were riding to Memphis, Tennessee. Three of the defending Graybeards were killed. Four others were injured.

Although they were in no major battle, In the last year of the war, the 37th suffered more than its share of misfortune. The adjutant general stated of the regiment, “During the period of their service the officers and men suffered greatly from sickness both on account of the change of climate and exposure to frequent rainstorms to which they were subjected. Ignoring the



THIS PHOTO OF THE “GRAYBEARDS” WAS FOUND ON LINE AND DOWNLOADED AFTER GOOGLING SAME.

These men enlisted for a full three-year tour of duty. They were excellent guards, but being older and set in their ways, they were annoyed by discipline and adapted quite slowly to army routine. For several months the men guarded prisoners of war and railroad lines in the St. Louis area. When they did not receive

Another even more remarkable fact is that none of the 37th Iowa Graybeards could claim the “Hawkeye” State as his birthplace. Why? Iowa was not yet a State when any of these men were born.

advanced ages of the men," the Iowa official continued, "they were not provided with adequate camp equipage and the exposure and hardships which they encountered resulted in many deaths and rendered many more unfit for further performance of military duty."

Battle casualties for the "Graybeards" totaled only 7 men, but 145 died of disease. Another 364 were discharged as too ill to serve any longer. When the regiment was officially mustered out from the Army in May of 1865, a startling fact emerged. More than 1,300 sons and grandsons of the members of the 37th Iowa had also been in Union service during the war. Another fact may be even more remarkable is that none could claim the "Hawkeye" State as his birthplace. Why? Iowa was not yet a State when any of these men were born.

Can you imagine the uproar today if we asked men past retirement age to serve our country? If needed, however, I suspect that many of our Brothers would be there.

Respectfully Submitted, in F. C. L., Michael Zafran,
PCC P. H. Sheridan Camp #2, and PI for the Department of Illinois

MIDTERM MEETING

Touring the collection of Illinois Civil War Battle Flags at Camp Lincoln prior to the meeting was time well spent, indeed. There has been much written from a host of different perspectives about Civil War battle flags, and eyeballing them can be an emotional experience. Naturally, several brothers asked to see the flags of their forefathers' regiments. Camp 4 is very proud of Brother Richard Schachtsiek. He volunteers at Camp Lincoln as do Camp 4 Brothers Don Ferricks and Stan Buckles. Richard gave excellent tours as he always does.



PHOTOED ABOVE ARE THE THIRTEEN BROTHERS WHO TOOK THE FLAG TOUR PRIOR TO THE MIDTERM MEETING BEING CAVELED INTO SESSION. THE THREE IN THE BACK ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT INCLUDE CC JEFF KAUP, OLD GLORY CAMP #6165 CHICAGO; PI CHUCK MURPHY, MCCLERNAND CAMP #4 SPRINGFIELD; AND CAMP COUNCILOR BRIAN CONROY, SHERIDAN CAMP #2 AURORA. THE SEVEN IN THE MIDDLE ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT INCLUDE BROTHER BARNEY BUCHOLTZ, SHERIDAN CAMP #2 AURORA; DC GARY GUNDERSON, SHERIDAN CAMP #2 AURORA; DS DON SHERMAN, CUSTER CAMP #1 WILMETTE; PDC JIM LYON, DUTTON CAMP #49 SYCAMORE; DEPT COUNCILOR DAVE WILDERMUTH, HECKER CAMP #443 BELLEVILLE; PDC NICK KAUP, CUSTER CAMP #1 WILMETTE; AND PDC STUART STEFANY, CUSTER CAMP #1 WILMETTE. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT THE THREE IN THE FIRST ROW ARE BROTHER RAY LIMBACH, HARDENBERG CAMP #39 TINLEY PARK; DT LEE LASSEIGNE, SHERIDAN CAMP #2 AURORA; AND BROTHER BOB KUREK, OLD GLORY CAMP #6165 CHICAGO. STANDING TO THE RIGHT IS FLAG TOUR GUIDE BROTHER RICHARD SCHACHTSIEK, MCCLERNAND CAMP #4 SPRINGFIELD. BROTHER RICHARD IS ALSO COLONEL OF THE 114TH ILLINOIS VOLUNTEER INFANTRY REGIMENT, REACTIVATED.



EDITOR'S NOTES

Reading Encampment agendas and minutes is one thing, but actually being in the room is something else entirely. You get to witness and hear the emotion, the frustration, the satisfaction, and the stress in our Brothers voices to fully experience the business at hand. For sure, sometimes the sandbox gets a little messy, and the word fraternity may temporarily escape us from time to time. But none of it is irreparable. And whether we are conscious of it or not, we always leave meetings more well rounded and wiser. **Two Midterm agenda items** are highlighted in this quarter's newsletter. They include the Stephenson Memorial in Rosehill Cemetery in Petersburg, and a very special relief sculpture having transatlantic implications by one of our very own esteemed and talented Brothers.

Beginning in 2023, we'll be toasting the annual event that is held at the Stephenson Memorial site. DC Gunderson is generously providing the essential spirits for next year, and Brother Dave Wildermuth (Brother Dave) is spearheading the Commemorative Souvenir Shot Glass Initiative. **Some of us may have never met PDC Terry Dyer**. He passed March 21, 2021 and any number of our Department Brothers attended the special Memorial Service that was held in his honor. Brother Terry's name was not on the agenda, but was he ever-present in the room! Brother Dyer's dream of **Making improvements at the Stephenson Memorial site** has met with cost overruns, supply chain delays in filling brick and bench orders, and very uncooperative terrain. Though a number of Brothers voiced regret at all the challenges having to be faced, there was no question that they are individually and collectively resolute in their commitment to accomplishing phase 2 project at the Stephenson site. Chalk me up as one who never met Brother Terry, but it is relatively easy to figure out that he was a true visionary and an inspirational leader, as the Stephenson site is an outstanding project that benefits the national Order throughout the country.

Brother Dave is most enthusiastic and committed to persevering and improving the Stephenson site. He encourages his Department Brothers and other individuals and organizations to consider purchasing bricks and benches in honor of their Civil War ancestors, and he is now taking the lead to spark interest in Camps and Brothers making fundraising donations for **Stephenson Memorial Gravesite Plaza Souvenir Shot Glasses**. Every Camp will be receiving fliers and order forms relative to the shot glass initiative, and we hope that our brothers give consideration to making donations. The glasses are truly a decorative souvenir, and will come in handy as we begin the tradition of annually toasting Benjamin F. Stephenson at his burial site in Petersburg come April 15th next, following his annual Remembrance Day Service.

Apologies are in order to Brother Richard Piper, Treasurer of Hecker Camp #443 Belleville. In the photo that was taken at the Lincoln Tomb ceremony last year, he was inadvertently listed as unknown. In the photo on the right below, from left to right Brother Richard Piper is the 6th of 7 Brothers, standing in between PDC Harold Reinecke IV and DSVC Bobby Welch. We need to thank Dept Councilor and Camp #443 Commander, Dave Wildermuth, for bringing the oversight to our attention. Please accept our sincere apologies Brother Piper. Speaking of Hecker Camp #443, check it out. Brother/Camp Guide/Editor Gerald Sonnenberg produces a very impressive newsletter, "Lest We Forget".

Appreciation is extended to PDC Nick Kaup, PDC Stephen Westlake, and Dept Councilor Dave Wildermuth for submitting photos and helping to identify names of all the Brothers in the photo of those who toured the Civil War flags.

From left to tight In the photo immediately below, are Dept Councilor Dave Wildermuth, DC Gary Gunderson, a representative of American Legion Post 32, and DT Lee Lasseigne, making a donation to legion Post #32.



The Civil War Tapestry of a Very Special Relief Sculpture



PDC, CC Stuart Stefany, Custer Camp #1 Wilmette, is an art teacher at a middle school in Gurnee, IL. Brother Stefany designed the 2002 National SUVCW Encampment Badge (Springfield, IL) While at that Encampment, he purchased old brick chips which were made available as a result of a restoration project that was going on at that time on the Lincoln Home foundation. Br. Stuart brought a relief sculpture he's been working on to our most recent Midterm encampment last month, and briefly discussed it. It was decided that an article about it should be included in the next "Railsplitter".

BRITISH CIVIL WAR ENTHUSIAST GINA COSTIN, PICTURED ABOVE, IS A UK REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DAUGHTER'S OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR.

HER GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER WAS GEORGE DENHAM (1835-1914). HE EMIGRATED FROM LIVERPOOL TO AMERICA IN 1856, JOINED THE U.S. NAVY AND SERVED ON THE USS ST. LAWRENCE UNTIL 1859. HE JOINED THE 111TH PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTEERS IN 1863, SERVED IN THE BATTLES OF WAUWATCHEE AND LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, AND IN 1864 HE RE-JOINED THE U. S. NAVY AND SERVED ON THE USS CHOCTAW. IN 1870 HE RETURNED TO ENGLAND AND SETTLED IN LONDON. HE DIED IN 1914 AND WAS BURIED IN LONDON'S HUGE ISLINGTON AND ST. PANCRAS CEMETERY. HIS GRAVE WAS UNMARKED AND ALMOST LOST DUE TO BEING OVERGROWN WITH GREENERY, BUT HIS GREAT GREAT

GRANDDAUGHTER, GINA COSTIN, LED EFFORTS TO FINALLY MARK HIS GRAVE WITH A GRAVESTONE. ALONG WITH OTHERS, INCLUDING DARREN RAWLINGS, ANOTHER WELL KNOWN CIVIL WAR ACTIVIST IN ENGLAND, THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF UK, AND THE ENSIGN JOHN DAVIS CAMP 10, THE FIRST AND ONLY SONS CAMP TO BE ESTABLISHED OUTSIDE THE U.S., ATTENDED THE FORMAL CEREMONY HELD AT GEORGE DENHAM'S GRAVE SITE ON JULY 30, 2021.

Civil War veteran James Cleggett served on the USS Morning Light and saw action in several battles. He was aboard when Confederates shelled it until the ship nearly sunk. Cleggett and his fellow shipmates were captured on January 18, 1863 and were later exchanged as the war was winding down. Cleggett returned to his native New York, but then he traveled to England where he lived for several years reuniting with his British comrades who had come to America to fight in the Civil War, and served with him on the Morning Light. In fact, he joined the London Branch of American Civil War Veterans Organization. Cleggett returned to the United States and upon his death in 1929, was buried in Lincoln Cemetery in Blue Island, IL. His grave was never marked but thanks to the efforts of Gina Costin and others, it was finally identified and on April 13th, 2022, a formal ceremony was held denoting such. It was extra special, Gina Costin and her cousin made their way to Chicago to attend the program. Efforts are now underway to secure a headstone. Cleggett was in the same Civil War group in London as Gina's great great grandfather, George Denham. Gina wrote that George Denham was number 8, and James Cleggett was number 11 on the list of London Branch American Civil War veterans.



While serving on the Supreme Court of the State of Massachusetts, Civil War veteran, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., wrote an 8 page essay entitled "Memorial Day". On May 30, 1884 he delivered a program about it before the John Sedgwick GAR Post Number 4 in Keene, NH.

Born in Dublin, Augustus Saint Gaudens (1848-1907) was an American Sculptor of the Beaux-Arts generation who embodied the ideals of the American Renaissance. He was raised in New York City and attended Cooper Union school for the Advancement of Science and Art, and the National Academy of Design. He traveled in Europe for further training and artistic study. Upon returning to the United States, he achieved major critical success for his monuments commemorating heroes of the American Civil War, to include, among others:

"Standing Lincoln", Lincoln Park, Chicago (1887);

"General John Logan", Grant Park, Chicago (1897);

"Robert Gould Shaw Memorial", Boston Commons, Boston (1897);

"William Tecumseh Sherman" Grand Army Plaza, Central Park, Manhattan (1903); and

"A Seated Lincoln", Grant Park, Chicago (1908).

His image appeared on a U.S. postage stamp in 1940 and he and his wife's letters figure prominently in the 2011 book "The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris" by historian David McCullough.



Pictured on the left is PDC Stuart Stefany and above is the 20 by 22 inch relief sculpture he is producing for Gina, Darren, and the American Civil War community in England. Ultimately, it will be placed on a masonry pedestal in Islington and St. Pancras cemetery to not only honor the British people who went to America to serve in the Civil War, but the American Civil War veterans who moved to England following the Civil War. Gina and Darren requested that the inspiration for the plaque be from Augustus Saint Gaudens' "Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts" sculpture in Boston Commons. That was just fine with Brother Stuart because in addition to being a Civil War Reactor and an Art Teacher, he is an art historian and very familiar with Gaudens' reputation and body of work. Pax Aeterna is Latin and means Eternal Peace, and the three characters from left to right on the plaque is an American Civil War Soldier, a British Nurse who went to America as many did, such as Gertrude Ledwith, to offer nursing aid and comfort to Union soldiers wounded in battle, and on the far right is a youthful resemblance of James Cleggett. Gina and Darren asked specifically for the nurse and Cleggett's likenesses, and Brother Stuart added the Yankee Civil War soldier. The British folks also specified which phrase from Holmes' "Memorial Day" essay was to be used in the plaque. Brother Stuart reminded me that the same phrase was used in the beginning of Ken Burns production of "The Civil War". It is amazing, Brother Stuart could not believe how much he, Gina, and Darren think alike. This project only began nine or ten months ago and it is likely to take several more months to complete. Brother Stefany indicated that it took him ten weeks to create the sculpture, and now he will turn his thoughts to working on the pedestal base that the sculpture will be attached to. The sculpture will be finished in solid bronze, and Stuart is beginning to think about the materials to be used in making the pedestal, to include Lincoln Home brick chips for symbolic purposes. Brother Stefany remains in contact with Gina and Darren (who is himself a frequent traveler to America's Civil War battlefields), and one of the decisions that remains is whether the plaque and pedestal are to be shipped to England in one, or in two pieces. This is a continuing story and we'll be keeping up with it in forthcoming issues of the "Railsplitter". Brothers from Custer Camp #1 Wilmette and Sheridan Camp #2 Aurora are also involved in this endeavor, and we'll be covering more about their individual efforts in upcoming newsletters as well. Among these items and others, in the Winter 2023 "Railsplitter" we'll discuss how Gina and Stuart met, and how the idea of the sculpture came about. As you might imagine, without Brother Stefany's cooperation, this story could not have been written and to him we are clearly indebted. (Courtesy Br Chuck Murphy)

CAMP NEWSSheridan Camp #2 Aurora

In the top left photo a Fox Valley Young Marine cleans the gravestone of a Civil War veteran. **In the top right picture**, Fox Valley Young Marines assist Camp #2 Commander Lee Lasseigne (left) and PCC Camp #2 Michael Zafran (bending down), level the base and middle stone, before using the hoist to lift the cap stone in place on the grave of a Civil War veteran. **In the photo below** Fox Valley Young Marines take a break to pose for a picture after a day of service, at Bluff City Cemetery, Elgin, Illinois. Pictured with Lee Lasseigne (left) Commander, Camp #2 and Robert Rogers (right) Secretary/Treasurer Camp #2.



Respectfully Submitted by PCC and
Dept Patriotic Instructor Michael Zafran

McClernand Camp #4 Springfield

Attending this year's Midterm Encampment at American Legion Post #32 brought back fond memories. Back in 2022 the SUVCW National Encampment was held in Springfield. I remember being somewhat active in Camp 4 at the time, and I served as a committee of one that summer to solicit donations from downtown businesses for the upcoming encampment. It was the loneliest job I have ever undertaken, and I failed miserably. Business after business shunned me like I had the plague. "Come back next week, or never." "I'd like to donate but business has been slow." "Tell me a little bit about the "Sons of 'what' again." "I'm too busy today, come back another time."

Back then Post 32 was downtown, on 5th Street, just northeast of the Governor's Mansion. In fact, there is a street sign there in memory of it that reads "American Legion Ave." I'll never forget it. I finally stopped by to see if the legion would make a donation. The guy in charge had been the former police chief in Springfield, so I knew what he looked like, though I had never met him. I asked the bartender if I could speak with the guy in charge. He told me that he knew he was very busy in his office at the moment, but he would see what he could do. As I waited I became very self-conscious. Upon retuning home from service in 1968, I had joined both the legion and the VFW, but I couldn't hang. They just weren't for me. I remember thinking that I wish I could tell the guy that I was a legion member, but I couldn't. In fact, between you and me, I was barely hanging on at that time as a member of the Sons!

He came out of his office in a rush and approached me with a very serious look on his face. I thought, "Oh Lord"! With zilch confidence, I hurriedly told him who I was and what I was doing. He asked me to hold on a minute. When he came back out of his office he smiled, handed me a check and said, "I hope you have a good conference". I remember being very pleasantly surprised, more like shocked!

Near the end of of the encampment on this past October 8th, a discussion ensued about making a donation to Post 32. Brother Dave Wildermuth said "They didn't charge us anything to use the meeting room...", and my Brothers seemed inclined to make a generous offer. I nearly fell out of my seat when Brother Steve Aarli stood up and suggested donating an amount that, as I recall, matched the check that the post donated to the Sons back in 2002. It was a special moment, and it brought a smile to my face.

After a three year hiatus brought on by the dreaded COVID, on Saturday, June 3, 2023 the Benjamin P. Thomas Civil War Memorial Conference will return to Illinois College in Jacksonville, IL. Speakers are still being lined up but commitments have thus far been received from renowned Civil War authors/presenters John Coski and William C. (Jack) Davis. John is the former director of the library and research at the American Civil War Museum in Richmond, VA and Jack was a history professor and former director of the Virginia Center of Civil War Studies at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. More information will be forthcoming. It could be a very pleasant gathering with our fellow Dept of Illinois Brothers who enjoy top notch Civil War presentations by reputable and nationally known Civil War historians.

Post Covid, Camp 4 is getting back in the game. We've set forth a few priories for 2023. One is to partner with other organizations to post a special marker beside the grave of the only Springfield resident to serve as a GAR Commander in Chief. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery. We also plan to honor General/Governor John M. Palmer at his graveside in Carlinville, IL. And we're looking forward working to identifying the Last Soldier in Adams County. Quincy is rich with Civil War enthusiasts, and we're looking forward to partnering with them in a most noble ceremony.

Respectively Submitted PI Chuck Murphy



ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE INTERSECTION ARE THE WOODED GROUNDS OF THE EXECUTIVE MANSION.
PHOTO (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.)

Hardenburg Camp #39 Tinley Park

ON A SHORT BREAK BETWEEN VFW MEETINGS IN SPRINGFIELD ON AUGUST 26, WE INITIATED THREE NEW BROTHERS. LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE PHOTO ON THE LEFT ARE BROTHER JASON HOFFMAN (VFW STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE), BROTHER ROBERT WELCH (CAMP 39 COMMANDER/VFW PAST STATE COMMANDER), BROTHER VINCE LONG (VFW PAST STATE COMMANDER), AND FRONT (JUNIOR) BROTHER JAMISON HOFFMAN.

BROTHERS TIMOTHY MAUCUS, ANDY PARTAK, AND NICK STARASINICH ARE REENACTORS WITH COMPANY K, 100TH ILLINOIS. THE PHOTO BELOW WAS TAKEN ON OCTOBER 1 AT A LIVING HISTORY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT THE MANHATTAN, IL LIBRARY ABOUT THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS.



ON SEPTEMBER 17TH, WHILE PULLING DOUBLE DUTY REPRESENTING THE SUVCW WHILE ON ASSIGNMENT FROM THE VFW, I ATTENDED A DEDICATION CEREMONY IN BLOOMINGTON FOR A MEDAL OF HONOR GRAVE MARKER FOR PVT JOSEPH KIMBALL, WHO SERVED WITH CO. B, 2ND WEST VIRGINIA CAVALRY. THE MEDAL OF HONOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAD CONTACTED THE LOCAL VFW TO SET UP THE CEREMONY AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF RESEARCH TO CORRECT A MISTAKE THAT WAS MADE. THE MEDAL OF HONOR GRAVE MARKER, IN THE PHOTO ON THE LEFT, HAD BEEN MISTAKENLY PLACED ON THE GRAVESITE OF PVT JOSEPH KIMBALL WHO SERVED IN CO. C, 2ND WEST VIRGINIA CAVALRY. JOSEPH KIMBALL'S GREAT GRANDNIECE, BETSY TIETZ, WAS IN ATTENDANCE AND WAS PRESENTED WITH A BURIAL FLAG BY CHAPLAIN DAVID TERRINONI, PICTURED BELOW.



In Fraternity, Charity, and loyalty
Brother Bobby



Bryner Camp #67 Peoria

KNEELING ABOVE AT GROOMS' NEW HEADSTONE IS DEPT COUNCILOR, AND CAMP MONUMENTS OFFICER BROTHER WAYNE WEHRHEIM.

WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON SEVERAL HEADSTONE PROJECTS THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. AFTER UPDATING THE TAZEWELL COUNTY GRAVES REGISTRY, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE LAST SOLDIER WAS PVT JOSEPH W. MOFFATT OF CO. E, 139TH IL INF. HE WAS BORN ON DECEMBER 18, 1845 AND DIED MAY 10, 1938. HE IS INTERRED AT FONDULAC CEMETERY IN EAST PEORIA. HIS STONE HAS BEEN BROKEN BUT A NEW ONE WAS ORDERED AND INSTALLED THIS PAST SUMMER. (SEE PHOTO ON THE RIGHT.) **THE SECOND HEADSTONE REPLACEMENT** WAS STARTED BY BR. JAMES NELSON, WHO DISCOVERED A DILAPIDATED AND WORN STONE WHILE HIKING IN THE HOWARD VIRGIN TIMBER PARK OUTSIDE OF LEROY, IL. A NEW STONE WAS ORDERED AND INSTALLED IN LATE AUGUST FOR PVT MARTIN V. GROOMS OF CO. I, 39TH IL INF. HE WAS BORN IN 1837 AND DIED IN 1875.



THE CAMP HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON FREEDOM MEMORIAL PARK ON THE SITE OF THE OLD MOFFATT HE SITE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF PEORIA. THROUGH GRANTS FROM NATIONAL, THE DEPT OF ILLINOIS, AND DONATIONS FROM BROTHERS OF CAMP #67 AND OTHERS, A PLAQUE (IN THE PHOTO ON THE LEFT) REMEMBERING THE 50 VETERANS INTERRED AT THE DESTROYED-AND-BUILT-ON-AGAIN CEMETERY, WAS ACQUIRED FROM THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

TWO MORE PLAQUES HAVE ALSO BEEN PURCHASED. ONE HONORING NANCE BEGINS-COSTLEY (PHOTOED ON THE LEFT), WHO WAS THE FIRST SLAVE FREED IN A COURT CASE BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN EARLY IN HIS LAW CAREER.



IN THE BOTTOM LEFT PHOTO, THE DARK BLUE PLAQUE IN THE BACKGROUND ON THE RIGHT SIDE IS CURRENTLY ON DISPLAY IN THE PEORIA RIVERFRONT MUSEUM (PRM) TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE PROJECT. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE FOREGROUND OF THE PHOTO ARE THE PARENTS OF LOGAN MILLER; LOGAN MILLER PRM INTERN; BOB HOFFER, MOFFATT COMMITTEE CHAIR; KATE SHUREMAN, PRM VP; AND BILL CONGER, PRM COLLECTIONS.

IT IS HOPED TO HAVE AN UNVEILING CEREMONY OF ALL THREE PLAQUES THIS FALL AND A DEDICATION CEREMONY HELD AT THE OLD CEMETERY SITE NEXT YEAR AT GRISWOLD AND ADAMS STREETS. AGREEMENTS FROM THE CITY AND PARK DISTRICT WERE DELAYED AND THE LEGAL WORK BY THE CITY TO TRANSFER THE DONATED LAND FROM PEORIA ROOFER'S UNION TO THE CITY IS IN PROCESS.

Respectively Submitted PCC Joe Hutchinson

In Three Parts - A Department of Illinois "Railsplitter" Extra



It is most unusual. For a number of reasons, most newsletter articles appear from start to finish in a single issue. This essay, entitled **"The Shiloh Triad: Lost Stories of Three Illinoisans at Pittsburg Landing"**, is a noted exception. Given the number of interesting items and photos routinely submitted for the Department's quarterly newsletter, the "Railsplitter", adequate space is not available for the entire article in a single issue. The question arises, will the Order be able to follow the storyline from one newsletter to the next? We think so but you, the reader, will be the final arbiter. Shiloh is an epic stage and in every instance, the gallantry exhibited by the three featured Illinoisans is riveting. Their heroic encounters in the face of the enemy are as divergent as they are compelling. But what is most unusual is that in every instance, the intrepidity exercised by these three young men is more than matched by the more powerful dynamo that is obscurity.

The Shiloh Triad: Lost Stories of Three Illinoisans at Pittsburg Landing" Courtesy Br Chuck Murphy (Part One of Three)

People visit battlefields for any number of reasons. Some simply want to take in the historic scenery, landscape, statues, and monuments. Visitors to Pittsburg Landing are typically most anxious to see Bloody Pond, the

Hornets' Nest, the Peach Orchard, Sunken Road, and Shiloh Church. Others are tracing the footprint of their families' ancestors. Many are anxious to study the path of a particular commander including, among others, Lew Wallace, Don Carlos Buell, Sam Grant, W.H.L. Wallace, and Albert Sydney Johnston. While others may be more focused on following the deployment of a particular regiment, or a brigade or two.

Though it may be uncommon, tracing the footsteps of individual medal of honor recipients on any given battlefield affords researchers still another perspective, and a deeply personal one at that. Granted, tracking the thirty-nine earned at Spotsylvania would take a significant investment, both in terms of time and treasure. But unearthing the scant three associated with Pittsburg Landing proved easily doable and abundantly tell-tale.

In addition to military and pension files, the National Archives maintains an individual medal of honor file on each recipient. These files contain varying degrees of information, which is frequently Unavailable in any other record. In contrast,

After one day of bloodletting at Antietam Creek, 20 Union soldiers were later awarded medals of honor. Following three days of fighting at Gettysburg, 60 (plus) were (ultimately) accorded medals. Do the numbers suggest that after two days of bloody battle, 40 medals should've been in the offing for Shiloh? Possibly, but only three were awarded. None of the 20 Antietam recipients or 60 Gettysburg medalists served in Illinois units - as did all 3 Shiloh recipients - making this story uniquely pertinent to the Dept of Illinois.

A LISTING OF THE NUMBER OF MEDALS OF HONOR THAT WERE AWARDED BY BATTLE ON SOME OF THE NATION'S MOST SIGNIFICANT CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS IS FOREVER ENGAGING. BUT MORE THAN THE 57 THAT WE'VE EARNED AT SAILOR'S CREEK, THE 24 THAT WERE EARNED AT CHANCELLORSVILLE, THE 23 THAT WERE EARNED AT WILDERNESS, THE 12 THAT WERE EARNED AT APPOMATTOX, THE 5 THAT WERE EARNED AT WILSON'S CREEK, OR EVEN THE 113 THAT WERE EARNED AT VICKSBURG, WHAT DRAWS ONE'S ATTENTION THE MOST IS THE ANEMIC 3, AKA THE SHILOH TRIAD, THAT WERE EARNED AT PITTSBURG LANDING.

standard medal citations typically provide just the recipient's name, where he lived, his rank, company, and regiment. They also identify the name of the battlefield by state, both the date the medal was earned and the date it was issued, and precisely what the recipient did to earn the medal.

It is not at all unusual. There is not one word in the "Official Records" about the intrepid actions of Shiloh's three medalists. We are indeed fortunate, however, as oftentimes a recipient's medal file can provide detailed information that may otherwise remain altogether unknown. For example, such facts may be included that help pinpoint the exact hour of the day, and specifically where he was on the battlefield when he earned his medal. Further, based upon the letters and eye-witness affidavits contained in the file, it can also disclose conversations between the recipient, his comrades, and his chain of command immediately preceding or following the action. They can be extremely revealing and help one understand so much more about what was going on in the immediate area when and where the medal was earned. Finally, in the recipient's own hand, they document a provocative, up-close and personal slant that may otherwise be lost to history.

Copies of their medal of honor files, along with both their military and pension files, were procured from the National Archives prior to visiting Pittsburg Landing back in 2012, during the battle's sesquicentennial. I had studied their records and I knew their stories. But I was surprised and gravely disappointed when I arrived at the battlefield only to realize that I could not have been more ill-prepared for what awaited me.

In coming "Railsplitter's", we'll begin to meet these three medal recipients and explore their gripping stories. Two of the 403 Civil War medals of honor awarded to Privates, were accorded Private John Wade McDonald and Private Ellwood Williams. One of the 294 Civil War medals of honor conferred on Sergeants, was bestowed on Sergeant Edward Spalding. As implausible as it may seem, these soldiers were the only ones to earn medals of honor on the bloodstained and momentous battlefield of Shiloh.

At best, the juxtaposition of Congress' medal of honor and the Shiloh Civil War Battlefield Commission's take on individual recognition is an imperfect fit. It is a flawed crossway and has a direct impact on how the battlefield is interpreted. Unfortunately, it assures that John Wade's, Ellwood's, and Edward's acts of fearless valor remain lost to the daily throng of visitors to Pittsburg Landing. The issue of individual recognition is an integral part of the story, to be sure, and will be subject to further scrutiny as this article matures in upcoming newsletters.

THE LYRICS FOR THE STATE SONG
"ILLINOIS" WERE WRITTEN BY CIVIL
WAR VETERAN CHARLES CHAMBERLIN.
SEE THE THIRD VERSE IMMEDIATELY
BELOW. IT APPLIES TO ALL THOSE
FROM ILLINOIS WHO WORE UNION
BLUE, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS THE
SHILOH TRIAD.

**"When you heard your
country calling, Illinois,
Illinois,**

**Where the shot and shell
were falling, Illinois
Illinois,**

**When the Southern host
withdrew, pitting Gray
against the Blue, there were
none more brave than you,
Illinois, Illinois,**

**There were none more brave
than you, Illinois**

**There we're none more
brave than you, Illinois."**



"...play nice in the sandbox"

Fraternity Charity Loyalty

24 Brothers Representing 11 Camps attended the Midterm