

The Railsplitter

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



WINTER 2022

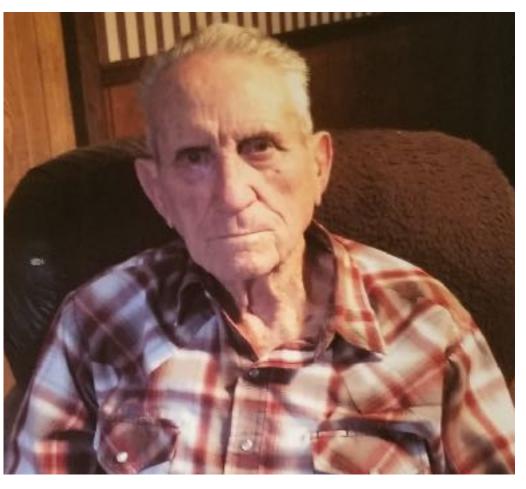


DC Hutchinson's Message

Brothers

In addition to the privilege of serving as your Department Commander, I'm also the Department's Real Son Officer. Both roles are very gratifying. Preserving the history and legacy of those who served, and their Sons, whom we respectfully refer to as, Real Sons, Is extremely rewarding. Below is a photo of William Pool. It is noteworthy that he is the Department of Illinois' last known Real Son. He and his

two brother's, John (1918-2016), and Garland (1927-2016), were added to the roster of Col. Bryner Camp #67 Peoria, in February 2004. Former Brother Tim



Real Son William Pool (Photo courtesy of Tim Pletkovich)

OFFICERS: Commander Joseph Hutchinson **Senior Vice Commander** Gary Gunderson **Junior Vice Commander** Lars Jacobson **Council Member 1** Gene Walker **Council Member 2/Dept. Ouartermaster** William Johnson **Council Member 3/GAR Highway Officer** Wayne Wehrheim Secretary/Color Bearer/Fraternal **Relations Officer** Leigh Franklin Treasurer Robert Welch **Patriotic Instructor** Michael Zafran Chaplain Jerome Kowalski **Graves Registration Officer/** Historian/GAR Records Officer/ **Assistant Secretary** Steve Aarli Counselor Harry Reineke IV PDC **Eagle Scout Coordinator** John Bigwood PDC **Civil War Memorials Officer** Steven Anderson **Camp Organizer** Nick Kaup PDC Guard Robert Hauff Guide Patrick McConnell **Recruiting Officer** Vacant **Signals Officer** Robert Welch **Real Sons Officer** Joseph Hutchinson **Chief of Staff** Steven Westlake **ROTC Officer** Lee Lasseigne

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Pletkovich recruited them when he served on the National Real Sons Committee, in the early 2000s. In fact, Tim published a book in 2007 entitled "Civl Wear Fathers: Sons of the Civil War in WW11". Real Son William Pool, aka Bill, just celebrated his 97th birthday on January 13th. Traditionally, National and Department SUVCW leadership encourage Brothers and Camps to send birthday cards to Real Sons. For those interested in sending Bill a card, his address is William Pool, 119 Forrest Street, Bolivar, MO 65613, Care of Parkview Care Facility.

These photos are also compliments of Tim Pletkovich. Below is a 2020 picture of Bill with his late sister, Real Dauchter Florence. On the right is a photo of the Pool Family, circa 1930s. Bill's father, Private Charles Parker Pool, served in Co. G, 6th West Virginia Infantry Regiment. Appreciation is extended to Mr. Pletkovich for making all three photos (that he acquired from the Pool family) available to DC Hutchinson; and to brother Joe for bringing this story to light in the Winter 2022 railsplitter. Happy birthday to RS Bill, and we hope he has Many, Many More.





Editor's Note: DC Hutchinson had already submitted his written comments for the Winter 2022 newsletter when these photos were brought to his attention. Though near the cutoff date for this quarter's Railsplitter, the article on RS William (Bill) Pool was so interesting, especially given his recent birthday, that the decision was made to work it in at the last minute. Brother Joe graciously authorized that his initial remarks be "edited down", to make room for the Bill Pool story. Please see below a shorter, adapted version of Brother Joe's initial offering.

Another year has gone by and in many quarters, it has been a tough one. While some of us have participated in select events, we're clearly still in the throws of the pandemic. To state the obvious, we're all looking forward to being able to get together in ways we're accustomed to.

These are indeed, trying times though if you stop and think about it, nothing like what our ancestors endured in the midnineteenth century, especially during the Civil War. In contrast, instead of spending Christmas in camp or on the

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battlefield, fully exposed to nature's elements and wartime depravations, we spent the day in our heated homes with our families and plenty of good things to eat. And though we're under barrage of a determined pandemic, our health care system is exponentially far superior than was our ancestors. For example, my forefather contracted measles and dysentery on the march to Memphis in 1862, and was sent sent home to die. Fortunately, he didn't. Otherwise I wouldn't be here. My ancestor could never have imagined how advanced our healthcare system would become. Though not perfect, I wish to recognize our nation's physicians, nurses, pharmacists, technicians, scientists, and all support staff for their exhaustive efforts, on behalf of all of us, as they tend to the sick and preserve life as best they can.

Better days are ahead and we must always look to the future. I'm looking forward to 2022 and praying that people will take the words, "Peace on Earth and Good Will Toward Men (and Woman)", to heart. Set partisanship to the side and be patriotic in doing what is good for the WHOLE country, AND our planet. We are all in this together. By compromising and working together, we can make this world a better place, not only for us, but for those who follow in our footsteps in noble pursuit of a more perfect Union.

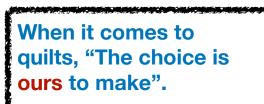
In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty, Joseph M. Hutchinson Commander, Department of Illinois Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

CHAPLAINS CORNER



There is an Award-Winning & Quilter living in Texas. I have the honor of possessing several of Mrs. LaBrot's masterpieces. The National Quilters' Museum, in Paducah, KY has recognized her

as well as many other competitions throughout the land. What she does is take various pieces of fabric and sew them together, which sounds pretty simple and easy. However, to turn out an Award-Winning quilt, you must have a design, coordinated colors, and sew perfectly to make the entire work pleasing to the eye.



I have often thought that our lives are like quilts. People come into the fabric of life, and make an impression. Some are pleasing, and others

are messy. The secret, it seems to me, lies in our ability to pick and choose who we allow to be in our quilt. They can be wonderfully uplifting, or drag us down and negatively impact the life we live. The choice is ours..., whether we are a Masterpiece, an award winner, or if we just get a participation certificate - the choice is ours to make. The Higher Power, who created you, and has known you for all eternity, gives you the grace to make the right choice.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty Chaplain Jerry

PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION



After spending a few workdays with my Camp #2 brothers at Bluff Street Cemetery in Elgin, IL and participating in eight ceremonies this past year, it brought to mind the magnitude of Illinois' overall participation, and death toll in the Civil War. One history site listed 256,297 persons as the number of Illinoisans who served in the Civil War, but Phisterer (1883), Fox (1889), and Dyer (1908), agree that the number was more like 259,092. The death toll, which was estimated at 31,000 from Illinois, was actually 34,384. A staggering total to be sure.

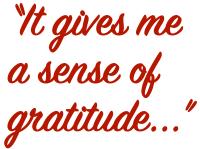
Illinois was a major source for combatants that fought in the Western Theater of the war, but a good number served in the Eastern Theatre as well. Moreover, Illinois was a major contributor to the total war effort providing military supplies,

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food, and clothing. The State of Illinois was energetically led throughout the war by Governor Richard Yates. The number of troops from Illinois was fourth among total manpower among Union forces. For the thousands who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the war, a number of national cemeteries were established in Illinois to bury their remains. Many Illini gained national prominence in the U. S. Army, and in national politics such as Lincoln, our 16th President, Generals Grant, Buford, Pope, Schofield, Logan, McClernand, Hurlbut, Grierson, and others. The previously mentioned Governor Yates, along with Senator Browning, Senator Trumbull, and Representative Washburn rose to the occasion to serve the war effort from their good offices.

Illinois was ranked fourth behind New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio in supplying personnel to the Union Cause. Beginning with (former Illinois resident) President Lincoln's first call for troops, and continuing throughout the war, the state mustered 150 infantry regiments, which were numbered from the 17th Illinois to the 156th Illinois. Seventeen calvary regiments were

also mustered, as well as two light artillery regiments. Due to enthusiastic recruiting rallies and high response to voluntary calls to arms, the military draft was seldom used in Chicago and the surrounding area. A major influx of troops from Illinois late in the war helped support not only Illinois regiments, but regiments from other states as well, to assure victory for the North. Camp Douglas, of Chicago, was one of the largest training camps for troops, as was Camp Butler near Springfield. Both served as major prisoner-of-war camps for captive Confederates. Another POW camp was located at Rock Island. Several thousand Confederates died while in custody in Illinois prison camps, and are buried in a number of nearby cemeteries.



There were no Civil War battles fought in Illinois, but Cairo, at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, was a most important supply base and was protected by nearby Camp Defiance, as were the major supply depots located in Mound City and across the Ohio River at Fort Anderson in Paducah, Kentucky. Interspersed in this general area were also sprawling facilities for United States Navy gunboats, and associated river fleets.

Only one of the 34,384 Illinoisans who died in the Civil War, received a medal of honor posthumously, and that was Henry Capron, of Peoria. Nine (9) from Illinois earned medals while serving in regiments from other states, and five (5) earned Navy medals of honor. However, ninety-one (91) Blueboys received medals while serving in Illinois infantry, artillery, and cavalry units. Their distinguished bravery and honored sacrifice for our nation, and for our Illinois, is exemplary. It gives me a sense of gratitude for the difference our state's men and women made to our nation's effort to persevere toward a higher calling that is democracy.

Respectfully Submitted Michael Zafran, F.C.L. PH Sheridan Camp #2 Commander Patriotic Instructor for the Department of IL

SAVE THE DATE - Saturday, May 14, 2022

The Department of Illinois Annual Encampment is scheduled for Saturday, May 14, 2022, at the McClean County Historical Museum in Bloomington, IL. More details will be forthcoming mid-April, in the Spring 2022 Railsplitter, in plenty of time to make arrangements for attending. In the meantime, please direct any questions you may have to Brother Dave Wildermuth, at 618.416.2298, or email him at dwildermuth59@yahoo.com.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

DC Hutchinson recently advised that among the agenda items at the upcoming encampment is election of officers. Serving on the nominating committee were PDC & Chief of Staff, Steven Westlake; PDC & Camp Organizer, Nick Kaup; and Department Treasurer & Signals Officer, Robert Welch. The nominees are as follows:

> Commander - Gary Gunderson, Sheridan Camp #2, Aurora Senior Vice Commander - Robert Welch, Sheridan Camp #2, Aurora Junior Vice Commander - Lars Jacobson, Dutton Camp #49, Sycamore Treasurer - Lee Lasseigne, Sheridan Camp #2, Aurora

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Secretary - Don Sherman, Custer Camp #1, Wilmette Council - Wayne Wehrheim, Byner Camp #67, Peoria Council - David Wildermuth, Camp #443, Belleville Council - Richard Hoover, Logan Camp #26, Rockford

CAMP NEWS

Custer Camp #1 - Wilmette

Nick Kaup has a special interest in the battlefield of Franklin. His great grandfather served there. Anyone who visits the Tennessee battlefield walks away with a much better understanding of the battle. While there, the Lotz House Museum is a must see attraction. On November 30, 1864 the Lotz family vacated their, sure-to-be-destroyed frame home, and took up refuge in the brick house across the street, in the Carter family home. Sure enough, the fighting invaded their yard and the dead were piled six feet deep. But somehow, the house survived, and became a hospital for both northern and southern troops until the summer of 1866. The house and its scars of war became a showcase in 1976.

Thomas Y. Cartwright is a celebrated expert on the Lotz House and the battle of Franklin. His tours are legendary and he is known and respected far and wide.



As CC of Camp I, Department of Illinois, SUVCW, Brother Kaup recently recognized Mr. Cartwright with a plaque, seen on the left, in tribute to his dedication and devotion to the Lotz family, and Franklin battlefield history. Below left is a photo of Thomas Cartwright and to his right, Nick Kaup. Pictured below is the Lotz House Museum.





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Pictured below is PDC & Department Eagle Scout Coordinator, John Bigwood, presenting SUVCW Eagle Scout certificates. The ceremony was held on Sunday, December 5th in Chicago by Scout Troop #944.



On the left is Eagle Scout Joseph Viola and on the right is Eagle Scout Hans Yparraguirre. Congratulations Joseph and Hans.



- The two photos below were taken this past Veterans Day at Union Ridge Cemetery in Chicago -



Left to right above is US Grant Camp 1863 SVC Mike Gregory; PCC Custer Camp #1, Rob Hauff; PCC Custer Camp #1 Tom Hauff; CC Jeff Kaup, Old Glory Camp #6165; and PDC Nick Kaup.



Program speakers included from left to right Brother Dave Totsch, Brother Noel Jackson, National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski, CC and DPI Michael Zafran, and CC Jeff Kaup.

Respectfully Submitted In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty PDC Nick Kaup

McClernand Camp #4 - Springfield

With the support of Camp 4, the Illinois State Military Museum at Camp Lincoln in Springfield is creating a special exhibit on General Grant to celebrate the General's upcoming 200th birthday (April 27). The exhibit will run through March and April, and will also feature two special programs in April. SVC Larry Werline is leading this effort on behalf of his Camp 4 Brothers.

In his Patriotic Instruction column above, Brother Zafran reminds us that Richard Yates was an energetic governor as he led the state of Illinois through the nation's cataclysmic Civil War. With the passage of time, few colleges in Illinois still

celebrate the Civil War, or harken back to its memory in daily life. One exception is Illinois College (IC), in Jacksonville. It was founded in 1829, just prior to A. Lincoln moving to New Salem. A few years back there was a movement underfoot to change the nicknames of IC's athletic teams, but the vote was decisive. IC would continue to be the Home of the "Blueboys" and "Lady Blues". It should surprise no one that the colors of the "Blueboys" and "Lady Blues" are Union blue and white. 240 original IC "Blueboys" served with Union forces during the Civil War, and some drilled in uniform on what is known today as the upper guad. Jump back a few decades and you would have seen a patriotic, male student attired in a Civil War uniform, with a faithful female student aside wearing a lovely Civil War era gown, as they meandered thought the crowd at football games. IC is the second oldest college in Illinois, but was the first to graduate students. In 1835, alumnus Richard Yates was one of the two students in IC's first graduating class. Those two just also happen to be the first college graduates of the state of Illinois. While it remains unknown if the moniker "Blueboys" stuck at IC due to the 240, and/or due to the influence of, or the long shadow of Governor Yates. Either way, it is a heartening thought. At right is a photo of Illinois Civil War Governor





This photo of John Tanner's Mausoleum in Oak Ridce is from the author's private collection.

Yates acquired on line by googling same.

Around the time that the next newsletter comes out, the SUVCW will be gathering for the annual Lincoln Tomb ceremony in Oak Ridge Cemetery. As the attendees align on the steps with their ceremonial wreaths in tow, they are facing south. If they take advantage of their elevation and gaze above, and beyond the crowd, they can see exactly 190 steps away a gray, ominous, formidable looking sepulcher with behemoth columns. It is kind of eerie looking and engenders strength and masculinity.

It is the tomb of Illinois' 21st governor, John Riley Tanner. He was a Civil War veteran, serving with the mounted 98th Illinois Infantry Regiment. Prior to enlisting he had been a farmer, but as a result of a wartime accident, he could no longer farm for a living. He could no longer chop wood, mount or ride a horse, plow, rake straw or hay, or even walk very far. A quick check of his Pension Records reflects that while jumping a stream on January 15, 1865 at Gravelly Springs, Alabama, his horse jerked

ORMER GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS DEAD John R. Tanner Passes Away Very Suddenly utism Affects Lefe Sido and Reaches His Heart-Chairman of Republican State Committee and Held Many Offices Beside Governor SPRINCHPIELD, III., May 20.--For-mer Governor John R. Tanner died here huddenly in his room at the Leisnd notel at 2:46 o'clock this aftermoon from romfined to his room since his return from Chicago last Saturday with rheu-matism on the left side, but the case was not considered in the least serious. He folt much, worze this afternoon and Des J. N. Dison, the governor's phys-iotan, was called about 2:30 and found the governor dying.

The article above was clipped from a write-up found on line in the May 24, 1901 edition of the Los Angels Herald. It details the Governor's death. Note that he had been confined to bed with rheumatism on the left side after returning from a recent trip to Chicago. It is interesting to consider if his testicular condition was an aggravating factor complicating his arthritic affliction. Perhaps it is just a coincidence, but it is interesting that there is no Death Certificate on file for Governor Tanner in the Sangamon County Clerk's Office.

to a stop after coming up short, and John's body was brutally forced forward into the saddles pommel, violently smashing his testicles. In an instant, it meant for him both a career and a life style change.

He suffered intense pain for the rest of his life, and if he exerted himself physically in the least, he would be bedfast for days, suffering something awful. His testicles and spermatic chords would at times swell, become extremely sore, and turn black. The only way he could achieve relief was by laying flat on his back, pulling his knees up, fixing his feet flat, and then arching his trunk upwards. During the rest of his life, including his term of governor, he would sometimes spend days in bed, coping in agony as best he could.

He didn't run for a second term and Governor Tanner died just a few months after leaving office in 1901, at the age of 57. Ciivl War veterans suffered physical and emotional wounds by the hundreds of thousands. Some wounds were obvious and others. not so much. Governor Tanner was not the only cavalryman to suffer such damage, but no number has been ventured. Those who lost limbs were conspicuous, but John Tanner's injury serves to remind us that any number of Civil War veterans suffered unspeakable maladies in strict privacy, and largely unknown to others.

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As we fall-in on or near Lincoln's Death Day, April 15, with our SUVCW Brothers on the steps of Lincoln's Tomb this year, let's remember to gaze yonder and call to mind not only John Tanner's

"IOHN R. TANNER FORMER GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS" AS IT APPEARED IN THE ARTICLE IN THE LOS

ANGELES HERALD REFERENCED ABOVE.

story, but all the other John Tanners who suffered a multitude of psychological and physical maladies that remained largely unknown to contemporaries. An untold number, they now rest comfortably in countless cemeteries throughout the land knowing that their privacy is secure, and the kindred pain and suffering is no more.

Brother Chuck Murphy Camp 4, Patriotic Instructor



Just a reminder, submission dates for Railsplitter articles and photos will continue to be April 15, July 15, October 15, and January 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.





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Bryner Camp #67 - Peoria

Camp 67 Commander, Ron Kirchgessner, had an entry in the East Peoria and Peoria Veterans day parades again this year. He pulled a trailer with numerous flags. Brother Joe Hutchinson followed alongside during the Peoria parade handing out small flags, SUVCW Flag Fact brochures, and VFW Veterans comic books to children along the route. On the right is a photo of CC Kirchgessner.





Above is a photo of Sct. John Humphrey's medal

An antique dealer knew of Jerry Martin's interest in the Civil War, and in April 2020, offered him a medal, which Jerry purchased instantly. How could he not for it was made by Tiffany's of New York? Brother Jerry is a member of Camp #67. The medal was in seeming mint condition and Jerry noted that it was awarded to a Sgt. John Humphrey, of Ohio. Brother Jerry accessed "find a grave" on line and discovered that the recipient was buried in Miamiville, Ohio. Upon contacting the cemetery to see what more he may learn about Sgt. Humphrey, Jessica told him that Humphrey has been interred in an unmarked grave ever since his burial. He further learned that John Humphrey had died in a train accident which most likely, mutilated his body.

After a year of working with the VA, to verify Humphrey's entitlement to a Government headstone, the dedication of Sgt. Humphrey's headstone finally came to pass. It would be shipped to Ohio in September or October of 2021. Once the tombstone was on the way, Brother Jerry contacted officials of the 4th Ohio Cavalry Association, to ask if they could have representative present for the placement ceremony. On October 23rd last, the ceremony took place in Miami Township, Ohio with great coverage by the Sons of Union Veterans Department of Ohio. Brother Jerry wrote, "Attending were the current Department Commander of SUVCW of Ohio, 2 Past Department Commanders, and the Commander of the SUVCW Camp Gen.

William H. Lytle No. 10 as well as Sister Anthony O'Connell ASUVCW. A total of 4 wreaths were placed. The descendants of the 4th Ohio Cavalry Association were also in attendance and placed a wreath. The ceremony culminated with taps. Brother Jerry Martin made remarks as the individual who determined Humphrey lay in an unmarked grave for 104 years. The program identifies me as a member of Col John C. Bryner Camp No. 67, Dept. of Illinois." Brother Martin concluded that, "as a wounded combat veteran and member of the SUV, I felt no veteran should be left behind".

Fraternity Charity Loyalty



The photo on the left above is Brother Jerry Martin offering remarks at the October 23, 2020 dedication of John Humphrey's headstone in Ohio. The picture on the right above is Sct. Humphrey's gravesite during the dedication. Below left is a picture of the Vice President of the 4th Ohio Cavalry Descendants Association, Mary Hennessey, and President Bill Krebs. The lower right photo is a close-up of Humphrey's Headstone.



Respectfully Submitted DC Joe Hutchinson

SERE EL A 4 BRIE CAN JAN 17 1842 IAN 5 1917

Hecker Camp #443 - Belleville



The photo on the left is Hecker Camp Commander, Dave Wildermuth, at the Veterans Day Parade in O'Fallon, IL

WE HOPE BROTHER DAVE WON'T MIND IF WE AGAIN PLUG THE ANNUAL DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS ENCAMPMENT ON MAY 14, 2022 IN BLOOMINGTON, IL. DETAILS COMING IN THE SPRING EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER, SO WATCH THIS SPACE.



The picture above is of PCC Greg Zelinski leading Co. G, 17th Missouri Infantry Regiment, in the Veterans Day parade in St. Louis.

This photo on the right was taken at the Veterans Day ceremony at the relocated CivilWar/Spanish American War Monument in Fairview Heights, IL Standing beside members the VFW Post #1117 on the far right is Camp Hecker Commander, Brother Dave.





The photo above was also taken during g the proceedings associated with relocating the Civil War/Spanish American Monument at City Hall's Veterans Plaza. Participants included: Joe Hutchinson, Dept. of Illinois Commander, SUVCW; Hecker Camp #443; U.S. Grant Camp #68, St. Louis, MO; Caseyville/Fairview VFW Post #1117; Cub Scout Pack #586; and City and Local Officials.



The above picture is of the swearing in of Hecker Camp officers for 2022. From left to right is DT Robert Welch, PCC and Councilor Greg Zelinski, CC Dave Wildermuth, CT Richard Piper, CSVC Russell Schleicher, and Guide Gerald Sonnenberg. Not pictured are CJVC John Stanton, CS Justin Ottolini, Councilor Gary Ladd and Councilor John Fulton.

Respectfully Submitted, CC Dave Wildermuth

U.S. Grant 1863 Camp - Palatine

U.S. Grant 1863 Camp was honored to participate in rededicating the Hillside Cemetery (Palatine, IL) Cannon last summer. The cannon was used on Decoration day to salute those who gave it all. Our Camp was chartered in the Fall 2020 so we have had limited opportunities to gather in person. We are looking forward to becoming an active Camp.

Respectfully Submitted, SVC Michael Gregory