McTeer’s Loyal Mountaineers

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2015

Each November, Gettysburg commemorates the establishment of the Soldiers’ National Cemetery on Remembrance Day following the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, which dedicated 17 acres to bury more than 3,500 fallen Union troops. President Abraham Lincoln arrived in Gettysburg by train on November 18th to attend the dedication ceremony for the cemetery the next day. There he delivered the Gettysburg Address, which eloquently honored those who fought and died at Gettysburg and continues to be one of the most revered speeches in American history.

Annual Remembrance Illumination - November 21, 2015, 5:30-9:30 p.m. The ceremony featured the lighting of a luminary candle on each of the 3,512 Civil War soldier's graves. Names of the fallen soldiers were read throughout the evening.

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November 19th, the anniversary of the Gettysburg Address and the Dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery, was formally designated as Dedication Day, by a joint resolution of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives in 1946. This day is celebrated annually and features a wreath laying, keynote speaker and is sponsored by the Lincoln Fellowship of Pennsylvania, Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg College, and the Gettysburg Foundation.

Garrison Keillor, host and produce of A Prairie Home Companion, a weekly radio program heard nationwide on over 600 National Public Radio (NPR) stations presented the Dedication Day keynote address.

Keillor commented, "It is something of a miracle that the prosperous Illinois railroad lawyer who won the 1860 election turned out to be Abraham Lincoln. He was a better man than anyone knew and a masterful writer, who gave us the Second Inaugural ("With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right"), and the classic of Gettysburg, on 11/19/63. Poor Edward Everett stood up and orated for two hours that day and went down in history as a pretentious gasbag and Lincoln gave his address that thousands and thousands of schoolchildren have memorized and learned what greatness sounds like. But it is his plain humanity that so impresses us today. He feels like a contemporary." (Source: http://www.nps.gov/gett/learn/news/2015-dedication-day-speaker.htm)

The Remembrance Day Parade takes place the Saturday following Dedication Day. This year that meant the date was November 21st. The parade stepped off at 1:00pm from LeFever Street and followed the traditional route to Liberty Street, turning left onto Middle Street, left again onto Baltimore, and finally onto Steinwehr Avenue. The parade ended at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

The annual parade is sponsored by the Sons of Veterans Reserve, the Military Department of the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. It was reported that the 2015 parade was one of the largest ever in terms of the number of participants. McTeer Commander David McReynolds and Polly Toole Auxiliary President Cindy McReynolds were honored to participate in the parade representing our camp riding in a Civil War era carriage pulled by a matched brother-sister team of Belgian draft horses.

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There was also a great event which took place at the Memorial to the Grand Army of the Republic (Woolson Monument) at Gettysburg National Military Park. Following are some wonderful pictures from that event:

![Picture of Eugene Mortorff delivering remarks at the event](image1)

![Picture of the front of the memorial](image2)

![Picture of Robert Costello portraying Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address](image3)

Above to the left is a picture of current SUVCW Commander-in-Chief Eugene Mortorff delivering remarks at the event, next is a picture of the front of the memorial and at the bottom is a picture of Robert Costello portraying Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address.

There were wreath-layings and ceremonies going on throughout the entire weekend at the many historical sites surrounding Gettysburg. One could spend every waking moment giving thanks to those who fought to preserve the Union and especially those who gave their lives at Gettysburg.
The 2015 Remembrance Day Parade
Dear Brothers,

It was an honor to represent our camp during the month of November, first at a meeting with Senator Lamar Alexander, who sent us his congratulations on winning the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief’s Award as the most outstanding camp in the order and the Horace Greeley Award for the most outstanding web site. We had a great meeting in which I was able to describe our camp’s activities and to tell the story of the Sultana tragedy—the greatest maritime disaster in United States history. And as usual, I had to have some fun with him as well.

Next, I visited Gettysburg for the Remembrance Day activities. Cindy and I were honored to ride in a beautiful red surrey with a fringe on top in the Remembrance Day Parade. I carried the Camp Guidon with the streamers for our recent national awards in full view. We also received a new streamer for our flag for our participation in the parade. There was so much going on during the long weekend event that it was almost overwhelming. It was a humbling experience.

I look forward to next year and the continued growth of our camp in not only event participation but also in learning more about the traditions of the SUVCW and our duty to preserve the remembrance of the Grand Army of the Republic!

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

David McReynolds, Camp Commander
Dear Members of the Major William A. McTeer Camp No. 39:

I am pleased and honored to congratulate you for being recognized with the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief's Award as well as the Horace Greeley Award for best camp website.

The Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War plays an important role in charting, recording and preserving the storied history of the men who fought in the Civil War from the East Tennessee. The work you do is valued and very much appreciated. The honors the Major William A. McTeer Camp has received are well deserved.

Congratulations again, and very best wishes.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr. David McReynolds
Commander
Major William A. McTeer Camp No. 39
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
4323 Near Shore Drive
Louisville, TN 37777
Another interesting pair of books in this issue, the first is the diary of a yeoman with the Gulf Coast Blockading Squadron while the second is a biography of one of the “top brass” of the Army of the Potomac.

In Yeoman in Farragut’s Fleet – The Civil War Diary of Josiah Parker Higgins we certainly get a taste of what life at sea must have been like in the Civil War. Josiah was born and raised in a small Massachusetts village, near Boston, with a background in Church events and where his parents operated a small store in which he worked as a clerk. He came to feel that his life was totally unfulfilled and his only desire was to see the world so he enlisted in the Civil War Navy and found himself on board the U. S. S. Gun Boat Kennebec as the ship’s Yeoman and does he grow up quickly. Less than a month after he is aboard ship he writes:

“I have seen enough of the U.S. Navy to know that it is not a fitting place for a young man: I have learned enough in reference to that to last me a lifetime. Such screaming; such vulgarity, such wickedness I have never heard or seen ...” (page 19).

However, Yeoman Higgins does learn to manage his life while keeping an interesting journal of the early sea battles of the war. He first finds himself with Farragut as the ships of the line move past the big guns of Forts Jackson and St. Phillip in the early union victory that took control of the Confederacy’s second largest city, New Orleans. Within the next month the Kennebec is ordered up river and runs the heavy artillery guarding Vicksburg and finally his ship is assigned to the blockading fleet of the Gulf Coast. For the next two years the Kennebec patrolled between the Navy Station at Pensacola, Florida up to Mobile Bay and then rounding “Ships Island” off the coast of New Orleans. His tales tell it like it was, bad food, sea sickness (a lot of) and poor officers. Their one minute of glory was the capture of the Confederate schooner John Scott with over 100 bales of cotton on board and destined for English cloth mills. Finally after two years of service he is discharged to home for the quiet life that he so eagerly left behind.

Yeoman in Farragut’s Fleet – The Civil War Diary of Josiah Higgins is edited and annotated by E. C. Hermann and published by Guy Victor Publications of Carmel, California in 1999. It is very well annotated and has numerous appendices that assist in understanding several of the journal entries and contains a short bibliography while being only 97 pages in length. If you are interested in the life of a sailor during the Civil War this is a good place to start.

From a life at sea we jump to the life of General John F. Reynolds, the

From the Book Rack—continued on page 9 ===>
soldier’s soldier of the Army of the Potomac. Toward Gettysburg – A Biography of John F. Reynolds written by the Pennsylvania State University historian Edward J. Nichols is an excellent study of one of the best military leaders of the war. John Reynolds seemingly was always a soldier, one of the best in his class at West Point then stationed at numerous forts mostly in the far West trying to control the Native Americans, the Mormons and the white settlers. In 1846 he was recognized as one of the outstanding “new breed” of fighters in the Mexican Conflict. After that war he chose to stay single and make the Army his career and when many officers resigned to join the Confederacy his honor and loyalty to the United States won out. He quickly became a division commander in the Army of the Potomac and refused to publicly criticize what he viewed as the poor leadership and the overriding civil interference with the army. Privately he considered Burnside and Hooker to be amateurs who were too much under the control of Edwin Stanton, the Secretary of War, but he was always there when they called upon him to fight. After Hooker’s resignation was accepted by the War Department, Reynolds was called to Washington City and offered the top command of the “A. o P.” but the research carried out by Dr. Nichols led to his conclusion the General refused the command because he would not be granted complete authority over the army. From there the story is well known, General Meade accepts the offer of Commanding General while Reynolds returns to his 1st Corp Command. In late June the Army of Northern Virginia is well into their invasion of the North having units already in Pennsylvania when the 1st Corp is urgently summoned to Gettysburg by Cavalry General John Buford to assist him in holding the “high ground” around the village. Finally, on July 1, 1863 while General Reynolds was placing two of his division in relief of the cavalry he was slain by a rebel bullet.

The hard facts of the book are that is was published by the Pennsylvania State University Press in 1958. It has 223 pages with another 32 pages of academic footnotes, an excellent bibliography and index. This truly is a very well written and researched book, however the overriding problem with Toward Gettysburg is that it was written 55 years ago and a newer follow up study cries out to be written.

Both books probably can be purchased on line, however you can borrow them from me for free.
GENERAL ORDER #3

It is with deep regret that I must inform you that Charles Henry Engle, Jr., PDC of Athens, TN died December 2, 2015.

Brother Engle was a long time member of the Department of Tennessee and served as the eighth Department Commander in 2003 and was again Department Commander in 2009. Brother Engle was a dual member of Major William Anderson McTeer #39 and Missionary Ridge #63 where he was the Secretary/Treasurer.

With the passing of our very good friend and beloved brother, Charles Engle, I order all Camp Charters and Membership Badges to be draped in black for thirty days. Please keep Charlie and his family in your thoughts and prayers, he will be sincerely missed by all.

Michael Downs
Department of Tennessee Commander
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
December 4, 2015
In a recent call for more ancestor biographies, I received the following e-mail response from one of our United Kingdom brethren. While I am uncertain as to how to refer to this ancestral relationship, Brother Hammerson’s description made it too tempting to resist:

“Although "only" an English Associate Member, some family research has indicated that my paternal great-great-great grandfather's niece's husband's cousin served during the Civil War; I hope that qualifies for a mention!

His name was Samuel Proops. He was born in Aldgate, London, 25th March, 1845. He is shown as arriving at New York City from London on the ship Adriatic on 21st September, 1863, his trade given as a butcher. It is unclear whether he was thinking of emigrating permanently; he was shown as a butcher living at 4th Street, Cincinnati, when he enlisted on 10th Feb. 1865 as a Private, and was mustered on March 3, 1865 into Co. E, 187th Ohio Infantry. The regiment did railroad guard duty in Georgia, and he was mustered out on Jan. 20, 1866 at Macon, Ga.

He continued to live and work at Cincinnati, but by 1868 he was back in Spitalfields, London, trading as a butcher; by 1901 he was shown as a grocer and chandler. He was member No. 133 of the London Branch of American Civil War Veterans, which existed from 1910 to 1933; I have done a considerable amount of research on it.

He was awarded a Federal War Pension on Feb. 18, 1910 (Certificate No. 1,160,722); he was then living in Dalston, London. His widow Hannah (who he married in 1867 and with whom he had eleven children) received one after his death on April 23, 1921, in London. He was buried in East Ham Cemetery, London, England, Section E, Row 2, plot 42. He has a good tombstone, though of course no mention of his civil war service; the cemetery have indicated that they would have no objection to a GAR marker.

In FC&L

Michael Hammerson”
Fort Dickerson 2015

Fort Dickerson was built by the Federal army in 1863-64 across the Holston (now Tennessee) River from Knoxville. The forts along this ridge were constructed to prevent the Confederates from bombarding Knoxville to drive out the Federals. Confederate cavalry attempted an attack on 15 and 16 November 1863 but retreated when they decided they could not take the fort due to the steep terrain and strength of the defending troops.

Today the fort is in a City park and is maintained by the City of Knoxville and the Knoxville Civil War Roundtable. The fort contains three replica cannon, numerous interpretative signs detailing the fort’s history and maps and photos of the actions around Knoxville. The Roundtable sponsors a Civil War Weekend the second weekend in November with a school day and two days of public tours and military presentations.

This year it took place on 14th and 15th of November. McTeer Brother George Lane cooks a dinner of red beans and rice for the re-enactors who take part in the event. Junior Vice Commander Richard Holmes and his family visited the event on Sunday the 15th. As you can see in the picture below, it is truly a beautiful park. Pictured are his son Carter (in the red jacket), who is a Junior Member of our Camp, his nephew Asron Watson and his wife Kelly.
David Duggan’s Visit to Arlington

Brother David Duggan of the McTeer Camp recently had the opportunity to visit the Arlington National Cemetery on a trip to Washington, D.C. It is always something special to visit this national landmark and pay respect to the many famous and not-so-famous veterans who are buried there. On this page and the following page are some photographs David took of some very interesting burial sites in the cemetery.

Medal of Honor Citation for Peter Grace:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Sergeant Peter Grace, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 5 May 1864, while serving with Company G, 83rd Pennsylvania Infantry, in action during the Wilderness Campaign, Virginia. Single-handed, Sergeant Grace rescued a comrade from two Confederate guards, knocking down one and compelling surrender of the other. 27 December 1894.
Just a sampling of some of the photos taken by Brother David Duggan during his recent visit to Arlington.

**A tradition in military cemeteries:** A coin left on a headstone lets the deceased soldier’s family know that somebody stopped by to pay their respect. Leaving a penny means you visited. A nickel means that you and the deceased soldier trained at boot camp together. If you served with the soldier, you leave a dime. A quarter is very significant because it means that you were there when that soldier died. It is an old Jewish custom to place a stone or pebble on a headstone to indicate that you have visited the grave and to indicate respect for the deceased.
Calendar of Important Events

Be sure and visit our Camp Website at www.mcteer39.org. There is a page with a complete Calendar of Events that is updated regularly. Check back often for news of changes in time or place!

December Camp Mess Will be on the 15th -
Come to our Camp Mess meeting on 15 December 2015 at Calhoun’s on the Creek Restaurant in Maryville, TN starting at 12:30 PM. We will review our year and celebrate the season. It’s a great opportunity to spend time together building upon the brotherhood of the order. Camp Mess meetings will continue throughout 2016 on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

12 December 2015-
Maryville Christmas Parade. Our first parade needs to be really special. Can’t wait!! We will on the trailer pulled by Roy Gamble’s antique tractor with signs and a lot of flag waving! Maybe some Christmas decorations too! Note the date change.

12 December 2015-
“Wreaths Across America” at the Knoxville National Cemetery in Knoxville, TN. An opportunity to see the fruits of our fundraising efforts in our first year of support.

20 February 2016-
Department of Tennessee (with Mississippi and Alabama) Annual Encampment to be held in Memphis, Tennessee hosted by Sultana Camp No. 1.

21 March 2016-
First camp quarterly meeting of 2016!

22-23 April 2016-
Sultana Descendant’s Association annual reunion at Mount Olive Baptist Church. 100th anniversary of Sultana memorial.

24 July 2016-
150th anniversary of the re-admission of Tennessee to the Union.

11-14 August 2016-
The 135th Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic to be held in Springfield, Illinois. More information forthcoming after the first of the year.

Reminder!
We have two events on 12 December 2015: the Maryville Christmas Parade and Wreaths Across America at Knoxville National Cemetery. We need participation in both. CC David McReynolds is the parade contact and DC Mike Downs will be at the cemetery.
How to Join the SUVCW

- It’s easy to join the SUVCW. Hereditary membership is available to a male descendant over age 14 of a Union soldier, sailor, marine or member of the Revenue Cutter Service between 12 April 1861 and 9 April 1865. You may either be a direct descendent or descended from a brother or sister of the person who served.
- Associate membership is available to men who do not have the ancestry to qualify for hereditary membership.
- Junior hereditary or associate memberships are also available to males 6-14 years old.
- One option is go to the national website (www.suvcw.org), click on the “Membership” tab and follow the directions to access and submit an application. Be sure to include your interest in our camp—Maj. Wm. A. McTeer Camp No. 39, Department of Tennessee.
- Or, you can go to our Camp Website, www.mcteer39.org, fill out a Camp Application, print it and follow the directions to submit it directly to our camp for rapid processing.
- Or you can message us on Facebook or just express your interest to any current SUVCW member. They will be glad to help you.
- Or, simply contact our Camp Secretary Doug Fidler at dksidler@charter.net. This method is likely the most efficient and economical path to membership.