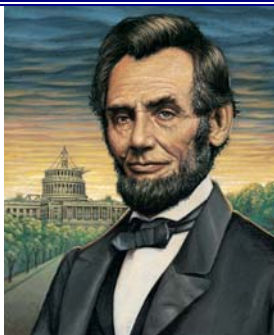


The Rail Splitter

Newsletter of the Department
on Illinois
Fall/Winter 2008



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Incorporated by Act of Congress

1 USPS

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

Department of Illinois, SUVCW Department Commander's Report



Brothers,

On May 10, 2008 I was elected Department Commander at the 124th annual encampment in Peoria, Illinois. I consider it an honor and look forward to working with all of you both now, and in the future.

We have many projects and events that have already been accomplished through the hard works of many Brothers and have more that are in the works.

The following are the activities I have participated in:

- July 04 - Marched in 4th of July parade in Hinsdale.
- July 17 - Attended Gen Sheridan Camp #2 in Geneva.
- Aug 6-9 - Represented the Dept. of Illinois at the National Encampment. Presented National Commander Kuhn with bronze plaque of President Lincoln.
- Aug 16-17 - Participated in the Lincoln speech reenactment and spoke at the ceremony in Lewistown, IL
- Sep 16 - Attended Gen. Sheridan Camp #2 meeting in Bloomingdale.
- Sep 20 - Helped man the recruiting table at the Du Page County Collector Show in Wheaton
- Sep 22 - Spoke at Gen. Custer Camp #1 camp meeting and initiated 2 new members in Glenview.
- Oct 4 - Participated in the memorial ceremony for the dedication of Illinois and Iowa monuments at Allatoona Pass, GA. Also presented a Lincoln bronze plaque to Brother Tom Gaard Dept of Iowa, Ray Wozniak Dept. of Georgia, Ed Hill, Etowah Valley Historical Society, and Gary Wehner, Chairman Allatoona Pass Memorial Park, for their contribution to make the ceremony a success.
- Oct 25 - Presided at the Department Encampment in Wheaton.
- Nov 9 - First Brigade Band performed at Memorial Hall in Rockford.
- Nov 11 - Veterans Day activities in Aurora.

Upcoming events:

- Nov 22, 2008 - I have been invited to the annual banquet of Camp Hecker Camp #443 Belleville
- Jan 31-Feb 1, 2009 - Lincoln Bi-Centennial activities and Ball in Rockford.
- Jan 24, 2009 - Joint Banquette for Camp #1, #2, #26.
- Apr 18, 2009 - Lincoln Tomb and GAR ceremony in Springfield & Petersburg, IL.
- May 09, 2009 - Department Meeting, Rockford, IL, 11:00 am.
- Aug 13-15, 2009 - National Encampment.

Ongoing Activities:

- 36th Illinois Battle Flag
- GAR Bridge Project with Department of Iowa
- Fort Donnellson Project

A special thanks goes out to Brothers Zingales, Nylund, and Kowalski, who have stepped up beyond the call of duty to help me and our Department with our accomplishments this year. At this time I want to wish everyone a joyous and blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

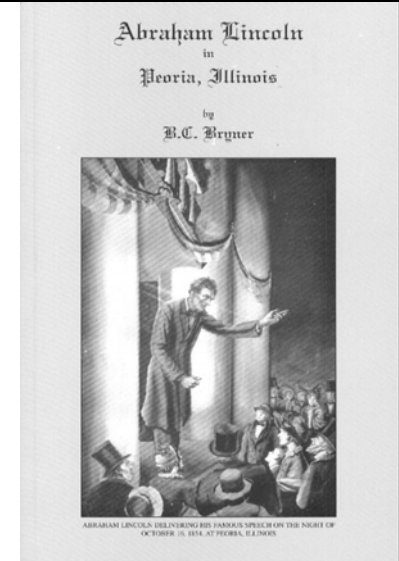
In Fraternity, Charity, & Loyalty
Steven Westlake
Department Commander

Colonel Bryner Camp 67 Offering

In celebration of Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday, Colonel Bryner Camp 67 in Peoria has made available reprints of former Bryner Post G.A.R. Commander and son of Colonel John Bryner, B.C. Bryner's book, "Abraham Lincoln in Peoria, Illinois" originally published in 1924 to commemorate the 70th



anniversary of the famous speech Lincoln gave in Peoria on October 16, 1854. Copies are available for \$20.00. Also available are commemorative coins for \$5.00. Please contact PCC Larry Wachtveitl at (309) 691-5462 for details.



A Note From The Editor

If you wish to contribute any material for placement in The Rail Splitter or have an address change, please contact the editor. Also, if you received this newsletter by USPS and have an e-mail address, please pass on you e-mail address to the editor. The Department of Illinois would like to reduce its mailing costs. We would like to send you the newsletter over the internet in a pdf file. If you can not download this file please let me know, and I will send you a hardcopy. e-mail: ejnylund69@sbcglobal.net

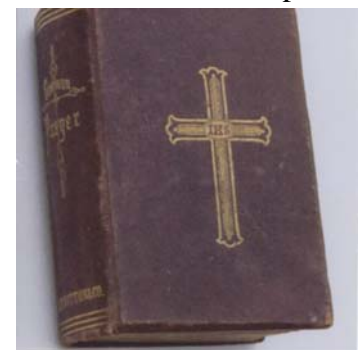
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CIVIL WAR BIBLES

By Bob Mohrman, Col. Hecker Camp # 443

Religion was an important part of the life of many of those, on both sides, who served in the Civil War. They carried religious items, prayer books and Bibles and had contact with regimental chaplains. This article describes and illustrates a pocket size prayer book and four Bibles and the men who carried them during the Civil War.

An Episcopal Prayer Book, that belonged to Pvt. Jacob A. Caswell of Co. H, 5th Mass. Vol. Inf., measures 3" x 4 5/8" x 3/4" and is dated April 13, 1849. Members of this regiment enlisted for 100 days. Caswell's name is written twice on the front pages.





This New Testament Bible was distributed by the American Bible Society. Dated 1863, it measures 3" x 4 5/8" x 1/2" and has colored threads for a bookmark.

It belonged to William Henry Palmer of Co. K, 1st NH Cav. He enlisted as a Private and was discharged as a Captain. His name is in the front. On another page the following is written in pencil.

“May your future be ever lighted with the sunshine of happiness”
Your true friend
Flora

A New Testament Bible, distributed by the American Bible Society, dated 1860 and the same size as the Bible carried by Palmer, was carried by James L. Fisher.

He mustered in on Sept 2, 1864, at age 20, as a Private in Co. H, 2nd Mass. Heavy Artillery. By order dated Dec. 16, 1864, he was transferred to Co. G, 17th Mass Vol. Inf. He was discharged June 30, 1865. Written in both pen and pencil in the front and back of the book are: “James Fisher (several times), Springfield, Mass., Co. H, comments on his school teacher, drawings and other words.” On one page is written in pencil: “Fannie C. Fisher”



This well used New Testament Bible was also distributed by the American Bible Society. Dated 1862, it measures 2 1/2" x 3 3/4" x 3/4" and belonged to Jonathan McConnell, who was born in Paisley, Scotland.

Jonathan was mustered in Co. G, 13th N. H. Vol. Inf. as a Private on Sept. 19, 1862. He transferred to Co. G, Veteran Reserve Corps on April 12, 1865 and was discharged June 29, 1865 at Point Lookout, Md. Written the front of the Bible is: “Presented to Jonathan McConnell Co. G, 13th N. H. Vol. by the American Bible Society at Concord, N. H., 6th October 1862.”

This new Testament bible, dated 1863, and distributed by the American Bible Society, shows much use and has a lot of writing, in both pen and pencil in the front and back. It belonged to Jefferson Leland Brown, from Wenona, Illinois. He was mustered in Co. E, 4th Illinois Cavalry as a Private on Sept. 26, 1861. The Bible was given to him by his sister who lived in St. Louis, MO., when his regiment was in Colliersville, Tenn. He was mustered out November 3, 1864. Written on the front page 1 (pencil) - “J. Leland Brown E Co., 4th Cav. Ills. Vol. Colliersville Tenn Sept 1, 1863”



Page 2 (ink) –

“Remember thy Creator
While youth fair spring is bright
Before thy _____
Before comes _____
While yet the sun shines on thee
While stars the darkness chase

While life is all before thee
Thy great Creator faces

Written by your sister
Amanda Tracy
Read and Profit”

Written on back page 1 (ink) -

“Dear brother read these lines
When you are far away
And think upon your sister
Who penned these line today
Think on your aged Mother
Your other sister too
And bring you safely through

page 2 (ink) -

“JEFFERSON L. BROWN
his book
Presented by his sister
Amanda D. Tracy
St. Louis, Mo
August the 24, 1863
Read and Profit”

Written August the 25, 1863
By your sister Amanda Tracy”

Mulligan's Battery (Battery L, 1st Illinois LA)

Mulligan's Battery (Battery L, 1st Illinois Light Artillery) was organized in February 2001 under the command of 1st Sgt. Dennis Kelly. Most of the members of the battery belong to the Gen. George A. Custer and Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan SUVCW Camps from the Greater Chicago area. The unit was established to honor the original battery that served under Col. James A. Mulligan during the early part of the war.

The original battery was organized at Chicago, IL. and mustered into service on February 22, 1862. The unit saw duty under Col. Mulligan (acting Commandant) at Camp Douglas, Chicago, guarding prisoners until June, 1862. Ordered to Harper's Ferry, W. Virginia on June 14, 1862, the battery served the remaining portion of the war with the Railroad District of the 8th Army Corp. in West Virginia guarding the ever-important Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The Battery saw occasional action in the district while also participating in numerous expeditions and operations within West Virginia.



Col. James A. Mulligan

Today, the battery is primarily a ceremonial unit, focusing on historical accuracy and promoting local Civil War interest. Members of the unit visit a number of schools in the Chicago area, presenting Civil War material to students.

They conduct Memorial Day services plus attend a number of statewide events each year, such as the Lincoln Death Day Ceremony in Springfield and the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Founder's Ceremony in Petersburg. The unit also performs Color Guard duties for the Department of Illinois SUVCW and attends memorial services sponsored by local Illinois SUVCW Camps.

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Department Calendar

August 13 – 15, 2009	National Meeting
Saturday April 18, 2009	Lincoln Tomb Observance, Springfield, Illinois at 10:00A.M. C.D.S.T.
Saturday May 9, 2009	Department Meeting, Rockford, IL, 11:00 am

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Yesterday a Past Dept Commander contacted me to inform me that his wife had been diagnosed with cancer and that he wanted my prayers. Here is what I sent back to him; have some small understanding of how you and Wife must feel. It is the depression that I felt when my doctor told me that I have lymphoma. Two years previous I had been the caregiver for Brother Steve Stewart, and I saw how the lymphoma tore him up and took him from his wife and two year old daughter, and now I have it. It never goes away. It is in my system. The first thoughts I had were the same ones you expressed. What did I do wrong? Why is God punishing me? What does He expect of me? Why me? Has my service to the Lord been so weak and pitiful that He does not need me any more?

These were the questions. Along with "*Why do bad things happen to good people?*" That was the title of a book. Or at least that is what I thought the title was. Actually, it is "*When Bad Things Happen to Good People.*" There are going to be earthquakes and floods, war and killing, sickness and disease. These things happen, because our Creator did not make us for here. We were made by Him, in His image to be Happy with Him - for all eternity, in the next life. Here we are being tested. Here we face trials and tribulations, but know this - the God who made you and your wife loves you, and will take care of you, because He wants you to be happy with Him.

My wife tells the story of a woman who spoke often to the Lord and asked Him why He gave her so much pain and suffering in her life. God responded that He did it because He loved her. She replied that she understood now why more people did not love God.

Many friends prayed for me. I kept a positive outlook. I prayed. My cancer is now in remission. I am still going to die - someday, but probably not from the cancer that I have been treated for. There are so very many cases of healing from breast cancer - even when in later stages. Know this - my wife JoEllen and I will be praying for your wife and you. We will ask the prayer warriors that we know to ask the Lord for healing. We will offer individual sacrifices so that the Heavens are stormed with requests that the Lord can not ignore.

When we say the Our Father, we utter the words "your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." We as Christian believers have to understand that it is His Will, His Power and His Thoughts that direct us. However, we can still ask, beg and petition Him for what we need and what we want.

Would the members of the Dept of Illinois please say a special prayer for this wife of our PDC.

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

- Sesquicentennial Abraham Lincoln Speech. The event took place at Lewistown and at the Dickson Mounds Museum. The event celebrated the sesquicentennial speech given by Abraham Lincoln. Our National Chaplin, Jerry Kowalski, played a key role in the event. As usual, he did a great job. Chaplin Jerry gave the morning sermon and presented an American flag to a Lincoln descendent.



- The Departments of Illinois and Iowa took part in the dedication ceremony October 4, 2008 of monuments representing each state at Allatoon Pass, GA outside of Atlanta. Brother Tom Gaard Monuments Officer, Dept. of Iowa was master of ceremony. Brother Ray Wozniak Dept. of Georgia and Brother Stewart Stefany each spoke in behalf of the SUCVW. Dept. of Illinois Commander Steven Westlake presented a Lincoln bronze plaque to Ed Hill, President of the Etowah Valley Historical Society and Gary Wehner, Chairman Allatoona Pass Memorial Park for their outstanding contributions.



L to R - ,Ray Wozniak Dept of Georgia, PDC Stuart Stefany, & Department Commander Steve Westlake

A special thanks goes out to Brother Gaard for organizing and Brother Wozniak for his contribution and Brother Stefany who was responsible for the design of the beautiful solid granite Illinois monument. The actual battle took place on October 5, 1864 with Regiments of the 7th, 9th, 12th, 50th, and 93rd Illinois and the 39th Iowa engaged. There were an estimated 706 Union and 799 Confederate casualties. It was declared a Union victory, as the Rebels attempted to overtake a Union supply point and depot on the Western and Atlantic RR. The 30% casualty rate was one of the highest in the Civil War.

- A bronze Lincoln medallion was created by PDC Stuart Stefany for the purposes of raising funds for memorial restorations. The medallion has been endorsed by the State of Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. Funds from the sales of the bronze Lincoln medallion have been used to support the Allatoona Battlefield memorial and are now being used to support the restoration of Crystal Lake's Civil War monument.



Brothers,

Fresh from the foundry, a new bronze to celebrate Lincoln's 200th birthday. Made in America! Sculpted by PDC Stuart Stefany, a graduate of Walt Disney's alma mater, the Kansas City Art Institute. Cast in solid bronze at a foundry in Chicago, this work of art is guaranteed to last for 6-1/2 thousand years under normal usage. Each costs \$65.00. That's just ten dollars a millennium, or a penny a year! All profits benefit Civil War monument restoration projects.



Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Medallion,
Actual size, solid bronze.
Sculpted by Stuart Stefany,
Past Department Commander of Illinois,
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Medallion is cradle shaped with quote from Gettysburg address on bottom runner.
All profits from sale benefit monument restoration projects of Dept. IL SUVCW.

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(847) 599-8665
Stefanyart@att.net

CAMP NEWS

- Camp 1 – Four Chaplain Award

Congratulations to Chaplain Jerome Kowalski for receiving a very special award from The Four Chaplain organization. Brother John Bigwood presented the award on behalf of this organization for the support he as given to SUVCW members in need.



Brother John Bigwood & Chaplain Jerome Kowalski

- Camp 1 – Final Muster Brother Paul L. Ecker

Brother Paul Ecker was born about 20 miles Southwest of Gettysburg and 20 mile north of Sharpsburg. He was very proud he was a member of the SUVCW. June 25, 2008

- Camp 2 – Dedication of the Civil War monument in Lemont May 11



Left to Right – CC Jo Zingales, DC Steven Westlake, and Brother Chuck Wright

- Camp 4 - Final Muster PDC Brother Bob Graham

Past Department Commander, Bob Graham, passed away on September 18. Bob was a long-time member of the John A. McClernand Camp #4 in Springfield as well as the former director of Oak Ridge Cemetery and a major part of the Lincoln Memorial Ceremony on April 15. Sept 18, 2008

Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty

Steve Westlake, Commander
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