



# Michigan's Messenger

The Official Newsletter of the Department of Michigan  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Volume 3 Number 1

August 1994

Michigan Department  
Department Orders #1  
Series 1994/1995

William Brennan  
Department Commander

Headquarters  
3289 Babylon Road RR5  
Allegan, MI 49010-9212

1. It is with heavy heart that I must issue this, the first order of my administration. All Camp Charters and the Department Charter are to be draped in black for a period of 30 days in memory of Brother John Campbell, a "True Son" of Governor Crapo Camp No. 145. Brother Campbell died July 16, 1994 at the age of 87, from complications due to pneumonia. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family of Brother Campbell.

2. I would like to extend my appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Commander of the Michigan Department, SUVCW. I feel like a racehorse ready to jump out of the starting gate, so "hang on to your kopies boys, because here I come".

3. Congratulations to Carol Santini upon her reelection as President of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Also, to Hazel Miller who is the new President of the Women's Relief Corps.

4. I hope that many Brothers will be able to attend the National Encampment to be held in Lansing, Michigan at the Holiday Inn South on August 11 - 14, 1994. If you've never been to one, this is a real opportunity to see what goes on at one of these Encampments. Michigan will be well represented there by several Brothers who hold very important offices at the National level. They are Brother Keith G. Harrison, Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief; Brother Gary L. Gibson, National Patriotic Instructor; Brother James T. Lyons, National Secretary for five years and now has turned over the job to Brother Dave Wallace, a wise choice for the job; Brother J. Douglas Park, National Member-at-Large Coordinator; Brother Richard A. Williams, National Membership List Coordinator; and Brother Russell Gregory, Editor of the Banner. These gentlemen are to be commended for a job well done.

5. The General Custer print "Bravado" will be raffled off to the lucky winner at the National Encampment on Saturday, August 13th, at 8:00 pm. As Brother Park has mentioned before, it is a real neat print and only five dollars per chance.

6. Congratulations to Brothers Kent Armstrong and Michael Nye on getting highway U. S. 12 in Michigan designated as the "Iron Brigade Memorial Highway". We are all very proud of your efforts.

7. Our new fund raiser is a framed print to be raffled to help pay for the historical marker on U. S. 12. It is called "Men of Iron" and is a painting of the 24th Michigan at Gettysburg on the first day (July 1, 1863). The print was donated for the purpose by the artist, Dale Gallon. Tickets are \$5.00 each, with the drawing to take place at Brother Dick Williams house on Sunday, October 9, 1994 in Lansing.

8. On September 24 - 25, 1994, the Michigan Department will have a recruiting table at the Oakland College Civil War Show in the Detroit area. Department Junior Vice Commander Don Workman would like the support of those Brothers that could work at the table and help to build the ranks of the SUVCW. If you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please contact Brother Workman.

9. Brother Dave (Chumley) Wallace, Department Senior Vice Commander, will be reviewing the Michigan Department Bylaws with his committee, please address any issues or concerns on the Bylaws to Brother Wallace.

10. I want to thank those that worked at the recruiting table at the Allegan Civil War event that took place on June 18 - 19, 1994. They were Ron Bellen-

ger, Camp Commander of General Benjamin Pritchard Camp No. 20; with Brothers Bill Costello, Phil Johnston, Gary Gibson and Boyd Veenkant. It was also nice to see Brother Dick Williams, Department Secretary/Treasurer, who helped ever so much and brought the Department recruiting tent. Other Brothers who visited the tent were Mike Culp, Don Everett, Howard Streeter, Steve Redinger and Herb Gage. Visitors from the Women's Relief Corps were Sally Redinger, Lynda Johnston and Lucille (Peaches) Streeter.

11. August 27 - 28, 1994 is the Jackson Cascades Civil War Muster's 10th Anniversary. If you've never been to a reenactment, this is an excellent one to attend. It's known as the largest reenactment in the Mid-West. Governor Austin Blair Camp No. 7 will be hosting the recruiting tent there. Please feel free to stop and visit with our Brothers from Camp No. 7. This has become a real recruiting hot spot for us as we continue to grow in size as a Department. We are now the third largest Department in the Nation, having recently passed New York, with only Ohio and Pennsylvania having more members. Look out Ohio, here we come!

12. Congratulations to Brothers Thayne LaBanta, Kent Armstrong, and Michael Nye, this years winners and recipients of the Department's Abraham Lincoln Award. Brother LaBanta has served over 65 years in the SUVCW, while Brothers Armstrong and Nye were instrumental in getting U. S. 12 designated as the "Iron Brigade Memorial Highway".

13. At the National Encampment, the Michigan Department will be selling SUV hat garland wreaths at \$18.00. The 7th Corps crescent moon and star badge will go for \$15.00, the insignia will sell for \$20.00 and (continued on page 2)

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### Commander's Column (cont.)

the Coat of Arms will be priced at \$30.00.

14. If you haven't yet turned in your list of ancestors who served the Union during the Civil War, it's not too late to do so. Please send your list to your Camp Secretary, who will in turn forward them to the Department Secretary as a Camp.

15. Department Headquarters will be at my residence, 3289 Babylon Road, Allegan, Michigan 49010. My telephone number is (616) 673-2229.

By order of:

*William Brennan*  
Department Commander



### "Organization"

.....is the art of getting men to respond like thoroughbreds. When you call upon a thoroughbred, he gives you all the speed, strength of heart and sinew in him.

When you call upon a jackass, he just kicks.

Michigan's Messenger is a quarterly publication of the Department of Michigan, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

All SUCVW Members and Associates of a Camp within the Department of Michigan receive this publication at no additional charge. Non-members of the SUCVW may receive this publication for an annual subscription fee of \$5.00. All subscriptions expire on December 31. Please be sure to include your zip code.

Checks should be made out to:

Department of Michigan, SUCVW

Mail requests for subscriptions to:

John Mann, Editor  
Michigan's Messenger  
2495 South Washington Road  
Lansing, Michigan 48911-7216

### 1994 Michigan Department Encampment, SUCVW Election Results and Commanders' Appointments for 1994 - 1995

#### Department Officers

Commander	William A. Brennan
Sr. Vice Commander	David F. Wallace
Jr. Vice Commander	Donald Workman
Sec./Treas.	Richard Williams
Assistant Sec.	Vaughn Rawson
Council (Chairman)	John Mann
Council	Paul Hodges
Council	Dean Parker

#### Staff Appointments

Chief of Staff	Keith G. Harrison
Camp Organizer	James T. Lyons
Patriotic Instructor	Louis Cuyler
Chaplain	Rev. Henry Reinewald
Counselor	James B. Pahl
Historian	Ronald Bellenger
Guide	Ronald Bellenger
Guard	Dean Parker
Color Bearer	Howard Streeter

#### Committee Assignments

##### Publications

John Mann	Russ Gregory
Richard Williams	Don Everett

*GAR Memorial and Graves Registration*  
Gary Gibson, Chmn. James Lyons  
Phil Johnston William Warren

##### Bylaws

David Wallace, Chmn.	James Lyons
John Mann	

##### Membership

Don Workman, Chmn.  
All Camp Jr. Vice Commanders

##### Legislative

Richard Williams	David Michnal
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##### GAR/SUV Archival

Ronald Bellenger	Gary Gibson
Donald Workman	Roger Heiple

##### Camp Organizations

Donald Workman	Keith G. Harrison
Gary Gibson	

##### Commanders Group

James Lyons

##### Veterans Affairs

Herbert Gage	Doug Casamer
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### An Invitation

Dear Brothers,

The General George Armstrong Custer, Camp No. 1, Department of Illinois and the management of Rosehill Cemetery (Chicago) join in inviting you to attend the rededication of the Rock of Chickamauga Memorial, originally erected by the George H. Thomas GAR Post No. 5, where about 30 members of the Post are buried.

The memorial and its associated accoutrements had deteriorated over time, so we at Custer Camp, with the assistance of the Rosehill Cemetery officials, have restored the memorial.

Rosehill Cemetery will celebrate its 100th birthday this year. We and they have decided to combine our rededication of the Rock of Chickamauga Memorial with the "Picnic in the Park" theme of Rosehill's celebration. The date for the affair is Sunday, August 21st. The day will start with a non-denominational prayer service in the chapel at 9:00 am. This will be followed by a parade to the Thomas Post No. 5 location. Our rededication will commence at 11:00 am.

Following the rededication there will be a picnic with refreshments being served, courtesy of Rosehill management. The cemetery is located at 5800 North Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago.

We hope that you can find it possible to arrange your busy schedules so that you can attend this fine event. Please let us know if you will attend.

Sincerely, with F., C. and L.,

*James A. Mueeting, Sr.*  
Senior Vice Commander  
Custer Camp No. 1  
1727 Morse Avenue  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018-3847  
(708)390-9757



Michigan supplied 87,364 men for the Union during the Civil War, 11.8% of her population. 85,479 of these were white, or 11.2% of the white population. 1,387 were black, or 20.4% of the black population. 14,753 Michigan men died in service, 16.9% of the total credited to the state.

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*In Memory of*

*A True Son*

## *John Campbell*

*March 7, 1907 — July 16, 1994*

On April 17th, 1993, Governor Crapo Camp No. 145 of Flint, Michigan initiated its first "True Son". In a long form ceremony, John Campbell, along with three others, became members of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Campbell, a resident of Frankenmuth, Michigan, claimed Member status based on the service record of his father, John Campbell. The elder Campbell served in the 13th Battery, 1st Michigan Light Artillery.

Although only six when his father died in 1913, John had many recollections of home life. One vivid memory related to me, was of many veterans coming to his father's home, reminiscing around the dining table. One comment of a veteran stayed in John's mind through the years - turning to the elder Campbell, the former soldier says, "Johnny, you set a very good table".

John's father, as an artilleryman, participated in many engagements throughout the war. But, as John proudly related, "he never fired a shot in anger". The elder Campbell was a part of the guard that accompanied President Lincoln to Gettysburg for the dedication of the battle ground. His father also was a part of one of the search teams for John Wilkes Booth after the assassination. After the war, his father was a Detroit police officer. He served with distinction for many years before retiring from the force and moving to the Groveland Township area near Holly. He was also very active with the Detroit GAR, and as John related, stayed in close contact with his fellow veterans.

Our Brother, John Campbell, was born in Detroit on March 7th, 1907 on Wabash Avenue. He was a toolmaker for many years in the Southeast Michigan area. He also served as Director-at-Large for the Michigan United Conservation Club. He served in the Michigan National Guard during the late 1920's. In the final years of his life, John resided in Frankenmuth, Michigan, a small community located between Flint and Saginaw, noted for its German influence.

John joined the SUVCW for both fellowship of the other sons and to honor his father. Membership into the SUVCW came via a newspaper article noting the activities of Wa-Bu-No Camp of Mt. Pleasant. He was active in our Camp since joining, attending monthly Camp meetings whenever possible. He also attended the annual meeting at Crossroads Village near Flint last year. This special meeting was held in conjunction with "Civil War Days", where period clothing was worn and a large reenactment was held.

Until his death at 87, Campbell maintained a full schedule of pursuits and interests. In addition to his SUVCW activities, John stayed active with the Saginaw Hunt Club and enjoyed spending time with his family, which included four children, 13 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Governor Crapo Camp No. 145 considers it an honor to have been chosen by Brother Campbell as his "home" Camp. The Brothers of this Camp will miss him very much. On behalf of the Camp, I extend our Deepest Sympathy to the members of the Campbell family.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

*David F. Wallace*  
Commander,

Governor Crapo Camp No. 145

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### The Treasury's Notes

Report from the Department Secretary/Treasurer:

Department Funds  
Balance Sheet  
As of 6/30/94  
SONS-All Accounts

#### ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts	
Mich. SUVCW Checking	\$1,084.03
Mich. SUVCW Savings	\$3,142.53
Total Cash and Bank Accounts	\$4,226.56

TOTAL ASSETS \$4,226.56

#### LIABILITIES

Other Liabilities	
Camp-at-Large	\$112.50
Medal of Honor	\$481.20
SVR	\$55.00
Total Other Liabilities	\$648.70

TOTAL LIABILITIES \$648.70

EQUITY \$3,577.86

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$4,226.56

Dated 7/13/94

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

*Richard Williams*  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Department of Michigan



### Editors Comments

This issue inaugurates a new feature in the Messenger, the Ancestor Vignette. Begun at the suggestion of John Braden of Henry E. Plant Camp No. 3, it will continue as long as Members submit the encapsulated biographies of their ancestors. The vignettes should be limited to no more than 300 words, not including the credit lines. That limit equals about one column of text and submissions will be edited to fit available space. Please mail all submissions for the Messenger to the below address, not the return address on the newsletter.

*John Mann, Editor*  
Michigan's Messenger  
2495 South Washington Road  
Lansing, Michigan 48911-7216

### Ancestor Vignette

John Braden  
1st Lieutenant  
5th Michigan Infantry  
Company G

Great Great Grandfather  
of  
John A. Braden  
Henry E. Plant Camp No. 3

John Braden (born in New York City in 1829) emigrated with his uncle to Michigan in 1834. He ran away from home to serve in the Mexican War, fighting with Co. A, 15th U. S. Infantry at Contreas, Churubusco and Chapultepec.

After the war, Braden returned to Detroit. He was a machinist there when, in September, 1861, he enlisted in the Fifth Michigan Infantry. He was quickly promoted to Sergeant.

In May, 1862, Braden was bayoneted through the hand at Williamsburg, Virginia. He was promoted to 1st Sergeant of Company C in September, 1862 and in December, was shot in the collarbone at Fredericksburg.

In April, 1863, Braden was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant of Company G. He fought at Chancellorsville, the Wheatfield at Gettysburg and in a few lesser conflicts later in the year. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in November.

In 1864, Braden fought at the Wilderness, the "Mule Shoe" of Spotsylvania and several other battles in the vicinity of Petersburg. He resigned at the end of his three year term of enlistment in October, 1864.

Returning home to Detroit, Braden married and fathered nine children. He died in 1895 and is buried at Elmwood Cemetery, Detroit.

*John A. Braden*



Union Major General Nathaniel Banks was dubbed "Commissary Banks" by the Confederates, due to his constant military disasters which proved to be a steady source of supplies for them.

### Ancestor Vignette

Jacob Presler  
Private  
88th Indiana Infantry  
Company H

Great Grandfather  
of  
John Mann  
Austin Blair Camp No. 7

Jacob was born August 12, 1845 in Big Lick Township, Hancock County Ohio. He was the third son of five boys and three girls of the farm family of George and Elizabeth Presler. Four of the five Presler boys served in the Union Army during the Civil War, two were destined not to return home. The fifth son, Henry, was too young to enlist, being born in 1854.

Jacob left home at the age of 16 to acquire his own farm, settling in Newville, Indiana. In the month of August, 1862 recruiters were busy in Newville enlisting men for Father Abraham's Army. Jake, barely 17 years old, signed up for a three year hitch.

Private Presler missed the first large battle the regiment fought in, the Battle of Stones River or Murfreesboro. He had come down with the mumps in early November and was sent to a field Hospital to recover. While there, he contracted the measles and was sent to the Hospital at Louisville, Ky. Trying to recover from this double whammy, he also contracted chicken pox! He finally was fit enough for duty and rejoined his regiment in March of 1863.

He went through the rest of the war, participating in all of his regiment's battles and skirmishes, without suffering any major wounds or sickness. The battles included those at Chicamauga, the Atlanta campaign, Sherman's march to the sea and into the Carolinas and the Grand March in Washington, D. C.

During the war, Jacob contracted dysentery, which was to bother him the rest of his life, finally resulting in his death in 1927. He made several applications for a total disability pension toward the end of his life. It was finally granted — five days after his death.

*John Mann*

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## Sage Sayings of the Senior Vice Commander

My thanks to all Brothers who attended the Department Encampment for bestowing the honor of this office upon me. I appreciate the kindness and support shown me during my term as Department Junior Vice Commander.

I would like to devote this column to two subjects: 1) Bylaws and 2) Media Relations. As you may be aware, the Department Bylaws were extensively reviewed by Brother Brennan, et al, during his term as Department Senior Vice Commander; and these revisions were adopted by the Department Encampment. The revised edition should be available soon from the Department.

As Chair of the Bylaws Committee, I am requesting all Camp Senior Vice Commanders to review and to update and correct them as needed. I know that my Camp's Bylaws need to be updated as a result of the Department Bylaws revisions. If you need any help or suggestions, please contact me.

Now on to the Media Relations. I was pleased to see the media contacts that have been developed by several of our Camps during the previous year. As General Logan requested in his General Order No. 11 - "He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this Order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of Comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith". Developing your area's media contacts is extremely important to the growth of your Camp. In developing credibility with your media contacts, you can assure that your Camp's events will receive the coverage it deserves. Good media coverage leads to public awareness and awareness leads to membership growth. Don't be discouraged if your early attempts are not that successful. After all, where would General Grant have ended up if he gave up after his early setbacks. Hard work, planning and tenacity will yield results!

Respectively submitted,  
In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

*David F. Wallace*  
Senior Vice Commander  
Department of Michigan

## The Secretary's Scribings

I've served as Department Secretary/Treasurer for the past four years. I believe it extremely important to the organization that no one person has a position in any voluntary organization for too long a period. The organization benefits in many ways by having a change in personnel. Personnel changes generate new ideas and allows the organization to grow and build backup capabilities for the position.

I've run unopposed for the Department Secretary/Treasurer position for the past few years and I don't believe that is healthy for the organization either. To insure a change will happen at the 1995 Department Encampment, I will not run nor accept the position of Department Secretary or Treasurer after the expiration of the current term.

There are key elements you must all consider before nominating and electing a new Department Secretary and Treasurer. The financial reporting of the Department records have been computerized for the last three years. The position must be filled by a person who has a computer and the Department should purchase a software package called QUICKEN (cost approximately \$70.00). I've been using my personal copy of the software for the last three years, but the software should be purchased and owned by the Department and passed on to the Department Treasurer from year to year.

Currently the Department funds are in a credit union where we accrue interest. In order for the funds to remain there I need to also be a coassignee on the account. You'll need to consider keeping the funds in the same credit union or moving to another financial institution.

I would suggest the Camps start thinking about a new Department Secretary and Treasurer for next year and communicate your nominee(s) to each other before next June.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

*Richard Williams*  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Department of Michigan

## Commander's Corner

On June 18, 1994, at the Allegan Civil War event, I had the honor of representing the Michigan Department at the home of General Benjamin Pritchard. General Pritchard was best known as the officer of the 4th Michigan Cavalry that captured Confederate President Jefferson Davis, on May 10, 1865, near Macon Georgia.

Reenactors of the Blue and the Gray marched over from the Allegan County Fairgrounds where the reenactment took place, to the Pritchard home, led by the 7th Michigan Drum and Fife Corps. It was a very enjoyable parade and I had the honor of participating as one of the fifers. Once we arrived, a volley was fired in honor of General Pritchard, by both the Blue and the Gray. This was followed by an address of appreciation from the family for coming to visit them. The address was given by John Pahl, local historian and long time friend of the family. I then extended greetings to the Pritchard's in behalf of the SUVCW. Kevin Mallo, Union Commander and Ron Crater, Confederate Commander, also greeted the Pritchard family on the outside porch. The comment was made, that this was probably the most Blue on the front lawn since the 4th Michigan Cavalry reunions that were held there prior General Pritchard's death in 1907.

By the way, the General's grandson, Dudley, is 96 years old and while Dudley's wife Ada is 97. Dudley is a Member of General Pritchard Camp No. 20 and the last living WWI Veteran of his unit of Engineer and Mechanics from Grand Rapids. He is also the last living member that signed the Charter of the American Legion Post in Allegan. The Post honored Brother Pritchard with a medal commemorating his service to the Post and the 75th Anniversary of the end of the First World War. Many are the stories he has told about the soldier's reunions and GAR gatherings that he attended with his grandfather.

The Pritchard home, built by the General, looks just like a Southern Mansion. The winding staircase is very impressive to see. Everything has been left in the house virtually the way it was when the General was still living. All of his 4th Michigan Cavalry/GAR badges and ribbons hang (continued on page 8)

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### Camp No. 3 Henry E. Plant

*Fruitport* — Camp No. 3 held their May meeting in the Nuncia Cemetery, Nuncia Michigan. At 9:15, the Camp met for the purpose of dedicating a marker for Medal of Honor recipient Henry E. Plant, for whom our Camp is named. He was awarded the medal for bravery under fire during the Civil War. The dedication ceremony was conducted by Camp Commander Max Riekse, with the assistance of Chaplain John Baldus. Commander Riekse related the circumstances of the action by Plant that earned him the award. Chaplain John Baldus gave an excellent rendition with the bugle. The Honor Guard consisted of Paul McDonald, Daniel Grable and Milt Mockerman with assistance from several VFW members. Henry E. Plant's Medal of Honor was displayed by family descendants in attendance.

In F., C. and L.,

*Milton Mockerman, Secretary*

### Camp No. 7 Governor Austin Blair

*Jackson* — Memorial Day saw the Camp marching in the Jackson parade and taking part in the Jackson County Veteran's Council ceremonies, at Jackson's Mount Evergreen Cemetery again this year. After the ceremonies, the Camp went to Spring Arbor to participate in a memorial service and their parade. Following that parade, Camp No. 7 held an SUVCW service in the Spring Arbor Cemetery to honor those Civil War Veterans buried there.

On July 9th the Camp hosted the rededication of the West Concord/West Brick Cemetery. Camp members have worked throughout the past four months to refurbish this long neglected cemetery. Brush and weeds were removed, tombstones reset and broken stones repaired, veterans stones ordered and set, a flag pole erected, a cemetery sign made and installed, all under the direction of Brother Todd Holton. A Revolutionary War reenactment group and a War of 1812 reenactment group and Revolutionary War period Drum and Fife Corps took part in the ceremonies, along with our Camp Color Guard and Dept. SVR Commander Keith Harrison. A Revolutionary War Burial service was con-

ducted, floral wreaths were laid and a three volley salute to the veterans (one Revolutionary War, three War of 1812 and five Civil War) was fired before an audience of about 150.

On July 11, Governor Austin Blair Camp celebrated its 80th anniversary (June 11, 1914 - 1994) with a joint meeting with our hosts, the Richard Smith American Legion Post. Brother Thayne LaBanta was again called upon to provide the program, as he had been at the Department Encampment. And again, he gave a most interesting talk on his attending GAR Encampments and Regimental Reunions with his father, Derrick Dean LaBanta. Following Br. LaBanta's program, cake was served and guests intermingled for a general bull session. Amongst the biggest throwers of the bovine chips was Department Commander William Brennan, although Past Camp Commander James Neely did his best in an attempt to out throw him.

In F., C. and L.,

*John Mann*

### Camp No. 20 Benjamin Pritchard

*Kalamazoo* — On Memorial Day the Camp marched in the Allegan parade and took part in the memorial service at the Allegan Cemetery. Following this service we held a ceremony at the grave of General Benjamin Pritchard. The General's grandson and Camp member, Dudley Pritchard was unable to attend. This is the first time he has missed the ceremony since joining the Camp. He is in the Soldier's Home in Grand Rapids. We are sure that Dudley would appreciate receiving cards from any and all Brothers in the Department.

After the Allegan ceremony the Camp reassembled at the GAR monument in the Riverside Cemetery in Kalamazoo. Our Camp members turned out in fine fashion and conducted a very impressive observance.

On June 18 and 19, Pritchard Camp hosted a recruiting table at the Allegan Civil War Muster. This was at the end of the warmest week this area has had in several years and attendance reflected the conditions. However, we gathered over a dozen names of potential members and are confident of adding a

significant number of them to the rolls of our Camp and Department.

In closing, Benjamin Pritchard Camp congratulates our Past Camp Commander William Brennan on his election as Department Commander. We would like to thank all Brothers in the Department for their support of Brother Brennan and look forward to the continued success of our Department under his leadership.

In F., C. and L.,

*Phil Johnston, Secretary*



### A Gettysburg Reenactment

There is a story that Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg was twice enacted, the final scene contributing a fearful, if lesser, carnage to the traditions of that great battle.

During a Blue and Gray reunion on the field, so some have it, aging Confederates fell into ranks and walked across the broad terrain where Pickett's men had charged on July 3, 1863. The watching ancients in blue could not long remain bystanders and as the feeble Gray ranks moved up the slope toward the spot where once the angled stone wall had run and where a clump of trees once stood on Cemetery Ridge, there were Yankee yells:

"Come on, boys! By God, they never made it then — and they'll not do it now."

Upon which the old boys of the Grand Army of the Republic are alleged to have run into position along the ridge and when the Confederates hobbled up, to have sprung upon them tooth and nail, the whole mass tangling in a fierce scrap until officials managed to part them.



The last surviving veteran of the Civil War, Confederate Walter Williams, died December 19, 1959, at the age of 117; out living the last Union survivor, Albert Woolson, by three years. During the week of Williams death, the nuclear submarine Robert E. Lee was launched.

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*The following article was printed in Coin World newspaper dated Monday, July 11, 1994 and is reprinted here verbatim. Thanks to Brother Gary Woodman, SVC Austin Blair Camp No. 7, for submitting it.*

## Medals Civil War gallantry remembrance with Grand Army of the Republic Camps

by Donald Bailey  
Special to Coin World

The Grand Army of the Republic was born out of discussions between Chaplain W. J. Rutledge and Dr. B. B. Stevenson, both of whom served during the Civil War in the 14th Illinois Infantry under Union General William Tecumseh Sherman.

While this regiment was taking part in Sherman's expedition to Meridian, Mississippi, in February, 1864, Rutledge and Stevenson were tent mates. During this period, Rutledge suggested to Stevenson that the soldiers so closely allied in the fellowship of suffering, when mustered out of the service, would naturally desire some form of association that would preserve the friendship and the memories of their common trials and dangers.

While on the march or in bivouac, the idea expanded into the widest fields of conjecture as to the capacity for good in such an organization of veterans. They agreed that if spared, they would work out some such project.

After the termination of their Army service, they continued to correspond on the subject until March of 1866, when Dr. Stevenson and Chaplain Rutledge met in Springfield, Illinois.

Present at the meeting were several other veterans with whom Rutledge and Stevenson had associated with since the war. One of these veterans, a Captain John S. Phelps, contacted the Soldiers and Sailors League in St. Louis to obtain a copy of its constitution, portions of which were used for the GAR.

On April 6, 1866, Major Stevenson, assisted by Captain Phelps, organized the first Post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

It was years before the GAR reached a position in any degree fulfilling the fondly cherished belief of its founder, who died August 30, 1871.

### Organization

The GAR was organized with precinct organizations, to be known as Posts; County organizations, known as District of (the name of the appropriate county); and state organizations, to be known as Department of (the name of the appropriate state).

GAR members were very active politically through various political clubs such as "Boys in Blue," "Soldiers and Sailors Leagues," "White Boys in Blue," "Colored Soldiers Leagues" and more. Both Republican and Democratic Parties were represented at the national convention of Soldiers and Sailors held in September 1866.

The GAR was directly responsible for the election of six of the eight presidents succeeding Abraham Lincoln's term. All were Civil War veterans and members of the GAR — Ulysses S. Grant, James A. Garfield, Rutherford B. Hayes, Chester A. Arthur, Benjamin Harrison and William McKinley.

The GAR was instrumental in establishing the "Pledge of Allegiance" in American schools as well as the flying of the U. S. flag in schools. They also established military parks, erected statues and monuments in almost every town in every Union state, created Old Soldiers Homes in each of the Northern states and provided pensions for veterans, their widows and orphans.

Following the formation of the first Post in 1866, there were years of struggle for some Departments, but by 1892 there were 7,613 Posts and 451,574 members. Five years later, in 1897, the membership went down to 340,610 and steadily declined until the last comrade was laid to rest in 1956.

This Order, founded on the principles of "Friendship, Charity and Loyalty," was unique as it had no predecessor nor could it have a successor, ending with its last member's passing.

### First Encampment

The first National Encampment was held in Indianapolis on November 20, 1866, with 228 representatives pre-

sent. National Encampments were held annually at various locations and the ribbons, badges and other memorabilia associated with the encampments have become highly collectible.

The various Departments, or states, of which there were 40, conducted Annual Encampments.

There are several branches of the Grand Army of the Republic. The following are the main ones.

The Women's Relief Corps (WRC) was organized by the women of the North during the conflict to assist Union soldiers in the war and their families at home. One must be 16 years or older to join. It is an auxiliary to the GAR, assisting in perpetuating the memory of the heroic dead and aiding veterans and their families. The WRC was officially organized in July 1883 and purchased and operated many homes for veterans and their families. They originated and helped pass the law that put the use of local histories and the American Flag in every school.

I had a personal visit recently from two ladies of the WRC from Calvin C. Colegrove Corps No. 232, who meet to this day in Marshall, Michigan, the town of my birth. These two ladies, Lysle (Wy-lo) Stuart and her daughter, Florence N. Vanalstine, were very interesting to talk to about what the WRC has done over the years in my home area. Ms. Stuart, who is 94 years young and sharp as a tack, related stories of the Colegrove Corps and their activities over the past 55 years that she has been a member. Ms. Stuart was the president in 1955 and 1978.

An Aunt of mine, Mable Green of Marshall, is the immediate past president, having served several years. She's been a Corps member for at least 35 years.

The Ladies of the GAR was the first women's organization of the GAR and was founded in Portland, Maine, in 1889. Only mothers, daughter, wives and sisters of honorably discharged soldiers and sailors of the Union forces could join. It was not an auxiliary to the GAR, but a part of it. Their principles were to unite with loyalty to our country a sisterly love and affection for each other paralleling (Continued on page 8)

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## GAR (cont.)

with the comradeship among the GAR members; to honor the memory of the fallen heroes and perpetuate and keep forever our sacred Memorial Day; to assist the GAR in its endeavors and to aid and assist sick veterans and their families; to look after soldiers homes; to watch over public schools and see that our children received proper education; and to follow the true history of our country and patriotism.

### Sons of Veterans

The Sons of Veterans was organized November 12, 1881, with the purpose of continuing the GAR and its beliefs and teachings beyond the lifetime of its members. It was originally titled the Sons of Veterans, but was changed to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Its purpose is to carry on the traditions of the GAR, the observation of Memorial Day and the allegiance to the United States, to teach patriotism and love of country, respect for the flag and preservation of the Constitution. They also register and maintain graves and monuments of Civil War veterans.

The Daughters of Veterans was founded in Massillon, Ohio on Memorial Day, May 30, 1885 and was originally called the Order of Ruby Seal. Camps or tents were named after Army nurses or some loyal women of the Civil War period. Like the Sons, membership eligibility is through lineage and open to females 15 years or older.

In this vastly interesting field, one can encounter all kinds of interesting items that pertain to these various organizations from uniforms, glass, canes, books, spoons, etc. The list goes on and on. These mementos provide but a small glimpse into the patriotic tradition carried on by the Grand Army of the Republic.

*The article was accompanied by a picture of a GAR membership badge, a medal issued by the GAR commemorating the centennial of Lincoln's birth and four GAR National Encampment badges. There also was a picture of a Sons of Veterans Auxiliary National Encampment badge, although, curiously, the one major omission in the article was that there was no mention of the Sons of Veterans Auxiliary.*

## GAR Rank Badges

In case you have ever wondered what the various rank badges stand for that are attached to some GAR Membership Badges, here is the rundown taken from GAR sources.

### National Officers

Commander-in-Chief.....four silver stars  
Senior Vice C-in-C.....three silver stars  
Junior Vice C-in-C.....two silver stars  
Staff of the C-in-C.....one silver star  
Surgeon General.....one silver star  
Aide-de-Camp to C-in-C.....silver eagle  
Chaplain-in-Chief.... silver star and cross  
Council of Administration.....silver "C"

### Department Officers

Commander..... two silver stars  
Provisional Commander.... one silver star  
Senior Vice Commander... one silver star  
Junior Vice Commander..... one gilt star  
Commander's Staff..... silver eagle  
Asst. Inspector General.....silver leaf  
Aide-de-Camp.....silver leaf  
Asst. Inspector.....gilt leaf  
Chaplain.....silver cross  
Council of Administration.....silver "C"

### Posts

Commander..... silver eagle  
Senior Vice Commander.....silver leaf  
Junior Vice Commander.....gilt leaf  
Surgeon.....gilt leaf  
Chaplain.....silver cross  
Officer of the Day.....two gilt bars  
Adjutant.....one gilt bar  
Quartermaster.....one gilt bar  
Officer of the Guard.....vacant field

### Non-Commissioned Staff

Sergeant-Major.....three bars and an arc  
Quartermaster Sgt.... Three bars and ties

The badge of the National and Department Officers had a black enameled field and that of the Post Officers a blue enameled field.

Past Officers of the Grand Army of the Republic, of whatever grade, were authorized to wear a rank badge designating the highest position they had held in the order; the badge was to be worn upon the ribbon between the bronze eagle and the star.

Information provided by:

*Roger Heiple*  
Colegrove-Woodruff Camp No. 22

## Commander's Corner (cont.)

still very proudly in frames on the wall, just as they did many years ago.

With all this in mind, it sends to me a powerful message that we must keep alive their memory, as they paid a big price for our Freedom and one Nation, not two split down the middle. "One Nation, under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All." If you think about this, you'll really appreciate why we carry on the memory of the "Boys in Blue" who fought to preserve the Union and have a different perspective of why Memorial Day was so important to the GAR.

They are all gone now, but we, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War shall and will continue to keep their memory alive. Being a member of this Order is an experience I'll never forget, and I am just as pleased as punch to be a part of it.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

*William A. Brennan*  
Commander  
Department of Michigan



## A House Divided

The White House was the leading example of the schism in the Civil War. Four of Lincoln's brothers-in-law wore Confederate uniforms.

Mary Todd Lincoln's brother, Dr. George R. C. Todd, was a volunteer Confederate surgeon and was quoted as saying that Lincoln was "one of the greatest scoundrels unhung."

Ben Harden Helm, killed as a Confederate General at Chickamauga, was married to one of Mary Todd Lincoln's sisters; he had spurned a personal offer of commission from Lincoln. Mary's other two sisters were also married to Confederate officers.

Washington gossip even spoke of Mrs. Lincoln as being "two-thirds proslavery and the other third Secesh." A Committee on the Conduct of the War even met to consider charges of treason against Mrs. Lincoln.

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## Calendar Of Events

### August

**4th — Colegrove-Woodruff Camp No. 22 - Marshall**

Meeting - 7:30 pm at the GAR Hall, 402 East Michigan Avenue, Marshall.

**9th — John A. Logan Camp No. 1 - Grand Rapids**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, Wyoming Public Library, Wyoming.

**9th — Nash-Hodges Camp No. 43 - Blissfield**

Meeting - 7:00 pm American Legion Hall, 451 High Street, Blissfield.

**12th, 13th and 14th — National Encampment of the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic.**

Holiday Inn South (former Clarion Hotel), 6820 South Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Ladies of the GAR Auxiliary to the SUVCW and WRC Encampments will also be held at the Holiday Inn South. The DUVCW Encampment will be held at the Sheraton Inn, Creyts Road and I-496, Lansing.

Luncheon and Dinner available.

All Sons Members are encouraged to attend this National Encampment.

**21st — Henry E. Plant Camp No. 3 - Fruitport**

Meeting - 2:00 pm, Tri-Cities Museum, 1 North Harbor Street, Grand Haven.

**27th and 28th — Civil War Muster - Jackson**

Jackson Cascades Annual Civil War Muster and Gun Show. Austin Blair Camp will host the Department recruiting tent. All Sons are welcome to drop by to lend a hand.

### September

**1st — Colegrove-Woodruff Camp No. 22 - Marshall**

Meeting - 7:30 pm at the GAR Hall, 402 East Michigan Avenue, Marshall.

**1st — Wa-Bu-No Camp No. 53 - Mt. Pleasant**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, Shepard Museum, 1st and Maple Streets, Shepard.

**12th — Austin Blair Camp No. 7 - Jackson**

Meeting - 7:00 pm at the American Legion Hall, 3200 Lansing Avenue, Jackson.

**13th — John A. Logan Camp No. 1 - Grand Rapids**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, Wyoming Public Library, Wyoming.

**13th — Nash-Hodges Camp No. 43 - Blissfield**

Meeting - 7:00 pm American Legion Hall, 451 High Street, Blissfield.

**18th — Henry E. Plant Camp No. 3 - Fruitport**

Meeting - 2:00 pm, Tri-Cities Museum, 1 North Harbor Street, Grand Haven

**21st — Governor Crapo Camp No. 145 - Flint**

Meeting - 7:30 pm, Flint Public Library, 1026 Kearsley, Flint.

**24th — Ulysses S. Grant Camp No. 101 - Detroit**

Meeting - 2:00 pm, Elmwood Cemetery, 1200 Elmwood Avenue, Detroit.

**24th and 25th — Civil War Collectors Show - Oakland**

Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sunday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Oakland University.

**27th — Curtenius Guard Camp No. 17 - Sunfield**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, GAR Hall, Main Street, Sunfield.

**27th — Benjamin Pritchard Camp No. 20 - Kalamazoo**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, American Legion Hall, 431 East South Street, Kalamazoo.

### October

**2nd — Book and Paper Show - Lansing**

10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Lansing Center, Michigan Avenue at the bridge over the Grand River. Books, documents, maps, postcards, etc. Approximately 15% of the items are related to the Civil War era.

**6th — Colegrove-Woodruff Camp No. 22 - Marshall**

Meeting - 7:30 pm at the GAR Hall, 402 East Michigan Avenue, Marshall.

**11th — John A. Logan Camp No. 1 - Grand Rapids**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, Wyoming Public Library, Wyoming.

**11th — Nash-Hodges Camp No. 43 - Blissfield**

Meeting - 7:30 pm American Legion Hall, 451 High Street, Blissfield.

**16th — Henry E. Plant Camp No. 3 - Fruitport**

Meeting - 2:00 pm, Tri-Cities Museum, 1 North Harbor Street, Grand Haven

**19th — Governor Crapo Camp No. 145 - Flint**

Meeting - 7:30 pm, Flint Public Library, 1026 Kearsley, Flint.

**25th — Benjamin Pritchard Camp No. 20 - Kalamazoo**

Meeting - 7:00 pm, American Legion Hall, 431 East South Street, Kalamazoo.

## October 15

is the deadline for the next issue of the Messenger.

Copy must be received by the editor by this date to insure its inclusion in the November issue.  
All Brothers are welcome to submit articles for print.

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John Mann, Editor  
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Lansing, Michigan 48911-7216

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## Michigan's Messenger

August 1994

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The Official Newsletter of the Department of Michigan, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

August 12, 13 and 14, 1994

# National Encampment

## Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic

Will be held at the **Holiday Inn South** (formerly the Clarion Hotel)  
**6820 South Cedar, Lansing, Michigan**

Registration begins at 8:00 am Friday

Luncheon and Dinner available.

Please plan on attending!