



Hartranft Herald

The Newsletter of
Maj. Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

[Http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html](http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html)



Volume 9, No. 5

May 2007



Blue Moon Edition

A newsletter for, about, and by the members of Camp 15 and Auxiliary 7.
Come One, Come All - Ladies and Brothers, and Family and Friends, all are welcome to our Camp meetings at the National Civil War Museum and field trips at-large -- Bring your camera!

[Decoration Day – Memorial Day](#)

General Order No. 11

Headquarters, Grand Army of the Republic Washington, D.C., May 5, 1868

I. The 30th day of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors, and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foe? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains, and their death a tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the Nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and found mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of free and undivided republic. If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain in us. Let us, then, at

the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude--the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

II. It is the purpose of the Commander-in-Chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. 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.

III. Department commanders will use every effort to make this order effective.

By command of: **JOHN A. LOGAN**,
Commander-in-Chief.

N. P. CHIPMAN, Adjutant-General.

[April Meeting](#)

April showers, along with late-March winds plagued us all weekend in Central Pennsylvania. It was cold and windy up top of Reservoir Park for our April Camp meeting. However, Brother Commander Donnie kept the meeting moving forward and we accomplished quite a bit of business and we were entertained too. See additional statements in this [Blue Moon](#) issue. That's right, during the month of May we will be front row guests to review and

enjoy two FULL moons this month. May 2nd and May 31st.

The next time you will witness a **blue moon** will be during December 2009.

[Another Brother goes to his reward!](#)

Harry M. Runkle, Sr. - April 18, 2007
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA - Lt. Col. Harry M. Runkle (Ret.), 77, who passed away on April 15, 2007, was the son of John H. and Kathleen Runkle.



A native of Harrisburg, PA, he received a Business Education Degree from Shippensburg State Teachers College in 1952. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps for 27 years. During this time he worked in various capacities including Artillery, Recruit Training, Military Intelligence and the U.S. Diplomatic Service as an

Assistant Naval Attaché. His tours of duty included Camp Pendleton, CA, Camp Lejeune, NC, Parris Island, SC, Quantico, VA, Korea, Okinawa, Vietnam, London England and Camp Elmore, VA. Upon retirement he returned to school to pursue certification in horticulture and became a certified Virginia Nurseryman. He worked for the City of Virginia Beach and Clark-Whitehill Enterprises as a Landscaping Supervisor.

He is survived by his wife, Mary E. Runkle; four children, Cynthia L. Runkle, John H. Runkle II, Harry Miller Runkle Jr., and Cheryl A. Barbier; and 11 grandchildren.

He was a member of Kings Grant Presbyterian Church, the Marine Corps League and the 3rd Marine Division Association.

A memorial service will be held at 4 p.m., on Friday, April 20, 2007 at King's Grant Presbyterian Church. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the King's Grant Presbyterian Church or the Virginia Beach Plaza Rescue Squad. The Cremation Society of Virginia, Virginia Beach, is serving the family.

www.pennlive.com/obits

Published in the Patriot-News on 4/18/2007.

Editor's Note: Not only did Harry grow up in Camp 15, but a number of Harry's sisters are members of Auxiliary 7 for Camp 15. Our Christian sympathy to the entire family.

[Congratulations to the DUVCW](#)

A recent news item says that a new chapter of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War is forming in Union County (Lewisburg & Mifflinburg)

Submitted by Brother John Deppen. JVC

[Pennsylvania State Department Commander represented at Salem Square Park, York Pa.](#)

Civil War Monument re-dedication

On a very hot Saturday, May 5, 2007, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the Pennsylvania Department, and Camp 15 were represented by Brothers Charlie Kuhn, JV Commander-in-Chief and David W. Demmy, Chaplain. Brother Charlie placed a SUVCW weath at the monument during the ceremony.

The restored statue honors the York Rifles, an organization that covers a period from 1775 to 1908 and which saw action in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Civil War.

The statue is of Capt. Michael Doudel, who headed the York Rifles during the Revolutionary War but is displayed wearing a Civil War (era) cap. It is dedicated to Doudel and his Rifles outfit.

Thanks to a fund-raiser, by Jane Eckenrode of West York, a member of the Daughters of the Union Veterans (of the Civil War) collected \$15,000 to pay for its restoration.



SHOWN ARE JOHN N. McNULTY AND JOHN M. McNULTY OF THE PA SUVCW AND CHARLIE KUHN.

AS USUAL, DAVID DEMMY IS BEHIND THE CAMERA.



Capt Doudel on duty at Salem Square Park

[Secretary's Corner](#) by Larry C. Sheibley

[SUVCW Camp 15 Minutes– Sunday, April 15, 2007](#)

[The National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg, PA](#)

[Officers Present:](#)

Don Prye, Greg Kline, John Deppen, Larry Sheibley, David Demmy, David Klinepeter, Frank Haley, Kelly Betz

[Officers Absent:](#)

Gene Mascioli

[Members Present:](#)

Floyd Demmy, Norm Houser, Larry Nace

[Guests Present](#)

Cathy Nace

After dropping a few members for non-payment of 2007 dues, Camp 15 now has a membership of 49 brothers.

Commander Prye called the SUVCW Camp 15 meeting to order at 2:02 pm. The camp treasury contains \$2711 as reported by Treasurer David Demmy. (Prior to our remitting National Per Capita)

Chaplain Demmy gave health up-dates on members. Arthur Longnaker is in rehabilitation

after brain surgery. We all wish him great progress.

Two Camp 15 members have notified officers that they are interested in purchasing three of our seven reproduction 45.70 rifles. In a motion made by Dave Klinepeter and seconded by Greg Kline, the rifles will be sold to members for their original price. Members have until June 30 to notify an officer about buying a rifle. After July 1, they go on sell to the general public.

Sunday, April 29, 2007, members of our camp will participate in a 4:00 memorial service at the Highspire Church of God.

Camp 15 received an invitation to participate in the May 28 Gettysburg Memorial Day Parade. We have marched for the past three years. Anyone interested in carrying our camp banner should contact Senior-Vice Commander Kline, by May 21, 2007.

A field trip to Montgomery Cemetery near Norristown is scheduled for Saturday, June 9. We will visit the graves of General John F. Hartranft and four other Civil War officers. There is, also, a small museum administered by the Montgomery County Historical Society. See Commander Prye to sign-up.

Another trip is being planned; this time to Maryland to the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick and the Prye House Field Hospital Museum in Sharpsburg. More information will be in a later issue.

An email was received from the 6th Maryland Regiment of Infantry Division Descendants Association requesting a donation toward the \$25,000 cost of erecting a monument to the men of the 6th Maryland Regiment on the Civil War battlefield of Pamplin Historical Park. Camp 15 donated \$25.

The family of Gilbert Kyle donated [American Civil War Magazines](#) to camp members who wanted them.

Patriotic Instructor Klinepeter told about former slave Ephraim Slaughter, Harrisburg's last Civil War veteran, and some information about President Lincoln. Acting as Governor Curtin, Brother

Klinepeter escorted Lt. Governor Knoll during the February Civil War Ball at the PA State Capitol. Brother Norm Houser finished the meeting with a presentation of his Hollywood stardom. As a living history and battle re-enactor or background artist, he told of his experiences while working as an extra on several Civil War movies. As a matter of fact, I got so interested in his presentation, I forgot to take notes. You will have to speak to one of the brothers listed at the top of this report for more information. As I continued daydreaming about my starring role in Gods and Generals, our Commander closed the camp at 3:38 pm.
 Larry Sheibley, PCC, Camp 15 Secretary

[May birthday\(s\)](#)

David W. Demmy, Sr,
 “Feeling all of forty-five, Going on fifteen”
 -- the Late Harry Chapin, “WOLD” pop hit 1974.

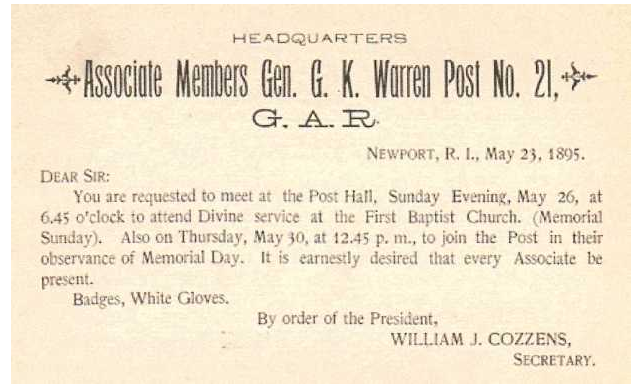
[PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR/GAR HISTORIAN](#)

by Dave Klinepeter PCC



*The most important day of the year for the **GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC** was **MEMORIAL DAY on May 30th**. On May 5, 1868 General John A. Logan, Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic issued order number 11, stating the 30th day of May 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country in the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet church yard in the land. Since that time there have been other wars and many other veterans who have died serving our country. We now observe Memorial Day for all Veterans. You can help Veteran organizations place flags on graves, visit a VA hospital, shake the hand of a Veteran and say thanks, support those who are now serving our country.*

A number of years ago the government changed the Memorial Day holiday to a long weekend so this year it is observed on May 28th.



Come out to our events and fellowship with us in remembrance of those that fought to give us freedom today!

For numerous pictures of past Memorial Day events, see the Hartranft Herald of May 2006 and May 2005.

See the newspaper clipping of the May 30th 1929 celebration in Harrisburg, Pa. Note that Camp 15 had a Drum Corps at that time. --- DJK



*Editor's Note: as usual, Camp 15 will be at historic Harrisburg Cemetery on **Saturday, May 26th** to place flags at veteran's gravesites. Come out and fellowship with us. Come to Camp meeting on Sunday, May 20 for details.*

Harrisburg's GAR Post 58 participants in Memorial Day events in Harrisburg, May 30, 1929.

Continue reading about that 1929 event below:

**REVERENT THROUG
 REVIEWS VETERANS
 IN MEMORIAL MARCH**

Post 58, G. A. R., numbers only 54 members at present. It once had a membership of over 1500. It is still the largest post in Pennsylvania, and the second largest in the United States.

E. A. Hoffman, a member of Post 58, who was unable to attend the exercises, stood on the porch of his home, 1158 Mulberry street, in full uniform, and saluted as he watched his comrades go by in the parade.

Circle No. 20, Ladies of the G. A. R., served a Memorial Day luncheon and supper to the Civil War veterans and their friends in the rooms of Post 58, at 26 North Third street. At 12 o'clock all in the room stood for two minutes in silence in honor of the soldiers who had died.

John Brimm, Post 199, Los Angeles, Calif., who is visiting his son, William B. Brimm, 1423 Zarker street, rode in the Memorial Day parade and attended the services yesterday.

A number of newsboys agreed not to "cry" any papers while the parade was passing "in honor of the heroes of the Civil War."

All of the Civil War veterans rode in automobiles in the parade yesterday for the first time, including H. W. Newman, chief marshal; M. A. Floyd, chief of staff; and J. D. Cameron, marshal of the third division. The Sons of Union Veterans insisted that they do so. "But they kicked like steers about it," said one.

The graves of several Confederate soldiers who lie buried in the soldiers' plot in the Harrisburg Cemetery, were decorated as carefully yesterday as those of the Union soldiers. "We harbor no malice," said the Boys in Blue. Their graves are marked: C. S. A. (Confederate States of America.)

Four generations of one family were represented at the luncheon in the rooms of Post 58 yesterday. They are: Mrs. Elizabeth Hoerner, the oldest member of Circle No. 20; her daughter, Mrs. Emma Hoke; Mrs. Hoke's daughter, Mrs. Florence Miller, and Miss Eleanor Miller.

Boy Scouts did their good turn yesterday by carrying water for those who took part in the parade and at the services. There were twelve troops of Scouts in the parade.

Post 58 was in charge of the Memorial Day exercises at the Penbrook Cemetery yesterday morning, assisted by about 250 school children, members of the W. C. T. U., the P. O. S. of A., and citizens of Penbrook. The Rev. A. Hoverter, of the Penbrook Church of God, gave the address.

Mrs. Charles Preisler, a member of Circle No. 20, whose birthday occurred yesterday, was given a handkerchief shower, following the luncheon.

Andrew Lang, a survivor of the crew of the Battleship Maine, was in the parade. He is a member of Camp No. 8, United Spanish War Veterans.

Sergt. William Whitmoyer, of Camp No. 15, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, was presented with an emblem of a color sergeant's insignia, gold on a blue field, in appreciation of his twenty years service as color sergeant of the Sons of Veterans. The presentation was made at a special ceremony held at the hall of the S. of V., 1216 North Third street, at 1 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Capt. Edward Rudy made the presentation speech. Capt. Robert Squires and Lieut. M. S. Fetterhoff represented the company. Sergt. Whitmoyer is retiring from office.

"America Safe With Such Patriotism," Says Orator After Parade Reaches Cemetery

The Boys of '61 and the deeds of those soul-stirring days of the Civil War, together with the heroes of the Spanish-American, the World War and all wars fought by the United States, were honored in the city yesterday in Memorial Day exercises, the most important of which were the Memorial Day parade and the services held in the Harrisburg Cemetery in the afternoon.

The parade, one of the largest and most impressive in the history of Memorial Day here, moved through the streets of the city at 2 o'clock. It consisted of three divisions, the last of which comprised the flag-decked automobiles of the blue-uniformed veterans of the Civil War.

Applause greeted the boys in blue all along the line from the thousands who stood in the hot sun until they had passed by.

The line of march extended from Front street to Fourth and across the Mulberry street bridge to Thirteenth and then to the cemetery.

At Thirteenth and State streets the first two divisions consisting of the 104th Cavalry, the 107th Field Artillery, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, United Spanish War Veterans, American Legion, other military organizations and the Boy Scouts halted in line by the side of the street, and stood at attention while the Third Division headed by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, moved slowly past. The line extended from State street beyond Market almost to Derry street.

An Impressive Sight

It was an impressive sight and an affecting sight, those soldiers and Scouts standing in stiff attention, hands, rifles and sabres raised in salute, all flags except the American flag dipped in honor of those heroes of '61.

There were not many of them in the procession yesterday, only twenty-five. Post 58, the only active G. A. R. Post in the city today, can muster only fifty-four names on its roll. It once had a membership of more than 1500.

Something of the pathos of those thinning ranks of blue must have stirred the hearts of every one who

watched that procession of automobiles of Civil War veterans. It must have touched the hearts of those heroes of the '60's, too, as they saluted in return or waved their handkerchiefs to the applause that greeted them from the citizens on the sidewalks. And more than one gazed at the other through mist-beclouded eyes.

State Librarian Speaks

They entered the cemetery in that order, the drum corps of the Sons of Union Veterans leading, the sons themselves marching with rifles reversed, and the automobiles with the Boys in Blue following. The first and second divisions then fell in line, and marched to the cemetery after the third division.

Dr. Frederic A. Godcharles, State Librarian, a member of the Sons of Union Veterans and a veteran of the Spanish-American War and of the World War, was the orator for the Memorial Day services held at the speakers' stand in the cemetery.

"America is safe," he said, "as long as we see such patriotism manifested as we witnessed along this line of march."

Doctor Godcharles used as the theme for his address the contribution which the men of Pennsylvania have made to their Country during all the wars which were fought by the United States. He said those wars were fought for "liberty, unity, humanity and democracy." The World War had brought about a peace, he said, "which, please God, shall as firmly weld together the big and little nations and make the world as safe for an honorable democracy as the states of the North and the South have been welded together into the greatest nation under the sun, whose people are united in every movement for the weal of our wonderful Country."

And Baby makes:

Feb 9, 2007 Great grand son Andrew Joseph, parents Dana and Rebecca (Klinepeter) Gilbert in New Hampshire.

March 31, 2007 Great grand daughter Tatiana Rose parents Jeremy and Natalie (Klinepeter) Hollinshead live in McConnellsburg, Pa. Natalie is daughter of Brother Michael Klinepeter

April 4, 2007 Great grand daughter Charlotte Isabel parents are Mark and Pam Klinepeter of Lexington Ky. Mark is son of Camp 15 Brother Michael Klinepeter.

We now have 7 great grand children

--- Dave & Gloria Klinepeter

[PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR/GAR HISTORIAN](#) con'd

Several weeks ago long time member of Hartranft Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Harry Miller Runkle passed away. Look up his profile in the Hartranft Herald March 2005. I realize that our members do not know him, but he was quite active in the 1930s and 1940s. Harry was the second oldest member of Camp 15 (I am the oldest member) He joined the Camp several years after me but was quite active in the Fife and Drum Corp long before me. John H. Runkle, Harry's father organized the Drum Corp in the 1920s and I am sure as soon as Harry could carry a drum he paraded. When I met him in 1942 he reminded me of the Civil War drummer boys. I remember a short, red haired, freckled face kid who was a very good drummer. He most always took the right rear corner when in parade formation.

Harry had three sisters, Mary, Jeanne, and Margie. The family was very active in the Sons of Union Veterans and the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans. His grand mother Mary Liddick, his Mother Kathleen Runkle and his sister Mary Smith were all Past Department (state) Presidents of the Auxiliary of the Sons of Union Veterans. Harry's grandfather, Jacob Liddick was a long time member of Camp 15, and his father was a Past Department Commander and Past Commander-in Chief (National) of the Sons of Union Veterans. His sister, Jeanne Blatt, and his wife, Mary Runkle are still members of the Auxiliary.

Harry Miller Runkle (USMC retired) May you rest in peace!



The short fellow in the center is Harry Runkle; standing in back of his right shoulder is John H. Runkle. The fellow on the right your Patriotic Instructor, David Klinepeter PCC.

[Camp 15 in the News](#)

HIGHSPIRE, Pennsylvania

Gettysburg inspires Arbor Day ceremony

Monday, April 30, 2007

BY MARY KLAUS

Of The Patriot-News

Highspire officials celebrated Arbor Day yesterday by planting a Gettysburg sycamore tree during a ceremony featuring a minister's prayers, the town band's music and **Civil War re-enactors' salutes**.

"Today, Gettysburg sycamores help us recall the desperate days of battle in a divided country and the message of healing that Lincoln spoke," Highspire **Mayor John Hoerner** said to about 100 people at the ceremony.

"This tree today provides seeds for the future," he said after the planting of the 9-foot tree in the cemetery behind Highspire First Church of God.

It was the 15th annual Arbor Day held by Highspire, one of Dauphin County's seven communities with a Tree City USA designation. The National Arbor Day Foundation awards Tree City USA designations to communities that have tree boards, tree care ordinances, community forestry programs and Arbor Day observances.

Hoerner said three large sycamores along Baltimore Street in Gettysburg "are living witnesses to the great battle that raged in this once-sleepy Pennsylvania town and to perhaps the most famous speech in American history, the Gettysburg Address."

The three sycamores stood between the front lines of the Union and Confederate armies "and were subject constantly to fire," Horner said.

The tree planted yesterday came from seeds of one of those sycamores, Horner said, noting that the borough's historic cemetery contains about 15 unmarked graves of Civil War veterans.

Tom Herald, who chairs the Highspire Environmental Advisory Board, which organized the celebration, said trees play an important role in a community.

"Trees improve the quality of life, cut down on air and noise pollution, make it cooler in summer and warmer in winter, and provide homes for birds," Herald said. "Highspire has a lot of trees. We encourage our citizens to plant them."

During the half-hour ceremony, the Highspire-Steelton Town Band played "Yankee Doodle," "Beautiful Savior," "Oh, Susannah" and other selections. Several Cub Scouts led the crowd in the pledge of allegiance. The Rev. Hobart Utter prayed for the community.

Larry Newswanger, a state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources forester, presented the mayor with a Tree City USA flag. **Members of the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15, also prayed for the Civil War veterans.**

"It's wonderful to plant trees," said Darlene Miller of Newport, who came to hear her daughter play in the band. "More communities should do it."

MARY KLAUS: 255-8113 or mklaus@patriot-news.com appeared on page B1 Patriot-News Monday, April 30, 2007

See photos on following page

Credential Cards

If your intention is to make either the Department Encampment in June 2007 or the National Encampment in August 2007, please make sure you obtain a signed card before making either event.

The Credential Card for the Department Encampment can be obtained from your Camp Secretary and must be filled out fully so that you have the right to participate during the business meetings and vote.

The Credential Card for the National Encampment must be filled out fully and signed by the Department Secretary before you are able to participate. So please contact your Camp Secretary or Camp Commander who may obtain these for you from the Department.

The form for the Credential Card is located on the National web site under forms. This is a printable form right off of the site. The site is "www.sucvw.org"

Please make every effort to have these filled out correctly as it makes it easier for those who do the registration to help you.



FROM LEFT, COMMANDER DONNIE PRYE, FLOYD DEMMY, AND GREG KLINE, SVC.



GETTYSBURG SYCAMORE & MAYOR JOHN HOERNER
PHOTOS BY DAVID DEMMY

[Department of Pennsylvania Encampment](#)

If you are going to the 2007 encampment as outlined in your March issue of the *Hartranft Herald*, you need to complete or perform action upon these two forms NOW. As in the past, our Camp secretary will have cards for you at a future meeting. Make your hotel reservations too. Deadline rapidly approaching! Recommend you make your reservations by telephone and not on-line for the group discount rate. See March newsletter for more details.

Department of Pennsylvania Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Annual Encampment PRE REGISTRATION FORM

Camp No.: _____ Date: _____

Brother: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____

I am a member in good standing in this camp and my rank in the Order is:

___ CinC ___ PCinC ___ DC

___ PDC ___ CC ___ PCC

Attending as ___ delegate ___ alternate
Pre Registration fee is \$7.00 by 6/10//07
\$10 at encampment.

Make check payable to: PA Dept., SUVCW
and send to: Robert Graves
827 S. Jefferson St., Apt.#4
Allentown, PA 18103

Please act today!

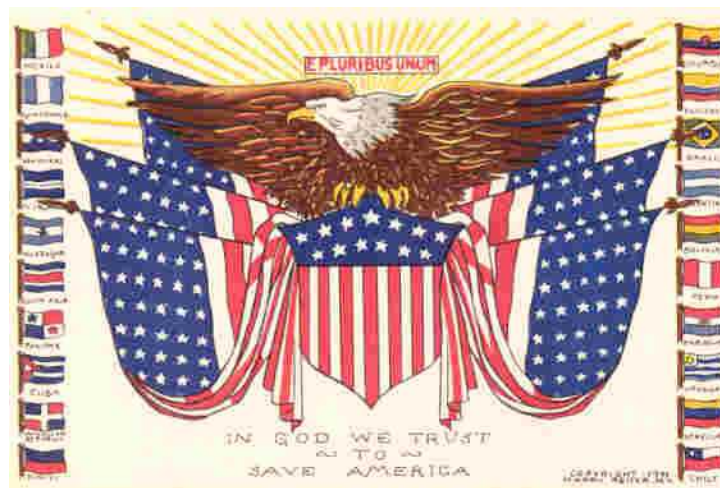
[Camp 15's Calendar of Events for 2007](#)

May – Sunday 20 th	General Meeting at National Civil War Museum.
May – Saturday 26 th	Annual Memorial Day outing at historic Harrisburg Cemetery. Placing flags upon veterans' gravesites.
June 9 th .	No general meeting. Field trip!
June 28 th – 29 th – 30 th	127 th Annual Pennsylvania State Department Encampment (convention) at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
July – Sunday 8 th	Annual Camp Picnic at Fort Hunter along Susquehanna River.
August 9 th – 10 th – 11 th	126 th National Encampment (convention).
September – Sunday 16 th	General Meeting at National Civil War Museum.
October – Sunday 21 st	General Meeting at National Civil War Museum.
November	No general meeting.
November – Saturday 17 th	Annual Remembrance Day at Gettysburg.
December – Sunday 9 th	Annual Holiday Party at Doc Holliday's Restaurant, Limekiln Road, Exit 40A, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Celebrate the Installation of Officers for 2008 at this annual event.



Allied Orders of the GAR

- ❑ Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to Grand Army of the Republic,
- ❑ Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic,
- ❑ Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War,
- ❑ Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and
- ❑ Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.



post proceedings ; after two months, by a two-thirds vote of the members of the second grade, the recruit could be advanced to the grade of soldier ; six months must then elapse, and again a two-thirds vote of the third grade members only must be passed, before the soldier could be advanced to the grade of veteran. An elaborate ceremony was provided, with grips, signs, and passwords for each grade. All members who did not assume the new obligations before September, 1869, were to be dropped from the rolls.

The adoption of this system proved quite generally unpopular, the opposition very nearly amounting to revolution in some departments. Two years later the entire grade system was abolished, but not until under its provisions tens of thousands of the old members had been thus legislated out of the order and a degree of dissatisfaction created, the retarding effect of which was felt for years. Indeed, in some departments, notably in Massachusetts, a considerable number of influential veterans, excluded



Major George S. Merrill.

under the operation of the rule for dropping members who refused to assume the grade obligations, have never returned to the ranks of the Grand Army.

As has been stated, the absence of even a pretext of records or reliable statistics from 1866 to 1871 renders exceedingly shadowy the story of the Grand Army during those years; but enough is known to give evidence of a genuine "hurrah" period, a magical growth, and an equally sudden practical disruption. In the central West the organization almost wholly disappeared, and but for the departments of the East, which religiously "kept the faith," the Grand Army of the Republic would have faded out of existence as the dew disappears before the morning sun.

At the second session of the National Encampment in Philadelphia, in January, 1868, the financial statement was as gloomy as the membership report was unsatisfactory. The receipts for the year were \$352, of which amount, singularly, more than one-third was from Louisiana, the departments of Illinois and Indiana contributing nothing. The expenditures had been \$1637, leaving an indebtedness of \$1285. An assessment of one dollar on each post was authorized to meet the



General Louis Wagner.

deficiency, but this realized only \$302, Illinois and Indiana being again conspicuous by the absence of the payment of a single dollar. Pennsylvania gave the largest amount, \$99, New York following with \$55, and Massachusetts with \$43. The financial demoralization seemed to keep pace with the uncertain membership. Again at the third annual session in 1869 there was reported an expenditure of \$3000 for the year, with receipts of only \$1260, leaving an additional deficiency of \$1740. Again Illinois, the birthplace of the order, with its sister department Indiana, failed to make any response to the financial requirements of the year. The burden of debt incurred in these years was not fully liquidated until 1872, when for the first time there appeared a cash balance in the hands of the Quartermaster-General, and from that date the question of finances has never clouded the history of the organization.

It would appear that no one of the departments escaped the effects of the period of depression succeeding the first outburst of enthusiasm. Maine found its low-water mark in 1874, when but 952 members were reported, of the 1311 in 1871; New Hampshire, with 964 in the latter year, retained but 561 at the close of 1873; the 720 members in Vermont in 1872 had fallen to 475 in 1879; Massachusetts reported 11,219 in 1872, and but 7609 in 1878; Rhode Island had 1022 in 1873, and 536 in 1876. New York showed a smaller loss, reporting 5120 in 1871, reduced to 4680 two years later; an increase of 1200 came the following year, with again a decrease to 4904 in 1877. Pennsylvania presents, among the persistent departments, the best record, only one year showing a decrease of membership, the num-

ber falling from 4045 in 1871 to 3545 the next year. At the close of the year 1878 the total membership in the country was 31,016, only 992 larger than at the end of 1871. In the year following there was a decided increase in members, but the new birth of the organization fairly dates from the administration of Commander-in-Chief Wagner, who introduced the feature of official visitations to the departments, and a vigorous system of recruiting, which set the order upon its course towards the present high point of success. His immediate successors took up the work with enthusiasm, and there has since been no cessation in effort to bring into the organization the great mass of the survivors of the Union forces. Commander-in-Chief Alger the past year has easily distanced all of his predecessors in the amount of time given, miles travelled, and visitations made in the interests of the Grand Army, and it is altogether probable that the membership has reached its maximum, the high-water mark, and that future commanders-in-chief must be content to note the inevitable recession.

The story of the rise of the Grand Army of the Republic, from the single post at Decatur to a

membership of possibly a quarter million, and

its swift decline until one-half

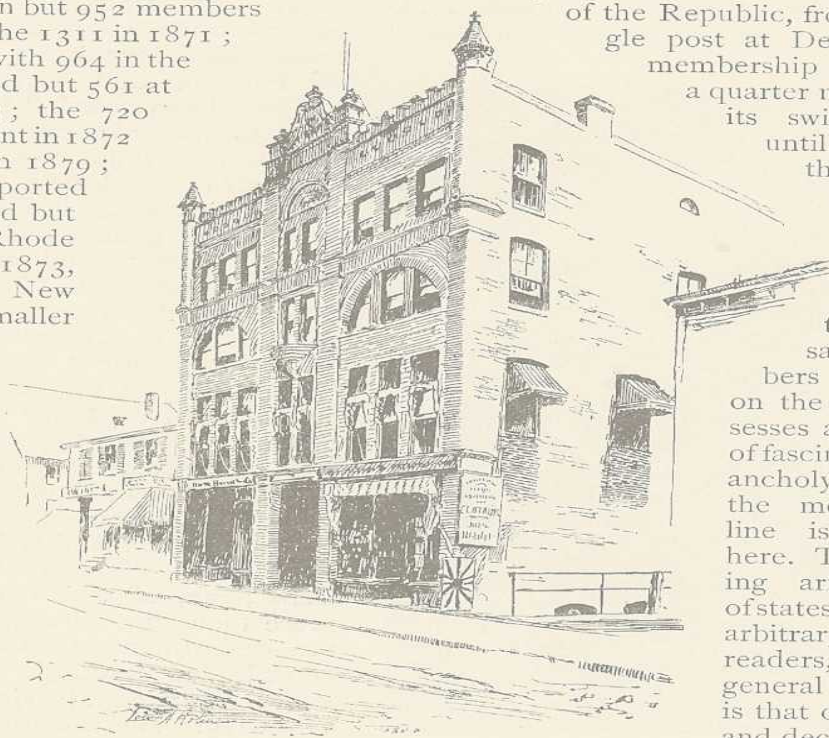
the departments had gone out of existence and scarcely

thirty thousand

members remained on the rolls, possesses an interest of fascinating melancholy, but only

the merest outline is possible here. The following arrangement of states may seem

arbitrary to many readers, but in general the order is that of the rise and decline of the departments.



General Lander Post Building, Lynn, Mass.

Series continued in your next *Hartranft Herald*.

Wear The Badge



Looking Ahead into June:

- Field Trip June 9.
- Flag Day June 14.
- Father's Day June 17. No general meeting during June.
- Pennsylvania Department Encampment convention June 28, 29, and 30
- Membership Bio Profiles will continue to appear in your 2007 *Hartranft Herald*.
- Have you submitted your BIO! (Member's profile) Why not begin work on it today!
- Keep a copy of your schedule of events and calendar handy for reference.

Join us please on Saturday May 26th at historical Harrisburg Cemetery for honoring the Civil War, GAR, and other American veterans as we place a flag at each Veteran's final rest stop.

In F, C, and L,

Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty!

--- End of May 2007 Hartranft Herald ---

