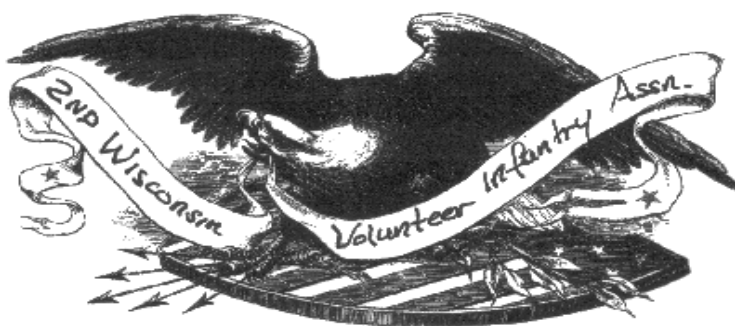


# THE FUGELMAN



## **THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SECOND WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY ASSOCIATION**

THE BLACK HAT BRIGADE---THE IRON BRIGADE

1861-1865

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**VOLUME XXVII**

**ISSUE 5**

**MAY, 2017**

**FU-GEL-MAN: A well-drilled soldier placed in front of a military company as a model or guide for others.**

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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**PASS IN REVIEW**

**pages 2-4**

<b>ASSOCIATION CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE</b>	<b>pages 4-5</b>
<b>REGIMENTAL DISPATCHES</b>	<b>pages 5-13</b>
<b>ATTENTION TO ORDERS</b>	<b>pages 13-25</b>
<b>REPORTS FROM THE CAMPS</b>	<b>pages 25-49</b>
<b>INFANTRY</b>	<b>pages 25-37</b>
<b>ARTILLERY</b>	<b>pages 37-42</b>
<b>SKIRMISHERS</b>	<b>pages 42-44</b>
<b>REGIMENTAL FIELD HOSPITAL</b>	<b>pages 45-49</b>
<b>CIVIL WAR MILESTONES</b>	<b>pages 49-52</b>
<b>EDITORIAL—"THE BATTLE OF SHILOH PART II"</b>	<b>pages 53-73</b>
<b>POWERFUL, EMOTIONAL, INTENSE: LINCOLN'S VISIT TO THE WOUNDED</b>	<b>pages 73-80</b>
<b>NEWLY DISCOVERED LETTERS BRING NEW INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE OF A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER</b>	<b>pages 80-91</b>
<b>FIRST PAGE OF DR. CHARLES LEALE'S REPORT ON TREATING PRESIDENT LINCOLN AFTER HE WAS SHOT</b>	<b>pages 91-92</b>
<b>SCHOLARSHIP RULES AND APPLICATION</b>	<b>pages 93-96</b>

## **PASS IN REVIEW**

*From the quill of Lt. Colonel Pete Seielstad*



**Here it comes! The start of another season of school programs, parades and events is upon us. For those of us who got an early start with the national**

**event at Shiloh, we should be primed and at the ready. Shiloh was a great time and the weather cooperated. Numbers were not what we have seen in the past but, we put our best effort into it and came away with a quality event under our belt. (See AAR – Shiloh below).**

**Most of you may know that there has been one big glitch with the use of the Napoleon cannon that the Second Wisconsin supported by providing a carriage and limber for it and has used in the past with Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup> US and the 6<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Light Artillery. The Wisconsin National Guard has pulled it from our use and it is now at Camp Douglas. Hopefully we can resolve the issue with an agreement and continue as we have in the past. If not, well...lets not think in the negative.**

**The La Crosse Light Guard Flag will be officially unveiled on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum at 5:30 pm. I hope you can attend this short presentation that is a culmination of several years of care from American Legion Post 52, the La Crosse County Historical Society and Company B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin. On behalf of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Vol. Inf. Association, three cheers to these well-recognized organizations and their commitment for the perpetual care and protection of the Light Guard Flag.**

**Stay safe and remember the inherent safety in the drill manuals. When in doubt, look it up.**

**I will see you on the field.**

**Your obedient servant,**

**Lt.. Col. Pete Seielstad**



## CAMPAIGN SCHEDULES OF THE COMPANIES AND ASSOCIATION

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### MAY

5th	Appleton School Day Pierce Park (Co.E)	Appleton,WI.
6th & 7th	2nd ACWSA National Skrimish (skirmish team)	Bristol, IN
12th	Appleton School Day Pierce Park (Co.E) Edison School	Appleton,WI.
12th	Hartland School Day (6thWILA)	Pewaukee,WI.
19th	School Day Valley View (Co.E)	Green Bay,WI.
19th	School Day (Co.K, 6WLA)	Milton,WI.
19th	West Salem School Day (Co.B)	West Salem, WI
20th & 21st	Milton Living History (Co.K, 6WLA)	Milton,WI.
20th & 21st	Pinecrest Village Reenactment (Co.E)	Manitowoc, WI.
26th	Howard School Day (Co.E)	Green Bay,WI.
29th	Memorial Day parade / Cemeteries (Co.B)	LaCrosse,WI.
29th	Memorial Day Events Milwaukee , Madison & Delafield (K)	Madison / Milw WI.

## **REGIMENTAL DISPATCHES**

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### **COMPANY SCHOOL DAY EVENTS**

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**With the arrival of spring and the end of school coming up, many of us are ready to tke up the challenge of school day presentations. This is probably our most important task as historians of the civil war era. It goes without saying that if we can spark an abiding interest in history and the civil war in only one student we have advanced the goal of a school day and extended a chain of future endeavor to all the authors and historians of various stripes from the past. A not insignificant accomplishment from our efforts!**

**Then there is the less taxing goal of introducing young people to the men who fought the war (and in some cases the civilians who experienced the war in different ways) and what it meant to be a soldier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**

**And finally there is an entertainment value to what we do. As an attorney I trained myself to maintain eye contact when arguing a case whether to a jury or a judge. That experience has become a habit for the Editor. It is certain that my comrades have experienced the same thing at their presentations. The look of awe, surprise, and even joy of the students at school day events makes it clear that reenactors have a big impact on their audiences. If only for a few minutes if we can inspire and introduce these young people to the history of this nation during the early 1860's, our event was a success. Remember this when the call comes to join your comrades for a school day event. Take your responsibility seriously because the students and teachers will.**

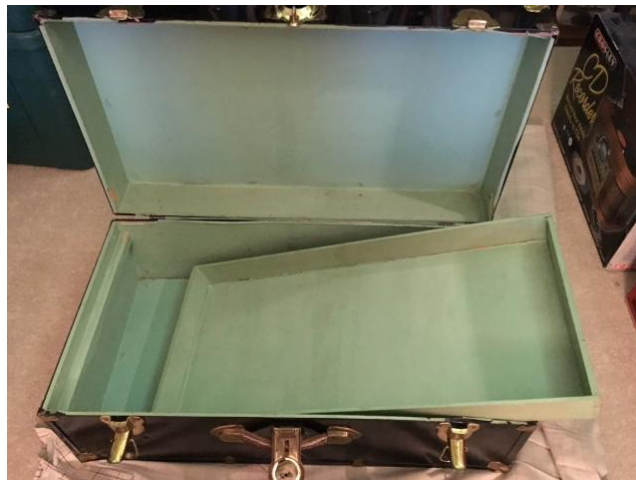
**REENACTOR UNIFORMS,  
EQUIPMENT AND CAMP GEAR FOR SALE**

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**THE FUGELMAN** received a request to post a rather large number of items being offered by Wes Severson, a reenactor with Company K—Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. The editor did not include photos of all the items for sale, but you can obtain photos and prices from the contact person below. Wes always took great care of his gear and field kit. Wes took tremendous pains to have his kit as authentic as possible. I encourage anyone looking to upgrade or fill his personal kit to check out the various items available for sale.

Long-time Company K reenactor, Wes Severson who retired from the hobby several years ago, is interested in selling his collection of clothing, musket and accouterments, camp gear, etc. Call 608-335-3207 or email: [olson3207@gmail.com](mailto:olson3207@gmail.com) for more information, pictures, and prices.







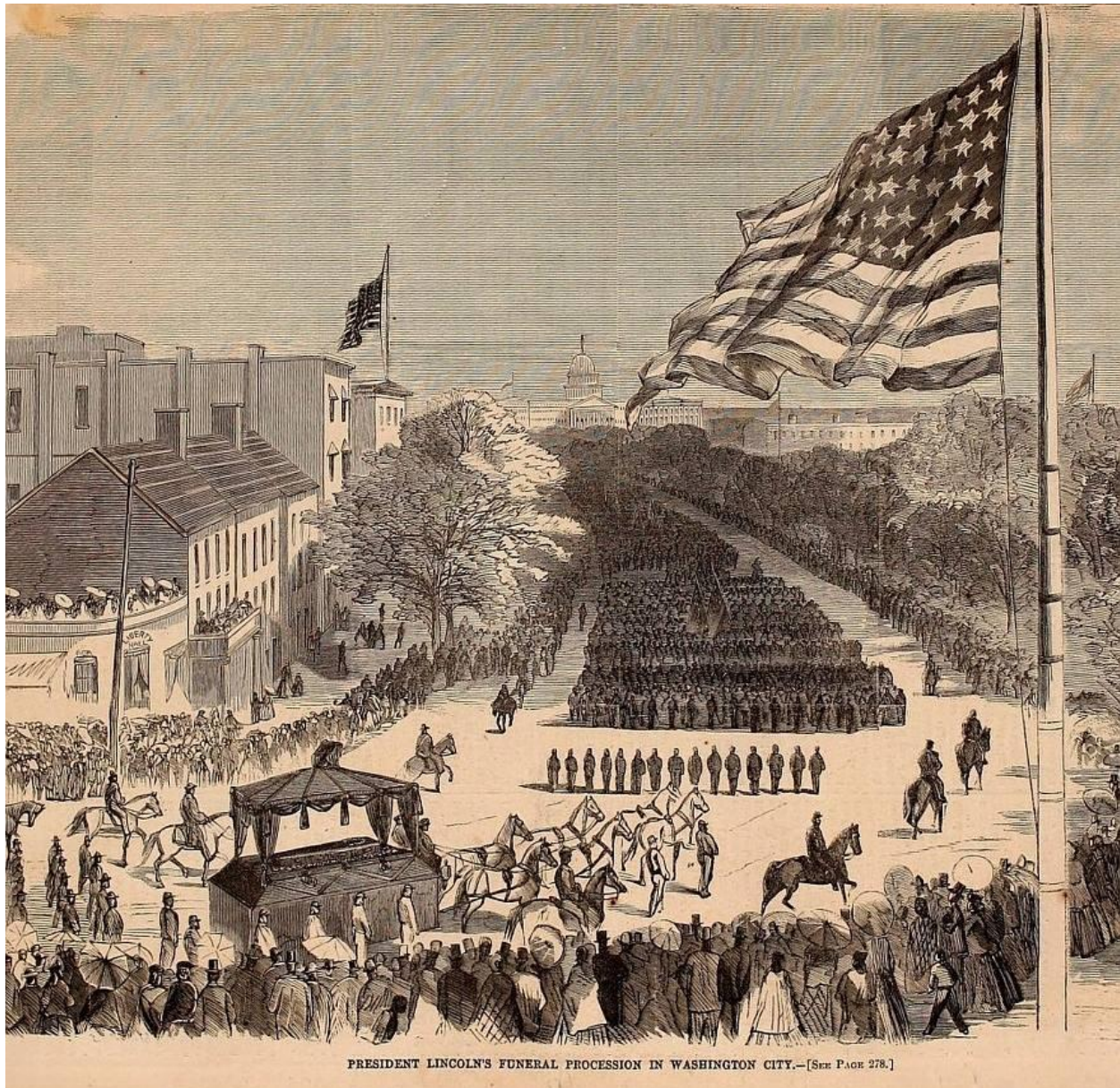












## RANDOM PHOTOS FROM THE SHILOH EVENT

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**The editor appologizes. I can't tell you who took these photos. They come from the Company K facebook pages.**





**Old glory flies over the Union camps**



**John Thielmann located the camp where his ancestor camped at Shiloh**



**The Putnam stump and Private Burzinski**

## **ATTENTION TO ORDERS**

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### **AFTER ACTION REPORT SHILOH 2017**

**SUBMITTED BY: CAPTAIN PETE SEIELSTAD**

**3<sup>RD</sup> COMPANY, 2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION, 3<sup>RD</sup> BRIGADE**

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**This report is taken from a company-level perspective. It is almost relaxing to take the position as a company commander and leave the big decisions to the higher level of command. Like all events, it is what you make of it. With**

**that in mind I ordered my Wisconsin men to leave “Pvt. Donny Downer” at home.**

**My report will breakdown my experience and opinion of the over-all event. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin was designated 3<sup>rd</sup> Company of Colonel Tim Bills’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade: Mike Lavis commanding.**

**Months prior to the event I was privy to some of the planning stages and came away appreciative that this was truly a collaborated effort with each element contributing his expertise and knowledge. Commander Bob Minton, Colonel Rob Van and Colonel Earl Zeckman (site coordinator), led the effort to make 155 Shiloh a meaningful experience for all the participants.**

#### **Thursday – Friday**

**Our caravan of Wisconsin men left the Badger State on Thursday and arrived at Shiloh National Park on Friday at 1100. To travel so far and be so close to a battleground of the American Civil War, we could not cast away the chance to tour the site. After spending three & a half hours, we proceeded to the event. Seeing signage for the event and registration “just ahead” we missed the registration tent because a Ford F-150 blocked the sign coming from our direction. (Slight delay.) Arriving in camp we quickly unloaded and set up our company street. At the same time First Brigade was formed and marched to Friday’s tactical battle. (Had Wisconsin been an hundred miles closer we could have participated.) Once camp was established we scouted out our surroundings and relaxed before our company drill at 1800. Consisting of 18 men and 2 officers (one on detached service), 3<sup>rd</sup> Company began its short and concise drill and made preparations for Saturday’s early reveille. “A damned cold night” overtook the land but by comparison to Wisconsin weather there was no difference and we adopted well.**

**Observation & opinion: *Registration moved smoothly, parking was not a problem, and finding our camp was no harder than asking for directions. Wood was plentiful and it was never a difficulty to obtain water. The port-a-johns, apparently placed for comfort of the spectators***

***were seemingly far away from our camp making for a long and sometimes swift walk to the sinks. I did not see Earl Zeckman at all during the event. I believe he and his event staff were busy at task to keep it all running smoothly. Thanks Earl & company.***

## **Saturday AM**

### **(First battle)**

**Spirits were high as the company marched to the field of battle. I was a little concerned because our battalion had not trained jointly before and this was the first engagement after a long winter camp. The frost & light fog lifted as well as the spirits of the men. Our battalion was posted to the far left in the line of battle. We prepared for the oncoming confederate force we knew would be approaching. It seemed our left was exposed even with our cavalry on that flank.**

***Observation & opinion: I felt there could have been a skirmish line to our front and left. Two men from (I believe) another brigade were tasked to warn us of the advancing enemy. There was enough time to deploy skirmishers, have them withdraw from the field and reform on the battalion. Having deployed skirmishers, infantry and/or cavalry, would have filled the lull and engage more men in defensive preparation. Kudos to the men and officers, when the first shots were fired, the men preformed well, followed commands and withdrew from the field in order. Withdrawing from the field was orderly but showing our entire battalion's back to the enemy has always made me nervous. By the right of companies to the rear, or retreating by company in echelon will minimize an inactive front. (Note: First time working together with no battalion drill at the first big event of the year...Col. Bills did right and kept it simple and we withdrew in an orderly fashion.)***

### **(Second battle)**

**The retreat to another field had a similar flare where our men stood and waited for an assault. Confederate cavalry ascended the hill in skirmish formation while the enemy infantry formed their battlefront. Our portrayal was to be the 53<sup>rd</sup> Ohio who fought, retreated then removed themselves from the field altogether. As the rebels advanced we were forced to retreat but**



**moved only a few yards to the rear and held the position while the enemy moved within a few yards of our position without showing signs of stopping. I immediately put 3<sup>rd</sup> Company at Arms Port. This stopped the advance into my company lines. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Company had the enemy actually come into their ranks reaching in as to follow through with a hand-to-hand fight.**

**Observation & opinion: *Again, a skirmish line could have been established to our front slowing down the enemy's skirmish line. I understood there was to be a push and shore segment at this stage of the scenario. It seems the Federals always play by the script. The confederates, knowing this, expect an easy run on our lines and we are to move aside for them. Over all, I think the rebs should fight for every inch as they moved forward.***

#### **Saturday PM**

**Report from Pvt. Dudkiewicz: *"Being pushed back to camp the men rested until called to a place that would be known as the Hornet's Nest later that day. The engagement was substantial and the firing hot. The boys in blue held for more than an hour. After some time, rebel massed artillery played effectively on our ranks, and the final Reb push caused the army around us to dissolve. Holding our ground, the Wisconsin boys became prisoners."***

**Observation & opinion: *This battle had several delays. First: To allow for spectators to enter. No problem here. Narrow roads bottlenecked movement and it takes time. After the initial action there was a delay that dragged on way to long. This caused the men to become idle and undisciplined. . What followed was a shameful exercise in an exaggerated theatrical style. Shame and disgrace to the man who broke from his lines to assault a wounded confederate soldier. Albeit, the rebs were also showing poor judgment as to rise up and take aim at the Federal line. Not one, but about six. This result was an execution-style firing squad by individuals from another battalion. A poor officer's command and undisciplined men had just made a joke of the men who fought at Shiloh.***

***The final assault was well done and as the confederates overtook our position they showed care and respect for us, which is very appreciated.***

### **Saturday Evening**

**A much warmer night and the men were in high spirits. Our company shared letters from home and enjoyed its evening meal. I am always amazed at what delicious meals are brought out from individual haversacks.**

### **Sunday AM**

**Cool and comfortable sleeping conditions and the men enjoyed the warmth in the early morning as they stood by the fire that was lovingly tended through the night by a member of the company.**

**Reveille, roll call, weapons inspection, drill and a surprise camp inspection kept the men active and in tune to the camaraderie of 3<sup>rd</sup> Company. At parade Col. Bills offered a moment of silence for the men who fought at Shiloh. (Thank you). The men were instructed to break camp in an orderly manner and prepare for the wagons to pick up their equipment later in the day.**

### **Sunday PM**

**Third brigade marched on the field with certainty to achieve a victory for the day. After our brigade was positioned we witnessed an artillery barrage. Following the barrage, our brigade advanced upon the confederate infantry. As nothing was in our front, I ordered my company to fire at the left oblique. After several moments of intense volleys our battalion was withdrawn from the center of the field and reformed on the left of the artillery. At this point there was a long delay while another brigade was brought over from the far right and positioned on our left flank. At this point the scenario was to allow for the Federals to capture a cannon and quickly lose it, as confederates retook it. Federals were now too far forward as the enemy cavalry formed for and advance on the fleeing Union men. Run off the field we were in a bad position as the Reb cavalry advanced. Once off the field, Federal galloped in mass to stop the enemy's progress. Following this our infantry marched forward and captured the field. Following the battle scenario 3<sup>rd</sup> Company split into platoons. First platoon was composed of those who went back to camp with the battalion; 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon was made up of those who split from the column and marched to where the cars awaited them.**

**Observation & opinion:** *The final battle of the event proved to be another set of delays due to spectators and possible other staging problems. This appeared to be the norm in order to complete staging and seemed to lose the battle's momentum. Although I experienced a highlight by facing so much confederate cavalry, there was a great potential if not real danger of being injured by so many horses advancing on the field. Those who fell wounded and remained on the field were at great risk by the confederates as they advanced and the Federals as they rode forward to repelled the enemy. If there needed to be a delay, this is where we needed one to clear the field.*

**Final Observation and opinion:** This was a national event where re-enactors from across the country came to portray soldiers and remember the battle that took place in Shiloh, Tennessee in April 1862. It was also the first collaborated effort of the new alliance known as the Grand Army of the Republic. Like the soldiers of the time, I only can describe what took place in my immediate proximity. My observation is very limited in relation to the whole picture.

Over all, I left 155<sup>th</sup> Shiloh with a good lasting impression. Event organizers and commanders who maintained their devotion to portray actual scenarios is a major accomplishment. Our brigade commander kept everyone up to date as to the scenario and to his expectations of his men. Col. Bills expected the best from his battalion and our company tried its best to comply. Third company came to this event prepared to immerse ourselves in the moment. This involved preparing ourselves in advance for camp life and battle scenarios. Our hobby remembers the past and honors the American Civil War soldier and is our primary function. Past friendships renewed, new friendships formed are the by-product of our hobby.

**Negative.**

**1. Delays.** Transporting spectators is an acceptable reason for a delay as well as a serious injury. If there was a delay in staging, it could be remedied by earlier communication of the movement or supplement the delay with a feint or other side attraction for the spectators. Radios are great to contact EMTs

**and event support staff, but I would have enjoyed seeing the cavalry used as messengers on the field carrying orders to the infantry, artillery and cavalry. This would have demonstrated the use of cavalry and may have taken messages to individual brigades faster.**

**2. Improper portrayal. Senseless individuals who think their sole purpose is to demean what we are trying to interpret. This is direct reference to the Federal infantryman who left his lines to stage a hand-to-hand fight with a wounded confederate during a long delay. Delays happen, but to fill a void with this kind of initiative is foolish.**

**Positive:**

**1. Event staff & EMTs are by far the most under appreciated members of an event. As stated earlier there was no problem with wood, water and sanitation. A member of our company became dehydrated; the EMTs recognized this and he was taken to the aid station where he was cared for and released. I cannot thank our EMTs enough. It is a good feeling to know that EMTs are ready to help if someone needs medical attention.**

**2. Commanding officers were aware of the scenarios and did much to keep their men informed. More than once a ranking officer would stop and talk to private and make him feel apart of the over-all event.**

**3. Weather. I requisitioned fair weather and event staff and commanding officers produced the best weekend forecast in April. Someone has pull somewhere.**

**4. Camps were mainly kept clean of visual 21<sup>st</sup> century intrusions as well as trash. The responsibility for each company street was left up to its officer and for the most part was well done. This officer will make it a habit to include trash bags to contain litter in camp at future events.**

**4. Participants. My observations left me with the impression that most of the men who contributed had no hidden agenda or large ego that had to take center stage. At all levels the primary focus was to honor and remember the American Civil War soldier at Shiloh and make a lasting experience for fellow participants.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lt Col. Pete Seielstad**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Vol. Inf. Association (GAR)**

## **AFTER ACTION REPORT AND PHOTOS FROM SHILOH REENACTMENT**

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***THE following photos and after action report comes from Private John Dudkiewicz of Company B. The Fugelman expresses its sincere gratitude for the submission and the editor is sure that all our readers will enjoy the report and photos!***

**Some pictures of the Wisconsin Company in line and at rest.**

**18 hardy men from Companies B, E and K formed up in Shiloh, joined by 2 members of the Walton's Guard from Florida.**

**The three companies started from their respective hometowns, and rallied in Paducah Kentucky Thursday night. The caravan then headed to the Shiloh National Battlefield, and enjoyed the visitor center exhibits, and toured the battlefield for roughly 4-1/2 hours. Then proceeded to the event site, adjacent to the National Battlefield.**

**Good hard ground, well invested with fire ants welcomed the Wisconsin men who formed as 3<sup>rd</sup> company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade in Grant's Army of the Tennessee, our Lieutenant was called battalion to serve as Adjutant.**

**Sinks and Water were at a sufficient distance to assure the boys would be well exercised by the week's end.**

**Roused 5:30 am Saturday to rush to the sound of guns, the men woke to a camp and fields covered with a light frost. A running fight ensued over about a mile of rolling hills, that continued into mid-morning. The union men taunted the Rebs who, while in great numbers, fired some particularly ragged volleys. Our battalion responded with crisp returns, to the hearty cheers of all the northerners in our vicinity.**

**Being pushed back to camp the men rested until called to a place that would be known as the Hornet's Nest later that day. The engagement was substantial and the firing hot. The boys in blue held for more than an hour. After some time, rebel massed artillery played effectively on our**

**ranks, and the final reb push caused the army around us to dissolve. Holding our ground, the Wisconsin boys became prisoners.**

**Having been quickly exchanged, we found our way back to camp. Resting and eating supper became the rule. Some letters from home were delivered to the camp, and Tom, Casey and Kevin read theirs from their wives and Sister. It was apparent to all that a local that had purchased a substitute was at home helping those wives left behind, in more ways than the company was comfortable with! Much laughter and enjoyment was had in camp that night.**

**Up early Sunday for inspection and light drill on our third consecutive cool, cloudless day, was followed by a surprise inspection by the Captain! He found some contraband including a near empty bottle of whiskey and quite a few cart-de vistas of ladies that were clearly not of sweethearts from home!! The captain was appreciative to a fault of the pictures, but insisted the party guilty of pilfering the bottle pour it out, much to the protestations of the individual, who attempted to follow the instructions to the letter, as the location for pouring was not specifically detailed. In the end, as the liquid baptized the Tennessee soil, the entire company let out a prolonged empathetic groan.**

**The men knowing a hard march was ahead, rapidly secured all extra materials to the wagons, and prepared for the long roll, which came soon. Marching off again, the company joined Buell's Army of the Ohio. Coming on the field the order of the day was to repel the rebs which was done in grand style. Strong Union artillery and active Infantry units carried the day for Grand Old Flag!.**

**The men tired and warm after the extended engagement, caught up directly with their respective wagons, and headed north, and again rallied in Paducah by threes and fours.**

**Your humble servant,  
Brevet Private John S Dudkiewicz**













**"A SOLDIER ENJOYS HIS CIGAR"**



**THE MEN OF THE SECOND WISCONSIN AT SHILOH**

## INVITATION TO ATTEND A SPECIAL PRESENTATION FROM COMPANY B

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**A dispatch from Co. B:**

**There will be a VIP Reception & Unveiling of the La Crosse Light Guard  
Flag at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum on Tuesday, May 2nd, 2017,  
5:30pm -7:30pm.**

**Dress is modern civilian. No show by us, just an honor to be part of a great  
donation, that Company B has played a part in attaining. As guardians of  
the La Crosse Light Guard Flag, Company B had it conserved in 1994. Now  
we played a small part in assuring it will be preserved and conserved for  
another 150 years.**

**Join us if you can.**

**Your humble servant,  
John S Dudkiewicz**

## SECOND WISCONSIN SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

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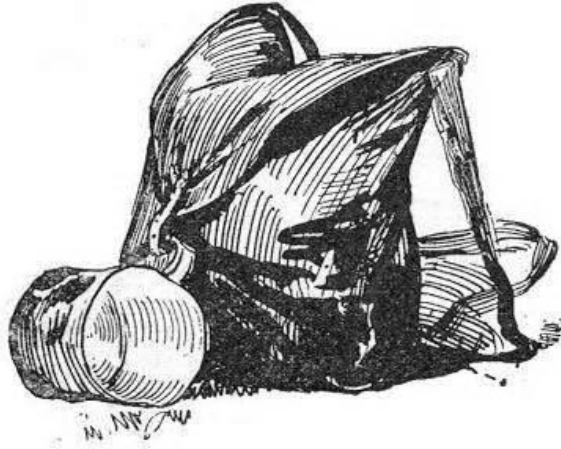
**LAST CALL LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! Anyone interested in  
submitting an application for the Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry  
Association Scholarship must mail the application no later than June 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
2017. This will thus be the last reminder for those who may be considering  
applying for the scholarship. You will find the application and rules for the  
submission at the end of this newsletter. Good luck to all the applicants!**

**FROM THE CAMPS OF THE  
COMPANIES OF THE SECOND  
WISCONSIN**

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# INFANTRY

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## COMPANY B

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### COMPANY B MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS

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**Company B has a parade and cemetery events scheduled for Memorial Day. It is a fitting reminder of the reason for a Memorial Day commemoration that we do remember those who gave the last full measure of devotion on behalf of the government and Union of states. Below is a list of the men from Company B who died in service to their nation, the expansion of freedom, and the preservation of a democratic republican form of government.**

**Below is the Company B roll of honor, each one these men died while preserving the Union. May they rest in peace.**

**Captain Wilson Colwell  
Captain Robert H Hughes  
Ignatius Anders  
Oscar M. Bradford**

**Michael Brennan**  
**Edwin O. Brewster**  
**Charles C. Bushee**  
**Silas Coster**  
**George W. Fisher**  
**George Fox**  
**Myron Gardner**  
**George D Hunter**  
**Charles C. Jenks**  
**Anton Knoblauch**  
**David M Knox**  
**Marvin Lee**  
**John M Marsh**  
**Robert L McClintock**  
**Norman McHardy**  
**Uriel P Olin**  
**Edward Potter**  
**Klaus Rackama**  
**Ferdinand Reibe**  
**William Stace**  
**Lest We Forget**  
**-Bill Beseler**

## **COMPANY E**

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**MAY 20-21, 2017 EVENT IN MANITOWOC**

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**“Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21 from 10 am to 4 pm - Battle at 2 pm both days!**

**Although it has been over 150 years since our country has fought in the Civil War, the diaries, stories, and lessons still remain.**

**During a Union Soldier Remembers, the pages of local Civil War veterans journals and letters will come to life as reenactors portray these stories and traditions. Along the way, you'll meet local residents, experience immersive presentations, and even participate in military drills.” <https://www.manitowocountyhistory.org/programs/union-soldier-remembers>**



**PINECREST**

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**CIVIL WAR  
ENCAMPMENT**

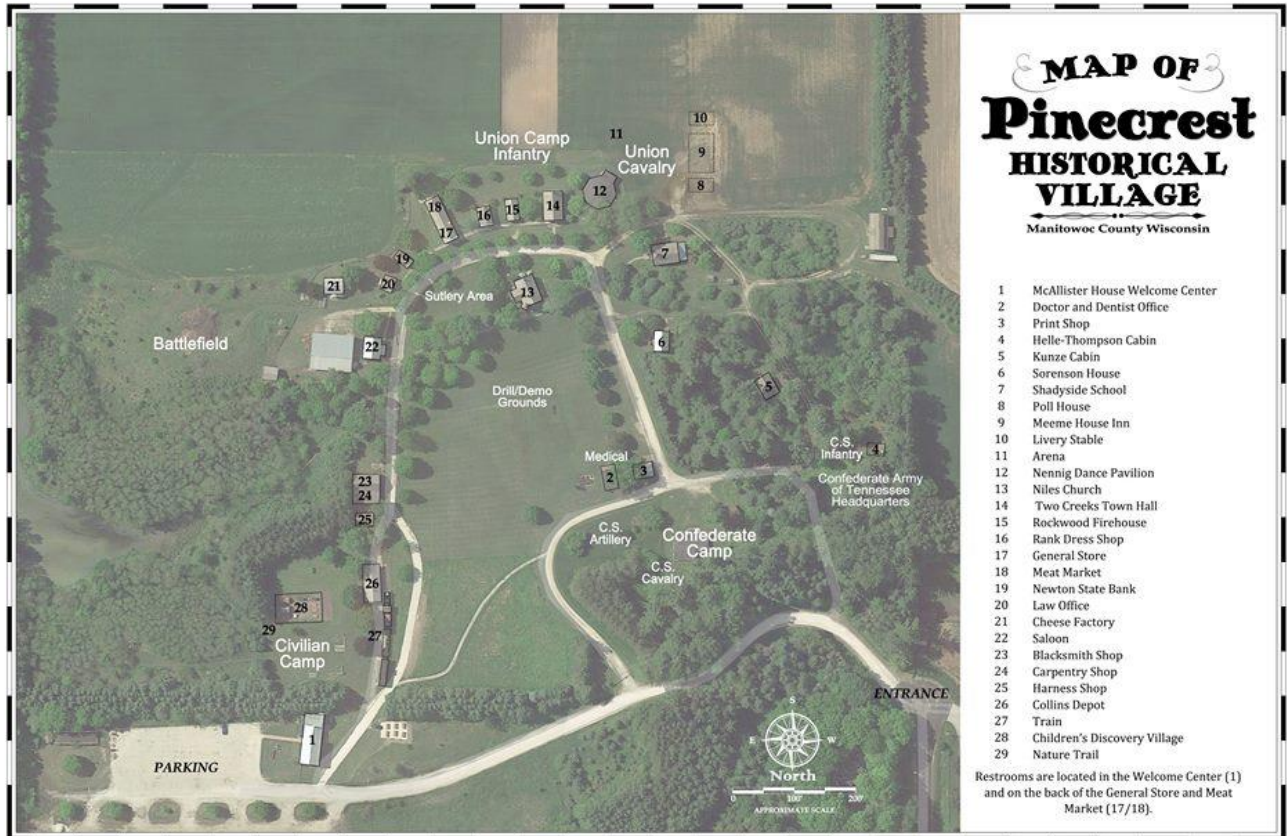
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**20-21 MAY 2017**

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**Pinecrest Historical Village**





[https://wego.here.com/directions/mix/1175-CR-H,-Reedsville,-WI-54230,-United-States:44.10898,-87.80003/Pinecrest-Civil-War-Encampment,-924-Pine-Crest-Ln,-Manitowoc,-Wisconsin:eyJuYW1lIjoiUGluZWNyZXN0IENpdmlsIFdhciBFbmNhxBtZW50IiwiaWVRkcmVzcyI6IjkyNCBQaW5lIENyZXN0IExuLCBNYW5pdG93b2MsIFdpc2NvbNpbiIsImxhdGl0dWRlIjo0NC4xMDczNzQzLCJsbn25naXR1ZGUiOi04Ny43OTEzNjA1LCJwcm92aWRlck5hbWUiOiJmYWNIYm9vayIsbnByb3ZpZGVySWQzOjUwNDg1NjQ0OTY2NzE0Nn0=?map=44.10768,-87.78875,15,normal&fb\\_locale=en\\_US&msg=CR-H%20WI%2054230](https://wego.here.com/directions/mix/1175-CR-H,-Reedsville,-WI-54230,-United-States:44.10898,-87.80003/Pinecrest-Civil-War-Encampment,-924-Pine-Crest-Ln,-Manitowoc,-Wisconsin:eyJuYW1lIjoiUGluZWNyZXN0IENpdmlsIFdhciBFbmNhxBtZW50IiwiaWVRkcmVzcyI6IjkyNCBQaW5lIENyZXN0IExuLCBNYW5pdG93b2MsIFdpc2NvbNpbiIsImxhdGl0dWRlIjo0NC4xMDczNzQzLCJsbn25naXR1ZGUiOi04Ny43OTEzNjA1LCJwcm92aWRlck5hbWUiOiJmYWNIYm9vayIsbnByb3ZpZGVySWQzOjUwNDg1NjQ0OTY2NzE0Nn0=?map=44.10768,-87.78875,15,normal&fb_locale=en_US&msg=CR-H%20WI%2054230)

## COMPANY E MEMORIAL DAY COMMEMORATION

### A MESSAGE

**“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.” General John A. Logan, Grand Army of the Republic**

**Commander, 1868. In 1868, the members of the Grand Army of the Republic embraced this pledge with honor and devotion. Today, we are presented the opportunity to sustain that pledge, and embrace the chance to show our respect and devotion to those who gave their “last full measure” that our Nation might remain united. Please come and show your devotion to the original “Oshkosh Volunteers” – those we have chosen to remember and portray — and to those who have sacrificed in service to our Nation before and since the Civil War, and those serving today. Thank you.**

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## **DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES**

**THE PROCESSION STEPS OFF AT 9:00 A.M. Company Volunteers (Ladies are invited!!) should meet at Riverside Cemetery—“GAR Section”—no later than 8:15. Or meet at the Staging Area downtown no later than 8:45 (see “Directions” below). The Memorial Day Ceremony will take place immediately following the end of the Procession.**

**Please come and march to Honor the original “Oshkosh Volunteers.”**

**DIRECTIONS: From North/South of Oshkosh, take US 41 South/North to Oshkosh; take Highway 45 exit south into Oshkosh, and Riverside Cemetery will be seen on your right; turn in near the tall obelisk soldier’s monument (“new veteran’s section”), and head to the “back” of the cemetery. Drive south on this back road and you should find a Civil War monument (“GAR Section”) and, likely, several vehicles. From here, we will carpool to the staging area, which is downtown in the Beech Building parking lot, next to the Christine Ann Center between Division and Brown Streets.**

## **COMPANY K**

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### **MILTON SCHOOL DAY EVENT**

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**On May 19<sup>th</sup>, inst., Company K will hold its annual school day event in Milton, Wisconsin, at the site of the Milton House Museum. This event is by far the most labor intensive and time consuming event by Company K every**

**year. It takes months to organize and arrange for the schools that attend and create the stations for the students. Nearly 2,000 students over a day's time frame will go through this event. It should be absolutely clear that every man must stand to his post on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Each member should contact the Company secretary informing him if you are attending the school day event or not. This is imperative!**

**The uniform of the day will be the Iron Brigade uniform. Frock coat, sky blue trousers, gaiters, Hardee hats, and brogans. You will need ammunition, about 20 rounds per man, for the day. The troops will need their rifles and accoutrements, especially their bayonets.**

**Everyone must be set up and in camp by 8:00 a.m. so that when the students begin arriving everyone is ready to go! The Company secretary, once he has a list of troops available for service, will provide a list of stations and assignment to those stations. If a member of Company K has a particular station to which they wish to be assigned you should inform the Company secretary when you notify him of your intent to attend the event.**



**A photo from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin website—Gary Van Kauwenbergh talking to student at Milton School Day event**





**Students at Milton School Day—2016**



**A member of Company K prepares for school day event in 2016**

## **MILTON LIVING HISTORY EVENT**

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**In conjunction with the Company K school day there will be a living history event scheduled for Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. The site of the event will be the same as for the school day event, the Milton House in Milton, Wisconsin. This is a good event and in the past there have been a significant number of visitors to the camps.**

**The following comes from the Milton House website describing the event:**

***Winner of the 2016 Wisconsin Historical Society Public Program Award. This community festival features activities for all ages. Activities being at 7am with a pancake breakfast at the Community House in North Goodrich Park. Guests are invited to wander the park and Milton House grounds as they interact with Civil War era soldiers and civilians camped out for the weekend. (Visitors may even find themselves face to face with General Grant or President Lincoln) The encamped company will provide cannon fire demonstrations throughout the day. Saturday's festivities will conclude with a concert in Goodrich Park.***

***Sunday will open with a military style worship service at 11am by the Goodrich Cabin. Cannon firings will continue throughout the day. Event goers are invited to conclude their day in Milton with a historic walking tour presented by the Milton Historical Society.***





**Regimental flag at Milton Living History Event-2016**



**Some old hands at Milton-2016**



**This guy is a terrific Lincoln impersonator and he does look a lot like  
Lincoln-2016**

## **MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS FOR COMPANY K**

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**Company K will have two events at different locations on Memorial Day.**

### **FOREST HILLS CEMETERY—MADISON**

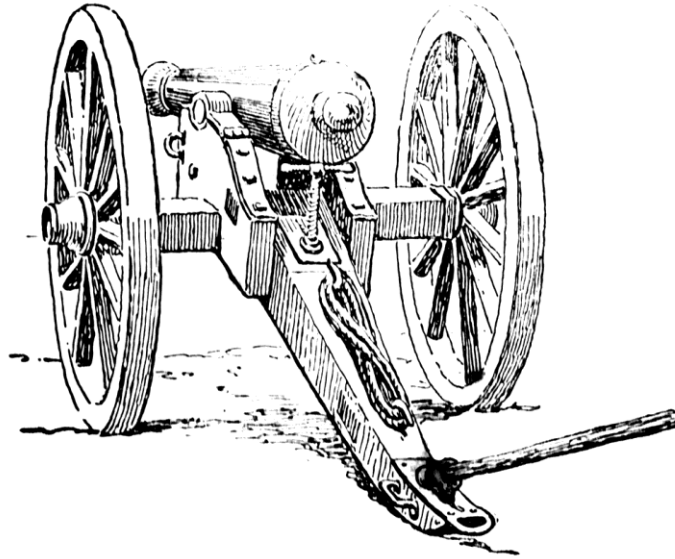
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**The Memorial Day ceremony annually conducted at Forest Hills Cemetery will be held on May 29<sup>th</sup>, inst. The uniform of the day will be the Iron Brigade impression: frock coats (if you have them), sky blue trousers, gaiters, and dressed Hardee hats. If you lack any of these items wear whichever uniform parts you usually wear. White gloves are appropriate as this is a ceremonial type of event.**

**The men should have a minimum of three rounds as there is usually one or two volleys at the grave of Lt. Col. Lucius Fairchild and one at Union Rest, during the public ceremony.**







## HARTLAND SCHOOL DAY EVENT

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**Students formed up and ready for a day of civil war history**





**2016—Closing ceremony for Hartland School Day**



**Kevin Klanrud conducting drill for Union division**

## **ARTILLERY DRILL APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup> AT THE HLABAN FARM**

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**The following photos come from Sgt. Lyle Laufenberg. They were taken at the April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, drill on the Wally Hlaban farm as the men of our battery sharpened their skills for the coming campaigns. Company K also conducts a drill at the same location and at the same time as the battery.**





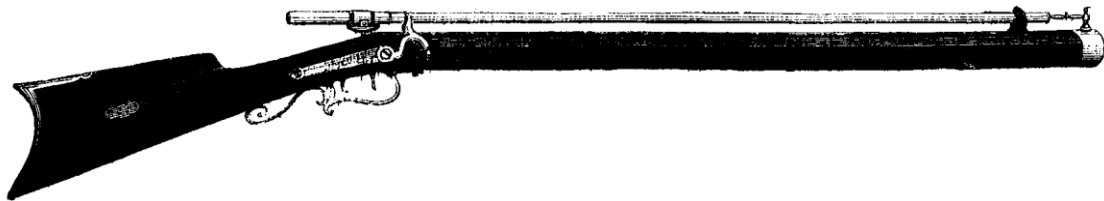






## SKIRMISHERS

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**THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR SHOOTING ASSN.  
2ND NATIONAL SKIRMISH MAY 4-7, 2017,  
CHIEF WA-KE'-DE RANGE, 16067 STATE ROAD  
120, BRISTOL, INDIANA**

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**The ACWSA cordially invites you to its 2nd National Skirmish. Paul Lipka is the Skirmish Director and the shoot will be hosted by the Michigan Region. However, everyone will be shooting and pitching in at the range. To maximize everyone's 'trigger time' there will be a duty roster splitting up the chores among the attending teams.**

**Important!**

**♣ Team commanders need to complete the attached registration form with payment no later than April 15, 2017.**

**♣ Shooting fees will be \$6 per shooter per musket and carbine team event.**

♣ Shooting fees will be \$5 per shooter per revolver, smoothbore, and breech loading team events. ♣ Shooting fees will be \$10 per mortar.

♣ We will not be having individual matches this year, but we will provide target frames and paper targets for those who wish to practice while team events are being held.

♣ Awards will be Cockade ribbons for team competitions.

♣ First through third place 'A' team awards will be presented for all competitions.

♣ 'B' team awards will be also presented for first and second places.

♣ Soda, and water will be available at the range. At this time you will have to provide your own food. If this changes we will let you know. (More info later.) . Chief Wa-Ke'-De rules:

♣ No alcohol on the range, only in the camp area after hours.

♣ No unprotected ground fires. Fire rings and fire trays are allowed.

♣ No pets.

♣ Dumpster space is limited. Campers are asked to 'pack-out' their trash.

For more information contact: Paul Lipka, [the\\_greyghost@msn.com](mailto:the_greyghost@msn.com) , (586) 243-7561 Mike Zandarski, [ffgmhz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ffgmhz@sbcglobal.net), (586)739-6499

**Lodging:** Camping is available at the range, and there is also a KOA Campground nearby at 52867 IN-13, in Middlebury, (800) 562-5892. There are more than a dozen motels about nine miles west of the range along the interstate north of Elkhart. Both price and ratings vary and but here are a few if you don't have internet access:

**\*\*Quality Inn & Suites, 3321 Plaza Ct, Elkhart, (574) 264-0404**

**\*\*\*Super 8, 345 E Windsor Ave, Elkhart, (574) 262-0000**

**\*\*\*\*Best Western Inn & Suites, 3326 Cassopolis St, Elkhart, (574) 262-8761**

**Chief Wa-Ke'-De Range, 16067 State Road 120, Bristol, Indiana Driving Directions to the Wa-Ke'-De Range from either the east or west on Interstate 80/90**

**1. Get off the Interstate 80/90 at Exit 101.**

**2. Pay the toll and drive to the "T" intersection that is Hwy 15 (Mottville Road) and turn left.**

**3. Drive back under the Interstate and straight to another "T" intersection in the town of Bristol, IN.**

**4. Turn left onto Hwy 120 (East Vistula St). 5. Drive ~1 ½ miles east on Hwy 120. The range is on the left.**

**ACWSA Nationals Schedule May 4-7, 2017**

- **Thursday, May 4 Range open for camping after 4:00 pm.**
- **Friday, May 5 Noon Range setup 5:45 Commanders' meeting for Mortar competition: Best five of seven rounds at 100 yards. Each team provides its own stake. Each crew must provide a safety officer.**

**Saturday, May 6**

- **8:45 Commanders' meeting for Revolver and Breechloader Teams**
- **9:10 Revolver Team (3 person teams/ 90 second events) Two-handed holds will be allowed. This will be shot in one relay provided we have enough safety officers. So plan on providing a safety officer. Targeting: 15 yard pigeon board - 9 15 yard hanging metal clover - 6 15 yard hanging 4" metal tile- 6**
- **10:30 Breechloader Team (3 person teams/3 minute events) This will be shot in one relay provided we have enough safety officers. So plan on providing a safety officer. Single shot breech loading rifle targeting will be pro-rated by rule. Targeting: 50 yard pigeon board - 24 50 yard hanging metal cans -12 50 yard hanging metal 4" tiles - 12 50 yard hanging metal clovers -**
- **12 Noon Lunch Break 12:30 Commanders' meeting for Smoothbore and Carbine Teams**
- **1:00 Carbine Team (4 person teams/5 minute events) Targeting: 50 yard pigeon board - 16 50 yard hanging breakable pigeons - 8 50 yard hanging metal 4" tiles - 8 50 yard hanging metal cans - 8 50 yard hanging metal clovers - 8**
- **3:30 Smoothbore Team (3 person teams/3 minute events) This will be shot in one relay provided we have enough safety officers. So plan on providing a safety officer. Targeting: 25 yard pigeon board - 9 25 yard hanging breakable 4" tiles - 6 25 yard hanging breakable pigeons - 6**
- **Range clean-up Sunday May 7 8:30 Musket Team Commanders Meeting**
- **8:45 Opening ceremonies & team awards presentation**
- **9:00 Musket Team (5 person teams/5 minute events), Targeting: 50 yard pigeon board - 20 50 yard hanging breakable pigeons - 10 50 yard hanging metal 4" tiles - 10 50 yard hanging metal cans - 10 50 yard hanging metal clovers - 10 Range clean up, closing ceremonies and musket team awards**

# **2<sup>nd</sup> WISCONSIN REGIMENTAL FIELD HOSPITAL**

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## **REPORT FROM THE UNION MEDICAL DIRECTOR AT THE BATTLE OF SHILOH**

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**MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ARMY OF THE OHIO,  
CAMP ON FIELD OF SHILOH, APRIL 21, 1862.**

**SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of the medical department during and after the battle of the 6th and 7th instant:**

**On the morning of the 6th I was at Savannah, and being ordered to remain at that place, I occupied myself in procuring all the hospital accommodation possible in that small village and in directing the preparation of bunks and other conveniences for wounded. In the afternoon the wounded were brought down in large numbers, and I then superintended their removal to hospitals, and did all in my power to**



**provide for their comfort. On Sunday evening, the divisions being under orders to come up as rapidly as possible, I ordered the medical officers, as it was impossible to take their medical and hospital supplies -- the teams and ambulances being in the rear and the roads blocked up with trains -- to take their instruments and hospital knapsacks and such dressings and stimulants as could be carried on horseback, and to go on with their regiments. I left Savannah by the first boat on Monday, and arrived at Pittsburg Landing at about 10 a.m. I found the principal depot for wounded established at the small log building now used as a field post-office. They were coming in very rapidly, and very inadequate arrangements had been made for their reception. I found Brigade Surgeon Goldsmith endeavoring to make provision for them, and at his suggestion immediately saw General Grant, and obtained his order for a number of tents to be pitched about the log house.**

**I then rode to the front and reported to you. The great number of wounded which I saw being transported to the main depot, and the Almost insurmountable difficulties which I foresaw would exist in providing for them, convinced me that my presence was needed there more than at any other point on the field. After spending an hour in riding a little to the rear of our lines, and seeing as far as possible that there were surgeons in position to attend immediately to the most urgent cases, I returned to the hill above the Landing, and used every exertion to provide for the wounded there. I ordered Brigade Surgeons Gross, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Gay to take charge of the different depots which were established in tents on the hills above the Landing, directing such regimental and contract surgeons as I could find to aid them. Many of the wounded were taken on board boats at the Landing and some of our surgeons were ordered on board to attend them. On Tuesday I had such boats as I could obtain fitted up with such bed-sacks as were on hand and with straw and hay for the wounded to lie upon, and filled to their utmost capacity, and at once dispatched to convey the worst cases to the hospitals on the Ohio River, at Evansville, New Albany, Louisville, and Cincinnati. In removing the wounded we were aided by boats fitted up by sanitary commissions and soldiers' relief societies and sent to the battle-field to convey wounded to the hospitals. Some of these, especially those under the direction of the United States Sanitary Commission, were of great service. They were ready to receive all sick and wounded, without regard to States or even to politics, taking the wounded Confederates as willingly as our own. Others, especially those who came under the orders of Governors of States, were of little assistance, and caused much irregularity. Messages were sent to the regiments that a boat was at the Landing ready to take to their homes all wounded and sick from certain States. The men would crowd in numbers to the Landing, a few wounded, but mostly the sick and homesick. After the men had been enticed to the river and were lying in the mud in front of the boats it was determined in one instance by the Governor to take only the wounded, and this boat went off with a few wounded, leaving many very sick men to get back to their camps as they best could. By the end of the week after the battle all our wounded had been sent off, with but few exceptions of men who had been taken to camps of regiments in General Grant's army during the battle. These have since been found and provided for.**

**The division medical directors were very efficient in the discharge of their duties, and they report most favorably of the energy and zeal displayed by the medical officers under them in the care of the wounded under most trying circumstances --**

**of want of medical and hospital stores, and even tents. Owing to the fact that a large majority of the wounded brought in on Monday and Tuesday were from General Grant's army, some of whom had been wounded the day before, it was impossible to attend particularly to those from our own divisions. Many Confederate wounded also fell in our hands, and I am happy to say that our officers and men attended with equal assiduity to all. Indeed, our soldiers were more ready to wait on the wounded of the enemy than our own. I regret to say that they showed incredible apathy and repugnance to nursing or attending to the wants of their wounded comrades, but in the case of the Confederates this seemed in some measure overcome by a feeling of curiosity and a wish to be near them and converse with them.**

**We were poorly supplied with dressings and comforts for the wounded and with ambulances for their transportation, and it Was several days after the battle before all could be brought in. Our principal difficulty, however, in providing for the wounded was in the utter impossibility to obtain proper details of men to nurse them and to cook and attend generally to their wants, and in the impossibility of getting a sufficient number of tents pitched, or in the confusion which prevailed during and after the battle to get hay or straw as bedding for the wounded or to have it transported to the tents. The only details we could obtain were from the disorganized mob which lined the hills near the Landing, and who were utterly inert and inefficient. From the sad experience of this battle and the recollections of the sufferings of thousands of poor wounded soldiers crowded into tents on the wet ground, their wants partially attended to by an unwilling and forced detail of panic-stricken deserters from the battle-field, I am confirmed in the belief of the absolute necessity for a class of hospital attendants, enlisted as such, whose duties are distinct and exclusive as nurses and attendants for the sick, and also of a corps of medical purveyors, to act not only in supplying medicines, but as quartermasters for the medical department.**

**I append a list of the number of killed and wounded in each regiment, brigade, and division engaged, in all amounting to 236 killed and 1,728 wounded.(\*)**

**Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
R. MURRAY,  
Surgeon, U. S. Army, Medical Director.  
Col. J. B. FRY,  
Asst. Adjt. Gen. and Chief of Staff, Army of Ohio.**

<https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/cwsurgeon/cwsurgeon/shiloh>



**STAN GRAIEWSKI OF THE REGIMENTAL HOSPITAL AT HARTLAND**



**VISITORS TO THE FIELD HOSPITAL AT MILTON LIVING HISTORY EVENT**





**OLD COMRADES OF THE EDITOR FROM MILTON EVENT**



**PRESIDENT LINCOLN IN MILTON AT MILTON HOUSE EVENT**

## **CIVIL WAR MILESTONES**



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## MAY

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|----------------------|--|
| <b>May 1, 1863</b>   | <b>The Battle of Chancellorsville begins.</b>  |
| <b>May 1, 1865</b>   | <b>President Johnson orders the appointment of the commission to try the alleged conspirators in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.</b>   |
| <b>May 1-2, 1863</b> | <b>General U. S. Grant drives the rebels from Port Gibson, Mississippi opening a path to Vicksburg</b>   |
| <b>May 2, 1863</b>   | <b>The second day of the Battle of Chancellorsville</b>  |
| <b>May 2, 1863</b>   | <b>General Thomas J. Jackson wounded in the evening by his own men while conducting reconnaissance between the two armies</b>  |
| <b>May 3-4, 1863</b> | <b>The Battle of Chancellorsville rages on and finally the Army of the Potomac retreats back across the Rappahannock River</b>   |
| <b>May 4, 1865</b>   | <b>Abraham Lincoln is laid to rest in Springfield, Illinois</b>  |
| <b>May 4, 1865</b>   | <b>Confederate General Richard Taylor surrenders the remaining troops in the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana at Citronelle, Alabama. The Texas Brigade surrenders at Jackson, Mississippi</b> |

<b>May 5, 1864</b>	<b>The Battle of the Wilderness begins</b>
<b>May 6, 1861</b>	<b>Arkansas secedes</b>
<b>May 6, 1861</b>	<b>Jefferson Davis approves a state of war between the U.S. and C.S.</b>
<b>May 8, 1862</b>	<b>Battle of McDowell, Virginia</b>
<b>May 8, 2016</b>	<b>MOTHER'S DAY</b>
<b>May 10, 1863</b>	<b>"Stonewall" Jackson dies as a result of wounds sustained on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1863</b>
<b>May 10, 1865</b>	<b>Federal troops capture Jefferson Davis at Irwinville, Georgia</b>
<b>May 10, 1865</b>	<b>Confederate guerilla William Clarke Quantrill is critically wounded during a raid in Tylersville, Kentucky</b>
<b>May 12, 1864</b>	<b>Battle of the "Bloody Angle" at Spotsylvania Courthouse during Grant's Overland campaign</b>
<b>May 12-13, 1865</b>	<b>Testimony begins in the trial of the Lincoln assassination conspirators</b>
<b>May 12-13, 1865</b>	<b>The Battle at Palmito Ranch in Texas</b>

<b>May 18, 1863</b>	<b>Siege of Vicksburg begins</b>
<b>May 20, 1861</b>	<b>North Carolina secedes</b>
<b>May 23, 1861</b>	<b>Virginia secedes</b>
<b>May 22-23, 1865</b>	<b>The Grand Review takes place in Washington City. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> the Army of the Potomac under General Meade paraded through the city. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, Sherman's Western troops marched in the review</b>
<b>May 25, 1862</b>	<b>First Battle of Winchester</b>
<b>May 26, 1865</b>	<b>General Edmund Kirby Smith surrenders the Army of the Trans-Mississippi in New Orleans</b>
<b>May 28, 1818</b>	<b>Gen. Pierre G. T. Beauregard, CS, born</b>
<b>May 28, 1863</b>	<b>The first black regiment, the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts, leaves Boston for Hilton Head, S.C.</b>
<b>May 29, 1865</b>	<b>President Johnson issues a general amnesty to most Confederates if they swear an oath of loyalty to the United States. Those who served in civil offices, left Federal offices or held high military or naval rank must apply for a pardon</b>
<b>MAY 29, 2017</b>	<b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>
<b>May 31, 1862</b>	<b>Battle of Fair Oaks, Virginia</b>

# **THE BATTLE OF SHILOH**

AN EDITORIAL BY JAMES H. DUMKE

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## **PART TWO**

**The Battle of Shiloh ground to a halt as the Confederate soldiers withdrew from the field of struggle. The aftermath of battle brought with it the rise of controversy and the awful requirements of cleanup and dealing with the results of battle. In the latter circumstance it is fair to note that the army was unprepared for the level of violence and in particular the care for the wounded. The status of the armies as the fighting ended in Sunday evening was described by the writer Force in his analysis of the Battle of Shiloh:**

**THE vice of the formation of Johnston's army into three long, thin, parallel lines, together with the broken character of the ground and the variable obstinacy of resistance encountered, produced a complete and inextricable commingling of commands. General Beauregard left it to the discretion of the different commanders to select the place for bivouac for the night.**

**Colonel Pond, retiring from his disastrous repulse toward the close of the afternoon, found himself wholly separated by an interval of more than a quarter of a mile from the nearest support, the whole of the Confederate left having drifted from him toward the south-east. Assembling all his brigade, except the Crescent Regiment, which had become detached, and recalling his battery—Ketchum's—he remembered that the special duty had been assigned to him, by General Bragg, of guarding the flank along Owl Creek. When night fell, he moved to his rear and then to his left, and bivouacked in line facing the east, on the high land west of Brier Creek. Ketchum's battery was placed in a field a little back from the ravine. He posted pickets to his rear as well as to his front. The other two brigades of Ruggles' division spent the night to the east of Shiloh Church.**



**Jackson's brigade, of Withers' division, when it recoiled from its fatal attack on Hurlbut and the reserve artillery, went to pieces. Jackson with the battery marched to Shiloh Church and reported to General Beauregard. He saw nothing more of his brigade till he rejoined it at Corinth. Chalmers, abandoning his vain assault, was astounded to find that the army had fallen back, leaving him alone. He fell back to the field where Prentiss surrendered, and there rested. Of the remaining brigade, Gladden's, the merest fragment cohered; this little band, or detachment, bivouacked near the Hamburg road. Trabue's brigade, except one regiment which had become separated, spent the night in the tents of McDowell's brigade camp; Breckenridge's other two brigades were between Shiloh Church and the river.**

**Of General Polk's command, Clark's division, though partially scattered, rested, the greater portion of it, between Breckenridge and Shiloh Church. The other division, Cheatham's, which remained the freshest and least disordered command in Beauregard's army, moved off the field; and, accompanied by General Polk and one regiment of Clark's division, marched back to its camp of Saturday night.**

**Of Hardee's corps, so much of Cleburne's brigade as remained with him, slept in Prentiss' camp; Wood's brigade slept in McClernand's camp; Shaver's brigade was disintegrated and dissipated.**

**In the National army, what men were left of Prentiss' division were gathered about the landing and with Hurlbut. The regiments of W. H. L. Wallace that had escaped capture returned to their division camp. Hurlbut after dark moved his division out to the front of the reserve artillery. Being relieved by General Nelson, he formed his line with its left near the reserve artillery and the right near McClernand. McClernand's command bivouacked along the eastern face of the camp-ground of W. H. L. Wallace's division. Sherman's left joined McClernand; his right, Buckland's brigade, lay along the field at the south flank of McArthur's brigade camp, and along the east bank of the ravine of Brier Creek. Stuart's brigade, the Fortieth Illinois of McDowell's brigade, and the Forty-eighth Ohio of Buckland's brigade spent the night near the reserve artillery. (Force, pps. 160-62)**

**As the fighting resumed on Monday morning the National troops pushed the rebels back slowly. The rebels fought hard and gave ground reluctantly. Finally, Beauregard determined to withdraw from the field. As Beauregard noted it was apparent that Buell's army had come on the field and further offensive efforts were not likely to succeed. The orders to withdraw were sent to commanders around 2:00 p.m. and by 2:30 p.m. the withdrawal commenced.**

**. . . . Our troops were being forced to recede, but slowly, it was not, however, until we were satisfied that we now had to deal with at least three of Buell's divisions as well as with General Lew Wallace's, that I determined to yield the field in the face of so manifestly profitless combat.**

**By 1 o'clock General Bragg's forces on our left, necessarily weakened by the withdrawal of a part of his troops to reinforce our right and center, had become so seriously pressed that he called for aid. Some remnants of Louisiana, Alabama, and Tennessee regiments were gathered up and sent forward to support him as best they might, and I went with them personally. General Bragg, now taking the offensive, pressed his adversary back. This was about 2 P. M. My headquarters were still at Shiloh Church.**

**The odds of fresh troops alone were now too great to justify the prolongation of the conflict. So, directing Adjutant-General Jordon to select at once a proper position in our rear, and there establish a covering force including artillery, I dispatched my staff with directions to the several corps commanders to prepare to retreat from the field, first making a show, however, at different points of resuming the offensive. These orders were executed, I may say, with no small skill, and the Confederate army began to retire at 2:30 P. M. without apparently the least perception on the part of the enemy that such a movement was going on. There was no flurry, no haste shown by officers or men; the spirit of all was admirable. Stragglers dropped into line; the caissons of the batteries were loaded up with rifles; and when the last of our troops had passed to the rear of the covering force, from the elevated ground it occupied and which commanded a wide view, not a Federal regiment or even a detachment of cavalry was anywhere to be seen as early as 4 P. M. (Beauregard, p. 593)**

**O. Edward Cunningham also points to the debilitating situation in which the rebel army found itself by Monday afternoon. Casualties and the loss of command and control of the rebel troops, along with the infusion of fresh Union troops made it clear to Beauregard that a withdrawal was appropriate.**

**The condition of the Confederate rank and file was grim. Probably one-fifth of the men who had marched from Corinth were dead or wounded, and thousands more were scattered all over several thousand acres of shell and bullet scarred terrain. Even many officers were lost.” (Cunningham, p. 334)**

**Larry Daniel makes the same point when he wrote:**

**BY EARLY AFTERNOON, it had become obvious that Buell’s army was on the field. The Confederates had been caught off-guard by the sheer magnitude of the Northern assault. Mississippi private A. H. Mecklin “began to have doubts as to the issue [outcome] of this contest. I knew that the enemy were reinforced and stoutly.” By 2:00, the entire Southern line had been driven back south of the Purdy-Hamburg Road. (Daniel, p. 289)**

**As the Confederate armies withdrew from Pittsburg Landing and began the long arduous march back to Corinth, they were a demoralized lot. The contemporary view of the results of the Confederate campaign was that the battle was a drawn affair, but that the overall strategic goal of the campaign was an utter failure. One enduring legacy of the battle was that it was the first glimpse of the devastation and destruction that would follow during the war. More men were casualties at Shiloh than had been lost in all of America’s previous wars combined. The bloodletting was a shock in both the North and South!**

**The Confederate army had inflicted great losses in men and material on the enemy, but had failed to score a decisive victory, while Monday was tactically a drawn action. But if the Southern army achieved a tactical success, they suffered a major strategic defeat. The Union army was now united at Pittsburg, and the Confederacy could ill spare its losses on Shiloh field. Beauregard listed the official Confederate losses at 10,699, comprising, 1,728 dead, 8,012 wounded, and 959 missing or captured. Actually true Confederate losses were much higher, probably running close to twelve thousand. This discrepancy in casualties was caused by the usual poor Confederate**

**bookkeeping system and by the mortality rate of Confederate officers. In many cases accurate accounts of losses in individual Southern units were not made until weeks after Beauregard turned in his report.**

**Official Union casualty returns show that Grant's army lost 1,513 killed, 6,601 wounded and 2,330 missing or captured, the latter occurring mostly in W. H. L. Wallace's and Prentiss' divisions. Buell's losses were officially listed as 241 dead, 1,807 wounded and 55 missing or captured, for a total of 13,047 casualties for both Union armies. Again poor bookkeeping and murderous officer losses concealed the true picture. Later casualty figures of the individual batteries and regiments indicate that most units suffered ten to twenty per cent higher losses than originally reported. Buell's figures seem to be very nearly correct, the discrepancies occurring in Grant's battered commands. Actual Union losses probably ran around 14,500 casualties. It was the first great battle of the Civil War, and up to that time the mightiest struggle ever to take place in the Americas. (Cunningham, pps. 375-76)**

**As the rebels began withdrawing, General Bragg organized a rear guard to protect the troops as they filed onto the roads leading back to Corinth. Nathan Bedford Forrest commanded the cavalry that screened the withdrawal. The trek back to Corinth was fraught with desperation and struggle. Torrential rains and dropping temperatures left the retreating troops water-soaked and cold. A lack of blankets and tents resulted in the soldiers shivering on the march. Soldiers walked in mud knee deep. Wagons and artillery sank up to their axles. The Confederates began arriving in Corinth wet, cold, and hungry. Misery engulfed the troops, including and especially the wounded, as they were evacuated from Pittsburg Landing:**

**If Grant had pursued, the Confederates would have been in trouble for the march to Corinth quickly devolved into a nightmare. The roads were clogged as the retreating host wound out in a jerky line seven or eight miles long. The crude country roads were already in bad condition from the march to Shiloh, and the additional rain that fell Saturday and Sunday night made them nearly impassable. Soldiers often sank nearly to their knees in the mud; wagons and guns were engulfed up to their axles. Cursing and swearing, the hungry teamsters lashed their mules and horses, trying to move with their cargoes of supplies and wounded.**



**About 6:30 p.m. it started to rain, and soon the temperature began dropping. The rain turned into hail, and marble-sized balls lacerated and bruised the pitifully tired, animals and soldiers alike. Most of the wounded did not even have a blanket to protect them from the barrage in their open vehicles. Many of the unwounded were in almost as bad shape. The exertions of the battle and the privations of the last five days had materially weakened them. Each step was harder than the last, for many of the men had badly blistered feet inside soggy and cracked shoes.**

**Breckinridge halted his command at Mickey's to see what would turn up, while the rest of the Southern army tramped onward into Corinth, dumping out along the route three hundred wounded who had died. (Cunningham, p. 370)**

**The wounded that could be moved had been loaded into wagons and any other conveyance the army could gather. There were so many wounded that there were not enough wagons to move them all. Some were carried by other soldiers on stretchers. The other story is that many of the Confederate wounded could not be reached by their comrades or were too badly wounded to be moved. These poor men would be left behind to be cared for by the Union doctors on the field.**

**Only the worst shot-up Southerners were accorded a crude bed in the ambulances, country wagons, and carts. When these were all filled, some of the more mangled men were loaded on stretchers and carried the twenty-two miles by hand. Men with smashed eyes, deafened ears, and mangled arms trudged through the mud along with the weary but unwounded soldiers. Everything was in a state of turmoil. Each time a wagon hit a rut, the delirious wounded groaned and screamed in agony. (Cunningham, p. 370)**

**The situation for the wounded soldiers also highlighted another problem, the inability of the military medical units to deal with the massive casualties on the scale of the Battle of Shiloh. There were not nearly enough doctors, on either side, to deal with the horrendous number of wounded men who needed care. Both armies were short on supplies because no one had any reason to anticipate the bloodletting at levels seen at Shiloh. Cunningham describes the situation as it existed at Corinth:**

**As the first wounded reached the little Mississippi town, the whole place was converted into a gigantic hospital. Churches, homes,**

**schools, and every other conceivable structure was taken over for the mangled men, while hundreds had to be placed out on porches, sidewalks, and platforms at the railroad depot. There were not enough doctors and nurses to go around, and available medical supplies were inadequate to meet the demand. Soon the doctors were busy sawing off mangled and torn arms and legs, limbs hopelessly smashed by Minie balls or shell fragments. With their crude nineteenth century medical skill, surgeons could do little but amputate. Weakened by their ordeal, many of the soldiers could not stand the shock of amputation, and many expired within a few hours. Tetanus stalked through Corinth, while the faint sickening smell of gangrene was vividly detected on many of the Rebel soldiers.**

**And things were not much better at Pittsburg Landing:**

**'Twenty-two miles away the Union army faced a similar medical crisis. Only regimental units were available to care for their wounded, and these were quickly overtaxed by the sheer volume of the task. Even before the fighting ceased, volunteer nurses, male and female, labored with the wounded, applying temporary bandages. Ambulances carried hundreds to emergency tent hospitals or to the few permanent structures available, but on Tuesday the majority still lay where they had fallen, pitifully crying for succor.**

**The doctors struggled to deal with the crisis. The medical department was disorganized and highly inefficient. At this stage of the war surgeons were assigned to regiments. This reduced the ability of the various medical units to deal with large numbers of wounded. One regiment might have been seriously engaged and sustained significant casualties while a nearby regiment might not have suffered many injured soldiers at all. Thus one surgeon might be simply standing around while another surgeon was inundated with wounded troops. Surgeons in many cases were inexperienced and unprepared for the carnage resulting from a battle like the one at Shiloh. Supplies were also a problem. The Union army did not lack for supplies, but the medical units did not foresee the need to have large quantities of supplies on hand. In Cairo, Illinois, huge stacks of supplies existed, but after the fight at Pittsburg Landing it would take a couple of days to get them to the point of need. It was not all disaster, some individual surgeons did take on the task of organizing their units for efficient service and care for the wounded. One of General Buell's**

**physicians actually exerted strenuous efforts to organize medical care for his units.**

**One of Buell's surgeons, B. J. D. Irwin, worked medical miracles on the bloody battlefield. Working at least twenty hours a day, he constructed a modern field hospital composed of commandeered army tents capable of housing two thousand five hundred soldiers. The patients were segregated according to their ailments, while the medical staff was assigned specialized functions. Irwin organized a central administration to handle food, drugs, laundry, and admittance—a streamlined method of hospital administration far in advance of existing practices. (Cunningham, pps. 371-373)**

**Larry Daniel, in his tome on the battle, described the medical crisis that faced Union surgeons after the battle. The numbers were overwhelming. There was a serious lack of facilities to care for the wounded. There was a deficient supply of doctors to meet the need for treatment and care of the wounded.**

**Evacuating and caring for over 8,400 Federal wounded and 1,000 wounded Southern prisoners proved to be an enormous undertaking. The primary hospital was the small log cabin on the bluff (located approximately where the United States flag stands in the National Cemetery). A Dr. Stephens was placed in charge, with only one steward and two male nurses. On Monday evening, April 7, several additional surgeons arrived, but after applying bandages to two or three of the less seriously wounded, they departed. Stephens had to perform all operations by himself until Tuesday morning, when two more surgeons arrived.**

**Surgeon Robert Murray, Buell's medical director, arrived midday on April 7. He found nearly 6,000 wounded, with no bedding, no food or cooking utensils, and no table furniture. It proved impossible to obtain tents, and many of the wounded lay exposed to the rain on Sunday and Monday nights. There was hay for bedding aboard some of the transports, but the landing was so clogged that none could be obtained. Many of the regiments in Grant's army had lost all their medical supplies.**

**The *City of Memphis*, the only hospital boat with the army, transported two loads of wounded to Savannah, and on the third trip**

**continued on to Mound City, Illinois, with 700 patients. During the battle, 1,800 wounded were transported to Savannah: 1,000 placed in ventilated buildings, 200 in houses, and 600 in tents. Every house, church, and barn was filled to overflowing. Six additional boats were turned over to the medical department on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. These transports were filled to capacity and sent to St. Louis, Louisville, New Albany, and Cincinnati. Surgeon Murray bitterly complained that the boats sent by various governors refused to receive wounded from other states or Rebel wounded, “no matter how uncomfortable on shore. (Daniel, pps. 298-99)**

**To understand the impact of the lack of organized medical care one needs only read the letters and diaries of the wounded. The following is one description of the suffering of the individual soldiers injured during the fighting:**

**The wounded told stories of excruciating pain. William Swan of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Iowa was grazed in the head and shot in the arm and shoulder. He was taken aboard the commissary boat *Continental*, where “nearly every spot upon which a man could lie was occupied—on boxes, and under tables, the floor of the cabin was covered.” No surgeons attended the wounded, and from Sunday night to Wednesday morning the 1,200 patients had no water—“hundreds begged for water,” wrote Swann[sic]. Erhard Dittman of the 45<sup>th</sup> Illinois, shot in the thigh and with a broken leg, was taken aboard the *City of Memphis*. “My suffering was indescribable. My leg burned as if a fire were kindled under it,” he wrote his parents. (Daniel, p. 299)**

**Words are hardly adequate to describe the circumstances on the battlefield after the rebels retreated. It is easy to focus on the fighting and overlook the aftermath of battle for historians. However, after a fight there were the awful repercussions from the fighting. Shiloh was such an example. Cunningham describes this situation graphically:**

**ON TUESDAY MORNING THE area around Shiloh looked as though a series of massive cyclones had swept over it. There were wrecked wagons, caissons, and field pieces strewn everywhere, while the vile odor of decaying flesh of thousands of horses and men poisoned the atmosphere. Young trees lay sprawled awkwardly on the ground, shot down by cannon balls or sawed through by repeated**



**impact of slugs. Canteens, bayonets, broken rifles, harnesses, bits of clothing, and a thousand other articles of military material littered the landscape.**

**Here and there Union stretcher bearers picked up wounded Federals and Confederates, some weakened by two nights of exposure on the battlefield. It would be Friday or perhaps even Saturday before the last battered body, still retaining a tiny spark of life, would be removed and carried to a field hospital.**

**Burial details were quickly assembled to dispose of all the corrupted flesh as a sanitary measure. The dead horses were piled in huge mounds, doused with kerosene, and ignited. The burning smell of animal flesh spread over much of the Federal camp area, much to the soldiers' distaste. Working with picks and shovels, the Federals soon cleared out burial pits roughly forty feet long by six feet wide and three feet in depth. The dead were disposed of in these shallow cavities.**

**Most of the Confederates were buried in as many as nine even larger pits, 721 bodies being planted in the last and deepest of these. Soldiers hitched ropes to the feet or hands and arms of the Rebel bodies and dragged them down to the waiting holes, where they were quickly pushed in. When the burial pits were full, Union soldiers walked along the edges, kicking and stomping at the jutting arms and legs, making them fit inside properly. Then the shovels were used to cover the holes with thin layers of Tennessee soil. It was a brutal, sickening job for the most callous of men. By Thursday after the battle, all but a few stray bodies lay beneath the sod. (Cunningham, pps. 379-80)**

**The disposal of the bodies were in personable and under the traditions of that Victorian age contrary to all social custom.**

**There were so many stories of tragedy on the bloody field, but one strikes modern readers as especially poignant. It is a love story between William and Ann Wallace. The Wallaces were deeply in love and the periods of separation required by General William H. L. Wallace's duties were difficult for both of them. Ann Wallace had boarded a troop carrier bound for Pittsburg Landing to visit her husband shortly before the battle began. She arrived during the height of the fighting. On Sunday, as Wallace's division was being withdrawn from its position at the Hornet's**

**Nest, Wallace sustained a serious head wound and was presumed dead by his staff officers and men.**

**Mrs. Wallace soon reached Savannah to find her husband in a cot in the Cherry House. Ann spoke to her unconscious spouse, who promptly awoke and clasped her hand. The chances for his survival were not good, but he seemed to rally and his pulse was strong and healthy. Such was his condition on Tuesday and Wednesday that Ann and the rest of the family thought he might live. But on Thursday, he became feverish and his pulse began to drop. Wallace was frequently conscious, and was able to carry on short conversations, but he seemed to realize that he could not survive. He touched his wife and said, "We meet in heaven." Soon his pulse dropped. He slipped into unconsciousness and passed away later in the day, apparently without any pain." (Cunningham, p. 373)**

**The story of the finding of the General still alive and what followed can best be told by his wife, Ann, in a letter written some time after the battle to her Aunt, Mrs. Templeton:**

**The lower deck of our boat and that of others was used to ferry reinforcements over. Over and back, over and back we moved. I was earnestly watching these scenes, more hopeful than most around me. Elder Button came up the steps with a worn, depressed look, for he had been partially disabled by a spent ball while caring for the wounded in the field. I felt sorry for him, knowing he had looked on so many loved faces that day for the last time and that he was suffering somewhat from his injuries.**

**Looking still more depressed, he came near me and a little behind me and said, "This is an awful battle." O replied, "Yes, but these fresh troops will yet win the day." He said, "You have a great many relations on this field, you cannot hope to see them all come in safe." I answered, "They all came safely through Donelson, and to-day my husband is in command of a division and is comparatively safe." He repeated from behind my shoulder, "It is an awful battle." My heart was touched by his depressed tones, but I thought his exhausting day's work had caused them. I turned to console him and raising my eyes to the face of Hartley, who sat in front of me, and whose countenance reflected horror as he gazed full in the face of Elder**

**Button, the dead truth fell on my heart like a thunderbolt, like the cold hand of steel.**

**Words needed not tell it; 'twas before me! I was stunned, chilled, almost paralyzed. Suffering came hours afterwards. Very soon brother Cyrus [Dickey] came to me, self-charged with the duty of telling me my life had been darkened. He was spared the task; his work was already done. He gave me some of the details. Will's division was falling back under orders and in order, he leading them. They had been outflanked by the enemy and at the time were under a heavy cross-fire of rebel musketry. Cyrus had just directed Will's attention to some move of the enemy and he raised in his stirrups apparently to see better; but a shot had reached him, and the next moment he fell upon his face on the ground. He was in full view of the whole division at the time, and from that time confusion reigned. Their hopes of success were gone; Cyrus and an orderly, (one who loved Will) carried him—whom they supposed dead—over a quarter of a mile. They had passed by their own lines and the enemy was madly upon them. To remain was to court death, and with no hope off finally saving their precious charge, they laid him tenderly beside some ammunition to shield him from the tramping feet, and tearfully left him, narrowly escaping with their own lives.**

**My husband was dead, and the enemy had possession of the ground where he lay. 'Twas all they could tell me, and it was enough.**

**In a few minutes Cyrus left me to go to Colonel Ransom of the Eleventh [Wallace's first command—the 11<sup>th</sup> Illinois Volunteer Infantry], who lay wounded on the steamer nearby, and he was by mistake carried down to Savannah. So I was quite alone that fearful night. God gave me strength and I spent much of the night in bathing the fevered brows and limbs of the sufferers around me. Action was a relief to me, and it was slight help to aid men who were suffering in the cause for which Will had given his life.**

**On Monday morning about ten o'clock, as I was sitting beside a wounded man just brought in, Cyrus came to me with the word that Will had been brought in (after the rebels were put to flight) and Oh! Joy, he was breathing. I flew to the adjoining boat, where he was. There on a narrow mattress on the floor in the middle of the cabin he lay mortally wounded. His face was flushed, but he was breathing**

**naturally, so like himself, save for that fearful wound in his temple. A ball had passed through his head in a manner that made it marvelous that he could still live. But the greatest joy was yet to come—Will recognized my voice at once and clasped my hand. I was thrilled and exclaimed, “he knows me; he knows me!” Others said that could not be, but Will’s lips moved and with difficulty uttered “Yes.” Words fail to tell how sweet it was. I believed my husband dead; and he is alive and knows me; Father I thank Thee! I could appreciate all the feelings of Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus.**

**The boat was now taken to Savannah, and we were permitted to place him in a large room at Post Headquarters. Brothers Cyrus Dickey, Martin Wallace, Hitt Wallace and several of Will’s staff were there, and all was done that ready hands and loving hearts could do. He seemed so happy and satisfied to have me near him, but lay in calm self-control even in death, conscious that his moments of life were continued only by his rest. Hope with us grew brighter until after periodical delirium, caused by excessive inflammation, passed away and his pulse began to fail; we knew his moments with us were few. My darling knew he was going and pressed my hand long and fondly to his heart. Then he waved me away and said, “We meet in Heaven.” They were the last words upon those loved lips, and he faded away gently and peacefully and hopefully.**

**My father snatched a moment to come to my side Thursday evening as he was breathing his last. I had now lost him in very deed, but the blow was not so heavy as when I first heard he was killed in the battlefield. Those last days had been so cherished, so unexpected, I raised my heart in grateful thanks for this, and also that the dearest friends of both were with him at his death. God had led me there, so that I should not meet the great sorrow alone. He had permitted me to soothe the last hours of my husband and had given him appreciated knowledge of the fact. (Wallace, pps. 197-200)**

**The battle at Pittsburg Landing, known almost exclusively as the Battle of Shiloh, came as shock to the country. The massive scale of the fighting and the costs of the battle in lives lost and ruined stunned the nation. In the South citizens were not only shocked by the cost of the fighting, but were deeply depressed by the final outcome. The final tally or, as it was referred to during the War of the Rebellion, the butchers’ bill for the battle indicated the violence and interests of the combatants. While**



**Cunningham describes the battle on Monday as a drawn affair, it really wasn't. Grant's fresh troops and the reformed units of the National army drove the rebels before them. Although the enemy resisted gallantly early on, they really were unable to affect a serious effort to turn the tide of battle. But Cunningham does offer a good summary of the impact of the fighting.**

**The Confederate army had inflicted great losses in men and material on the enemy, but had failed to score a decisive victory, while Monday was tactically a drawn action. But if the Southern army achieved a tactical success, they suffered a major strategic defeat. The Union army was now united at Pittsburg, and the Confederacy could ill spare its losses on Shiloh field. Beauregard listed the official Confederate losses at 10,699, comprising, 1,728 dead, 8,012 wounded, and 959 missing or captured. Actually true Confederate losses were much higher, probably running close to twelve thousand. This discrepancy in casualties was caused by the usual poor Confederate bookkeeping system and by the mortality rate of Confederate officers. In many cases accurate accounts of losses in individual Southern units were not made until weeks after Beauregard turned in his report.**

**Official Union casualty returns show that Grant's army lost 1,513 killed, 6,601 wounded and 2,330 missing or captured, the latter occurring mostly in W. H. L. Wallace's and Prentiss' divisions. Buell's losses were officially listed as 241 dead, 1,807 wounded and 55 missing or captured, for a total of 13,047 casualties for both Union armies. Again poor bookkeeping and murderous officer losses concealed the true picture. Later casualty figures of the individual batteries and regiments indicate that most units suffered ten to twenty per cent higher losses than originally reported. Buell's figures seem to be very nearly correct, the discrepancies occurring in Grant's battered commands. Actual Union losses probably ran around 14,500 casualties. It was the first great battle of the Civil War, and up to that time the mightiest struggle ever to take place in the Americas. (Cunningham, pps. 375-76)**

**As with every battle, during the War of the Rebellion controversy followed each battle. Historians are intrigued by the "what ifs". In the following section of this article three of these controversies will be analyzed, but each reader should determine for himself or herself their own conclusions.**

**The first controversy surrounded the determination by General Beauregard to halt the attack on the Union forces on Sunday night, the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, 1862. Beauregard at around 6:00 p.m. issued an order to withdraw the Confederate troops and halt the attack that had been ongoing for 12 hours. Contrarians argued that the attack had been successful and had it been pressed the rebels could have “watered their horses in the Tennessee River” that night. Beauregard, in an article on the battle written long after the war, described his decision on Sunday night:**

**Comprehending the situation as it was, at six P. M. I dispatched staff officers with orders to cease hostilities, withdraw the troops from under fire of the Federal gun-boats, and to sleep on their arms. However, before the order was received many of the regiments had already been withdrawn out of action, and really the attack had practically ceased at every point.**

**My headquarters for the night were established at the Shiloh Meeting House, in the tent that General Sherman had occupied. There several of the corps and division commanders called for orders, and all evinced and expressed much satisfaction with the results, while no one was heard to express or suggest that more might have been achieved had the battle been prolonged. All seemed to believe that our troops had accomplished as much as could have been hoped for. (Beauregard, p. 591)**

**The facts seem to support the decision reached by General Beauregard. First, the Union troops had pulled back into a more compact defensive line without the various gaps in their line that had occurred during the day’s fighting. Those gaps had resulted in repeated flanking movements by the rebel troops that broke the Union positions. This also resulted in a more effective level of fire by Union soldiers. Secondly, a strong artillery line had been created, again resulting in much more effective fire into the oncoming rebel forces. Thirdly, General Grant’s newly formed lines were also under an umbrella of the heavy guns of the Union fleet on the banks of the Tennessee River. Some have argued that these guns were less than effective, most shots sailing over the Confederate positions, but at the very least the fire from the fleet was extremely demoralizing for the rebel troops. Fourthly, reinforcements were pouring into Pittsburg Landing. General Lew Wallace was finally arriving with his division on the right of the Union line. On the Union left, General Buell’s troops were moving into position providing fresh men and filling out the defensive lines.**

**All these factors were changing the balance of power on the battlefield. The stabilization of the Federal lines, the increased firepower resulting from a more compact line of troops, and the increasing number of fresh troops made continued success by rebel forces an unlikely possibility as night fell over the battlefield. Night attacks were also avoided during the Civil War because of confusion and problems with coordination during such enterprises.**

**The Confederates also faced two other problems. The rebel troops were spread out and intermingled from the days fighting. Commands were separated from their regiments, brigades, and corps. Even regiments had found themselves confused and lost on the field. Individual soldiers were scavenging the Union camps looking for food and any other items that struck their fancy. With the advent of nightfall the process of reorganizing these units was nearly impossible, although some efforts were made to accomplish this goal.**

**The other problem was that the rebel army had sustained tremendous losses during the day's fighting. And while Grant had reinforcements arriving to make up for the large numbers of killed and wounded, there were no new men to fill the depleted rebel ranks. Again Grant had fresh troops coming on the field, the survivors of the rebel soldiers were fought out, tired and hungry. A further, but significant, part of the problem of losses was the incapacitation or death of so many officers in the Confederate army. From the commanding general down to company commanders the rebel troops lost many of their leaders which seriously deranged their command structure. Who would lead the men if the fighting had continued on Sunday? The loss of officers would also impact the efforts to reorganize the army and its cohesion come Monday's fighting.**

**It seems clear that the decision by Beauregard to halt the Sunday attacks and to try and reform his army was likely a wise one under all the circumstances. While it is clear that Grant was able to use the respite in the fighting to his advantage, the rebels had reached the limits of their offensive thrust by the time Beauregard issued his order for the rebels to fall back and regroup. It seems fair to acknowledge that had Beauregard persevered in the attacks all he would have likely accomplished would have been increasing the casualties on both sides without succeeding in defeating and capturing the Union army. Cunningham certainly would agree with the view that breaking off the attack Sunday evening was a wise decision.**

**It was now after 6:00 and the sun was slipping perilously low along the horizon. From his headquarters in the rear, General Beauregard sent his staff officers to the various corps commanders with instructions to break off operations and withdraw to the captured enemy camps for the night. He did not know that reinforcements were already reaching Grant's army, and assumed the Confederate army would be able to resume the action on Monday morning, still facing the same men beaten on Sunday. Since a night action was dangerous, and assuming that the enemy was completely beaten, Beauregard issued this order, thereby laying the ground work for one of the bitterest controversies of the Battle of Shiloh, and indeed of the Civil War.**

**For a century, critics have maintained that the Creole forfeited a magnificent chance opportunity to completely destroy Grant's army—one more assault and the Federals would have been driven into the river and captured. Such an opinion completely ignores the existing situation on the Shiloh battlefield on late Sunday evening, April 6, 1862. It was nearly 5:30 p.m. before General Prentiss and his troops, as well as General Wallace and his men, were finally rounded up after falling back from the Hornet's Nest. (Cunningham, pps. 323-24)**

**A further controversy arising from the Battle of Shiloh was whether or not Grant and Sherman were surprised when the rebels launched their attack on Sunday morning. Both Grant and Sherman essentially said they were not surprised by the Confederate attack. The author O. Edward Cunningham points out that both Grant and Sherman had been receiving reports from their subordinates that there was an increasing buildup of rebel troops near the encampment at Pittsburg Landing. That was true, there was constant skirmishing between pickets and troops advanced to conduct reconnaissance. But it seems that Sherman, at least, misread the information. One can see that in the dispatches sent to General Grant by Sherman. He clearly did not anticipate that the rebels would take the offensive or attack the Union forces at the Landing.**

**All is quiet along my line now. We are in the act of exchanging cavalry, according to your orders. The enemy has cavalry in our front, and I think there are two regiments of infantry and one battery of artillery about six miles out. I will send you in ten prisoners of war and a report of last night's affair, in a few minutes.**

**Grant seemed to apprehend the possibility of an attack based on all the reports coming in to headquarters from company and regimental commanders. Grant inquired once more what might be occurring on Sherman's front.**

**Your note is just received. I have no doubt that nothing will occur to-day, more than some picket firing. The enemy is saucy, but got the worst of it yesterday, and will not press our pickets far. I will not be drawn out far, unless with certainty of advantage; and *I do not apprehend anything like an attack upon our position.* [Emphasis added—Ed.] (Force, p. 119)**

**A corollary of the issue of surprise was the failure of the Union army to entrench or take other defensive actions. Cunningham and Daniel both point to the fact that Grant thought it more important for the army to work on drill and the school of the soldier then to spend time digging in. Especially, since there was no inclination to believe an attack might be imminent. Certainly, later in the war experience would have made defensive works a mandatory effort, but at Shiloh it may not have been the serious concern one would find with further experience.**

**It seems clear that the Sunday morning assault was unexpected, despite what Grant and Sherman may have said after the battle. Clearly in some camps the soldiers were unprepared. But other groups were in the process of shaking out lines of battle. Some notice of a problem reached the advanced camps as the level of firing between pickets and the reconnaissance by the Twenty-fifth Missouri ran into the rebel advance. The rising level of gunfire convinced some officers that something unusual was occurring. Still, the National troops were shocked by the impact of the initial assault and although some units offered obstinate resistance, the Union troops were pressed and fell back to regroup.**

**The final controversy arose over the failure of General Grant to pursue the defeated rebels. In hindsight it is possible to discern the desperate condition of the Confederates as they marched away from Pittsburg Landing. And certainly the infusion of fresh troops would have given Grant a considerable advantage had he overtaken the rebel army in retreat. The author Cunningham frames the question as well as any for the purpose of this discussion:**

**There was no pursuit. Why did Grant remain quietly on the battlefield instead of leading his men after the battered Confederates?**



**His actions have never adequately been explained. In his *Memoirs*, Grant claimed that he did not have the “heart to order the men who had fought desperately for two days” to pursue, and that he did not order Buell to, since they were so nearly the same in seniority.**

**Grant’s argument remains a little shaky. As an old regular army officer, Grant knew full well that his few weeks army did give him command on the field. This was standard army procedure, and Buell, as another army officer, knew it also, Buell maintained that Grant and his army did not want to pursue, and that he did not want to make such an effort on his own authority. (Cunningham, p. 368)**

**General Sherman offered the following analysis of the issue of pursuit of the retreating rebels:**

**Certainly, the ultimate responsibility rested on Grant. Perhaps Sherman summed the matter up best in a conversation some years later after the war. When asked why Beauregard was not pursued, he replied, “I assure you, my dear fellow, we had had quite enough of their society for two whole days, and were only too glad to be rid of them on any terms.” (Cunningham, p. 368)**

**There are some factors which mitigate Grant’s failure to pursue the rebels. The first, and most obvious, was that Grant’s army and units of Buell’s troops had fought themselves out. They were physically exhausted after the savage combat of two days duration. (Or in Buell’s case the march to the field and the fighting on Monday) It is impossible to gage the impact of terror, struggle, and physical effort expended by the Union troops. Simply put, Grant’s troops were worn out! Certainly the same physical conditions existed among the rebel troops, except they were hungrier and more worn out. But they were marching towards their supply lines while Grant was marching away from his lines of communication. And like the rebels, Grant’s army was dispersed and intermingled. It would have taken some time to reorganize his troops and set them on the roads after their enemy. Finally, the losses of officers during the battle would also have required time to sort out and overcome.**

**The second factor was supplies for the men. The initial camps had been ransacked by the rebels. Ammunition had been used up or soaked with rain making it unreliable. Food was in short supply, although boats were beginning to arrive with much needed supplies. However, those**

**supplies would have had to be off-loaded and distributed to the soldiers. It would have been asking a great deal to march tired, hungry men out to rejoin a battle with the rebels.**

**The third factor was terrain. As noted above when discussing the rebel advance, there were only two roads appropriate for use by large bodies of troops, and they were not very good roads. Not only were the roads deplorable, but the surrounding terrain had been soaked with rain so that troops who were moved from the roads quickly became mired in muck and mud up to their knees. It would have been virtually impossible to shake out lines of battle to attack the rebels once Grant had overtaken them.**

**The final factor was the weather. Rain came with hail and colder temperatures by around 6:00 p.m. Monday evening. This made the retreat very difficult for the rebels as noted above. It would have been equally debilitating for the Union troops. All in all, many factors militated against pursuit if Beauregard's troops. And I am sure the troops probably felt much like Sherman about parting company with the Confederate soldiers!**

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## **POWERFUL, EMOTIONAL, INTENSE: LINCOLN'S VISIT TO THE WAR WOUNDED**

BY NOAH ANDRE TRUDEAU

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*Abraham Lincoln did not live to see the establishment of a special day each year to remember and honor the sacrifice of the soldiers and sailors who as President Lincoln so eloquently said “they gave their last full measure of devotion” to preserve the Union, democracy, and freedom. It seems safe to say that Mr. Lincoln would have heartily approved of the idea. There was a close bond between the commander-in-chief and the men who served in his armies and navy. These men called the President “Father Abraham” or “Uncle Abe”.*

*As we prepare to participate in the annual MEMORIAL DAY events this year let us remember the caring spirit of Lincoln in our hearts, the Lincoln we see in the article below, and not simply go through the motions as we commemorate the sacrifice of all our veterans.*

**Father Abraham spent hours comforting the wounded of both sides near the war's end.**

**One of the most profoundly symbolic and emotionally intense moments of Abraham Lincoln's presidency occurred at midday on April 8, 1865, near City Point, Va. In a move unequalled in American history, Abraham Lincoln undertook to honor the war's wounded.**

**Lincoln knew that his stay at the Army of the Potomac's supply base, which had begun on March 24, would have to end soon. He had hoped to hear from General Ulysses S. Grant that the Army of Northern Virginia had been**

**defeated during his visit, but much as he wanted to linger at City Point until that happened, he could no longer justify remaining absent from the Oval Office. Before he left, however, there was one important duty he wanted to perform. The president had spoken during his second inaugural address of the importance of caring “for him who shall have borne the battle.” In December 1863, he had written of the honor due the citizen who “cares for his brother in the field, and serves, as he best can, the same cause.” On April 8, Lincoln was determined to turn his own words into deeds—on a grand scale.**



**Newspaper drawing depicting Lincoln’s visit to the Depot Field Hospital near City Point, Va. (Courtesy New York State Library)**

**Wounded troops were not unfamiliar with the president, whose lanky form had often been seen in hospital wards around the Northern capital. Now he was determined to visit one of the largest hospitals in the United States and personally greet every wounded soldier—at least 5,000 men, perhaps as many as 6,000. A chapter of history was nearing its end, and before he turned to the challenges of a postwar American nation he needed to meet with the men whose sacrifices had bought that victory. He had been waiting to do so for some time, and now the time had come.**

**Lincoln made his intentions known during his morning visit to the telegraph office, and word was passed to the medical director of the 200-acre Depot Field Hospital. Carriages were waiting when a little after midday, the president and his wife, plus Mary’s entourage, clambered aboard. Their route eased along the riverbank, crossing a special spur added to the military railroad to facilitate transporting wounded troops. Lincoln and his party could see a wooden boundary fence and, behind it, row after row of temporary buildings and tents.**

**Dr. George B. Parker, the surgeon in charge, met the procession and started steering the president toward one of the kitchens when Lincoln objected, saying he had come to visit the troops. Then several of Parker’s assistants started explaining how the place functioned, annoying Lincoln even more.**

**“Gentlemen, you know better than I how to conduct these hospitals,” he exclaimed, “but I came here to take by the hand the men who have achieved our glorious victories.” When someone mentioned the large number of patients involved, Lincoln said that he “guessed he was equal to the task; at any rate he would try, and go as far as he could.” Parker promptly conducted the Lincolns and their group into the nearest ward, operated by the II Corps.**

**It would appear the party traveling with the president remained with him to varying degrees. Mrs. Lincoln appears to have dropped out early, prompting a disdainful observation from a regular nurse: “One lady in rich garb sauntered through our worn walks, leaning on the arm of a Congressman, noting what we lacked in our appointments. My bed-tick dress made a sorry contrast to her costly-attired figure, but I looked at my hands, which were not afraid to touch the dirty blouse of a wounded soldier, and wondered if her jeweled fingers would shrink from the contact.” The Marquis de Chambrun stayed the course, but not always alongside Lincoln. Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner seems to have remained nearby the whole time. (There’s no mention of Tad Lincoln, who may have remained aboard the vessel River Queen, which had brought the Lincolns to City Point.)**

**By the time the president entered the II Corps compound, all the ambulatory patients had been lined up outside their tents to receive him. Sometimes it was a straight line, sometimes circular. Lincoln alternated between greeting those in line and ducking inside the tents to meet those who couldn’t stand. He was often preceded by a corps surgeon who announced, “Attention: the President of the United States!”**

**The II Corps had taken part in the actions against the White Oak Road and participated in the April 2 breakthrough of Confederate lines, suffering some 917 casualties, of which 628 were wounded. “Weather clear and pleasant,” wrote a II Corps Pennsylvanian. “Old Abe passed through on a shake hands with all the patients.” One New Yorker added that “Uncle Abe gave us each a word of cheer.” For many of those standing outside the tents, the president’s words were a simple “How do you do.” Some of those unable to stand heard him say, “I hope you will soon be able to go to your friends.” A Vermont man serving as a sharpshooter recalled that they were told we could uncover our wounds, but must not speak to him. I threw the blankets off so he could see that my right leg was gone, above the knee, and when he reached my bed he said: ‘What, a leg gone?’ I said: ‘Yes.’ He stopped at the head of my bed and looked at the card, saying, ‘and a Vermonter.’ I said: ‘Yes, sir, I pride myself on being a Green Mountain boy. I was born within seven miles of Mount Mansfield, the highest peak of the Green Mountain range.’ He then took my hand in both of his. I asked him:**



**‘Well, Father Abraham, have we done our work well.’**

**He said: ‘Very well, indeed, and I thank you.’**

**I never shall forget the pressure he gave my hand, nor can I forget that sad, careworn face.**

**Recollecting that day 50 years later, the soldier wrote: “I often see that sad and worn face in memory, and I can hardly keep back the tears.”**

**Also witness to Lincoln’s visit were members of the Depot Field Hospital support staff, both army and civilian. An aide known to the readers of a hospital newspaper only as “Frank” said the president “passed around and cordially shook hands with nearly all the boys. It pleased them greatly. He had, as ever, kind words for all, and now and then found utterance in some jokes, for which he is so well known, and thereby would arise the sounds of mirthful laughter.”**

**“He had the manner of a gentleman—I may say of a gentle gentleman;” added an agent for the U.S. Christian Commission, “his voice as we heard it was subdued and kindly; his eyes were mild but all-observing; and his face that he once himself described as ‘poor, lean and lank,’ was a strong face marked with lines of a mingled gentleness and sadness that redeemed it from being homely. The close grasp of his hand attested the sympathetic great heartedness of the great man.”**



**This lithograph provides an overview of the 200-acre Depot Field Hospital. (Courtesy of National Park Service, Petersburg National Battlefield, “Depot Field Hospital, Army of the Potomac, Near City Point, VA Krebs & Bro. Lith. Pittsburgh, PA, Sketched by F. J. Chasseur,” PETE 2121.)**

**Many of those in the V Corps wards had fought at Quaker Road, White Oak Road and Five Forks, where the totals for killed and wounded exceeded 2,800. A soldier with a shoulder wound remembered the Lincoln mantra, “Be of good cheer, boys; we are at the beginning of the end at last.” To**

another he said that "the war will soon be over and then we'll all go home." In one tent the president encountered 12 officers of the Maryland Brigade, 2nd Division. With them was a Confederate major who had fallen at the same time as the Union men. According to one of the Marylanders, Lincoln "gave this officer a hearty grasp of the hand and inquired what State he was from and where he resided before entering the Army....He then...wished him a speedy and hasty recovery from his wounds and [told him] that in a few days the war would be over and he would be able to see his dear ones at home." After Lincoln left, the dazed Rebel asked who the man was who had spoken to him and was stunned by the answer. "My God, is that so?" he exclaimed. "Is that the kind of a man that we have been fighting for four long years?"

There was an even more distinguished Confederate officer in the V Corps wards, Colonel Harry L. Benbow, who had been captured at Five Forks. Benbow later recalled that the president walked down the long aisle between the rows of cots on each hand, bowing and smiling....Arriving at length opposite where I lay, he halted beside my bed and held out his hand. Looking him in the face, as he stood with extended hand: Mr. President, I said, do you know to whom you offer your hand?

'I do not,' he replied.

Well, I said, you offer it to a Confederate colonel, who has fought you as hard as he could for four years.

'Well,' said he, 'I hope a Confederate colonel will not refuse me his hand.'

No, sir, I replied, I will not, and I clasped his hand in both mine.

I tell you, sir, he had the most magnificent face and eye that I have ever gazed into. He had me whipped from the time he first opened his mouth.

Dr. George Mendenhall was not present when Lincoln visited the Depot Field Hospital, arriving just minutes after he departed. "It was like the visit of a father to his children and was appreciated in the same kindly spirit by the soldiers," he wrote. "They loved to talk of his kindness and unaffected manner & to dwell upon the various incidents of this visit as a green spot in the soldier's hard life." From Surgeon Parker, in charge of the facility, he learned that at "one point in his visit he observed an axe which he picked up & examined & made some pleasant remark that he was once considered to be a good chopper. He was invited to try his hand upon a log of wood lying near from which he made the chips fly in primitive style." According to another doctor, Lincoln was "swinging the ax around in a powerful manner, which I would hardly have expected in a man of his sedentary habits."

**Those hospitalized from the IX Corps had seen hard fighting at Fort Stedman and in the April 2 attacks along the Jerusalem Plank Road, which had resulted in over 2,500 killed and wounded. One Pennsylvanian who had been hit on March 25 remembered when “Abraham Lincoln came along, took off his hat, grasped him by the hand, asking if there was anything he could do or any word he could send for him to the folks back home.” Massachusetts officer Cyrus T. Goodwin would write home that the president “looks very thin and as though he has not much rest. [H]e must have had a good deal on his mind the last four years and it would broke many a tougher looking man than what he is. He had a kind word for us all[.] The Dr told me he said the war would be over in six weeks [but] we can tell better about that when the times comes around.” Lincoln was a bit more definite speaking with a New York colonel, telling him to “cheer up, and get well...for this dreadful war is coming to a close.” Another man whose hand he shook was Sergeant John H. Strickler, struck down on April 2, who afterward said that he felt he was “in part...recompensed for the wound.” A young medical aide trailing the president through the wards was deeply impressed by his “genuine interest in the welfare of the soldiers.”**

**Two of the IX Corps boys seen by the president were struggling to survive—a fight that would claim the life of one. Pennsylvania Lieutenant Levi R. Robb had been terribly wounded on April 2. A less severely injured soldier lying next to him recalled the moment when the president stopped by: “Suddenly his eyes opened wide and his face lit up with a happy expression of recognition as he spoke in a clear but feeble voice, ‘The President.’...When he reached Lieutenant Robb’s cot he grasped his feebly extended hand as he cheerily said, ‘God bless you.’ Slowly and deliberately came the reply, ‘He has, Mr. President, and may it be your happy portion, too.’ The President paused just a moment; as he looked with compassion into the wan face of the wounded officer, and said, ‘It is, but cheer up, my boy, we’ll meet again,’ and then passed on to cheer others.” Robb died on April 9.**

**One of the others was Captain Charles H. Houghton, who had been wounded three times during the Fort Stedman fighting, after which he lost part of his left leg. Another wounded officer lying next to Houghton recorded how Lincoln paused at the captain’s cot, bent over and gently kissed him on the cheek. Then in voice so tender and so low that only my near proximity enabled me to hear, he began to talk to him, telling him how he had heard from Dr. McDonald all the story of his bravery in battle, his heroic fight for life and quiet cheerfulness in hospital.**

**...Poor Houghton could only reply with faint smiles and whispers that were too low to reach my ears, but Mr. Lincoln heard, and a smile came to his grave face. Turning to the surgeon the President asked to be shown the major’s wounds, especially the amputated limb. Dr. McDonald tried to dissuade him by saying the sight...would be too shocking. But the President**

**insisted, turned down the light coverings, and took a hasty look. Straightening up, with a deep groan of pain, and throwing up both his long arms, he cried out, ‘Oh, this awful, awful war!’ Then bending again to Houghton with the tears cutting wide furrows down his dust-stained cheeks, and with great sobs shaking him, he exclaimed, ‘Poor boy! Poor boy! You must live! You must!’ This time...[his] whispered answer, ‘I intend to, sir,’ was just audible.”**

**Captain Houghton survived his wounds.**

**The final ward contained soldiers from the VI Corps, whose breakthrough on April 2 had cost them 958 wounded or missing. When the president stopped at the bed of amputee patient C. Hull Grant of the 43rd New York, Grant reminded him that he had previously greeted the then president-elect in 1861, during a stop in Albany en route to Washington. As Grant’s friends like to tell it, “On the first occasion he shook hands with his own good right hand, but on the second occasion he was obliged to use his left, for the other was on the field.”**



**Lincoln’s rail car sit in the foreground of this wartime view of City Point, Va. (Library of Congress)**

**A Vermont soldier recalled years afterward that Lincoln’s “tall form and loving face bent over every one of us. Not one did he pass by. And to every one he had some word of good cheer tenderly spoken, while his homely face became absolutely beautiful as it beamed with love and sympathy. He would say to each, ‘God bless you, my boy! Keep up a good heart. You’ll come through all right. We’ll never forget you!’”**

**Ah, I tell you, boys, we felt like reaching up our weak arms to clasp his neck yes, even to press our lips to his rough cheek. We all felt impatient to get well as fast as possible that we might fight as never before for our President, the great heart who came to cheer and love us while we lay disabled from our wounds.”**

**One soldier who had a more comprehensive view of the proceedings was Private Wilbur Fisk, a hospital guard. “Everything passed off in a very quiet manner,” he wrote the next day, “there was no crowding or disorder of any kind....Mr. Lincoln presides over millions of people, and each individual share of his attention must necessarily be very small, and yet he wouldn’t slight the humblest of them all.”**

**It was late afternoon by the time the president finished greeting the wounded warriors, each of whom, as he said, “bravely bears his country’s cause.” Senator Sumner remarked, “Mr. President, you have taken the hand of some thousands of men to-day: you must be very tired.” When he afterward recalled that day while speaking to Secretary of State William Seward, the president described it as having ‘worked as hard at it as sawing wood.’ Only when he returned to the privacy of his stateroom on River Queen did Elizabeth Keckly hear him admit to Mary Lincoln: “Mother, I have shaken so many hands to-day that my arms ache tonight. I almost wish that I could go to bed now.”**

**In an age when people were as apt to bow as clasp hands when they met, Lincoln’s hand-shakings were an integral part of the man. His actions at the hospital were not perfunctory, but rather an expression of sympathy and honor from the heart to men who had sacrificed so much. In taking their hands, Lincoln was affirming for each Union soldier the righteousness of their cause. And for the Southerners he encountered, the president’s firm grip said clearly, “Welcome back to the Union.”**

***Noah Andre Trudeau is the author of numerous award-winning books on the war, including Bloody Roads South and Like Men of War. This article is adapted from his latest, Lincoln’s Greatest Journey: Sixteen Days That Changed a Presidency, March 24 – April 8, 1865, published by Savas Beatie LLC.***

## **NEWLY DISCOVERED LETTERS BRING NEW INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE OF A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER**

**A MYSTERIOUS PACKAGE HOLDS LONG-LOST CORRESPONDENCE FROM A YOUNG  
UNION INFANTRYMAN**





Re-enactor John Holman displays a newly discovered letter alongside period objects including a hardtack-crate desk. (Claire Rosen)

**The envelope was addressed simply:**

**The postmark indicated that it had been mailed the day before—April 23, 2015—from Grand Rapids, 36 miles away; the careful, somewhat spidery penmanship suggested an elderly sender. “Except for the ‘Received Unsealed’ sticker on the back, there was no sign that the packet contained anything other than, say, an authorization to hold mail,” recalls Lori Boes, the warm, hardy woman who then ran the post office in this tiny Muskegon River lumber town.**

**Inside that envelope was another one, brown and brittle, its edges in tatters. A battle scene, in blue and red ink and bearing the legend “The War**

**for the Union,” was imprinted on the top-left corner. Though the postage stamp had been removed, the name of the city of mailing—Norfolk, Virginia—was partially legible. The addressee: Orrin W. Shephard of Croton, Newaygo Co., Michigan.**

**The letters within—their mysterious discovery, and subsequent acquisition by the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, disclosed here for the first time—were tidily folded. As Boes flicked through the yellowed pages, she felt a sense of anticipation. “Some were in perfect shape,” she says, “You could read every word.” One began:**

***“Alexandria, Virginia***

***My Dear Parents,***

***I received your ever welcome letter last Sunday and I just returned from Guard and I was just in the right mood to write so I will try it we left Union Mills the next day after I sent you the letter as we passed Fairfax Court House we marched about 6 miles when we were drawn up in line of Battle. But nothing hapend [sic] only a few of our Pickets taken Prisoners the next morning we took three Prisoners Rebels....”***

**It dawned on Boes that she was reading a note sent home by a soldier during the Civil War. “Suddenly, I felt the enormity of what was in my hands,” she says. “My heart leapt in my throat. I was holding a piece of Americana. I was mortified that I’d ripped open the outer envelope.”**

**She laid out the pages on her desk, resisting the urge to tape the torn corners. There were two complete letters, a partial letter and several fragments—to the soldier’s folks, also containing notes to his younger brother, Albert. A fascinating insight into a turbulent moment of history, the correspondence stands as a poignant reminder of the terrifying responsibilities shouldered by inexperienced troops. The charm of the letters lies in the informal way they capture the aspirations of a wide-eyed, ambitious young man who had no idea what fate held in store.**

**Unsure what to do with the cache, Boes phoned Greater Michigan district manager Chuck Howe in Grand Rapids and said: “You’re not going to believe what I just received.” She was right. He asked to see the letters for himself. “I’ll deliver them in person,” Boes said, prudently. “They’re too precious to trust to the mails.”**

**Howe got in touch with United States Postal Service historian Jenny Lynch, who requested that he email images of the pages to her office in Washington, D.C. Though the letters looked authentic, she verified their provenance by consulting Dan Piazza, assistant curator of philately at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum. After scrutinizing the paper, its size and the ink, Piazza pronounced his verdict. “They are genuine,” he told Lynch.**

**To fill in the gaps in Nelson Shephard’s biography, Lynch enlisted the help of Steve Kochersperger, a USPS research analyst with a personal stake in the Civil War. An ancestor, Lt. Col. Charles Kochersperger, was second-in-command of a Union regiment at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. The following year he led the unit during the Battle of the Wilderness, where he was severely wounded. Curiously, before the war Charles Kochersperger ran a private mail service in Philadelphia, Blood’s Penny Post, that issued its own stamps and competed with the USPS forerunner, the U.S. Post Office Department. The government sued him—*United States v. Kochersperger*—and eventually prevailed.**

**The 21st-century Kochersperger is a sleuth who uses a computer screen instead of a magnifying glass. Still, for all his decades of postal gumshoeing, this particular case presented a special challenge. “There were no descendants looking for Nelson Shephard,” he says. “Rather, it felt like Nelson Shephard was looking for us to tell his story.”**

**That story moved Kochersperger in ways he hadn’t expected. “I identified with him as a boy off to see the world,” he says. “I could also identify with his parents, since I have five kids of my own.”**

**He began by transcribing the handwriting. Literacy rates were high on both sides during the Civil War—about 90 percent for Union soldiers, above 80 percent for Confederates. Still, many enlisted men preferred dictating messages to comrades whose writing was swifter or neater or both. (Walt Whitman, who volunteered at D.C. Army hospitals beginning in 1862, was the most famous of these scriveners.) Kochersperger determined that Shephard's letters bore the script of three writers. Only two of the notes, meant for Shephard's brother, Albert, appeared to have been in his own hand.**

**Once the letters were deciphered, Kochersperger aligned the events Shephard described with the historical record. Kochersperger's primary source for the movements of Shephard's unit, the Michigan 26th Infantry, was Franklin Ellis' 1880 book *The History of Livingston County, Michigan*. Kochersperger relied heavily on archival newspapers and genealogical sources like census reports and military rosters.**

**Here's what Kochersperger was able to piece together: Nelson Shephard was born in 1843 or '44, the eldest of Orrin and Sarah Shephard's three children. In 1850, the family lived in Grass Lake, a whistle-stop of the Michigan Central Railroad. No saint, the adolescent Nelson was arrested for burglary and did a stretch in Jackson State Prison. By the summer of 1860 he was working as a mill hand in the town of White River, where the Shephards had resettled.**

**After Confederate forces opened fire on the federal garrison at Fort Sumter in South Carolina, on April 12, 1861, President Lincoln asked the Northern states for 75,000 militiamen to help quell the insurrection. In Michigan, a general assembly in Detroit pledged to "stand by the government to the last." Over the next four years more than 90,000 Michiganders would fight in the Civil War. Though no battles took place in the state, Michigan men fought in every major battle.**

**During the summer of 1862, the 18-year-old Nelson enlisted in the 26th Michigan Volunteer Regiment. He mustered with Company C, which was made up of men primarily from Muskegon County. Under the command**

**of Col. Judson S. Farrar, the 26th reached the District of Columbia on December 18 and was given a couple of days to see the town. In his letter home, Shephard called the capitol “the finest piece of architecture in the United States...a large Mass of Stone and Iron there is scarcely any wood about it....It is all White and completely filled with the most Beautiful Paintings I ever saw.”**

**After crossing the Potomac, the infantrymen marched to Alexandria, Virginia. To maintain order during the occupation, the regiment was detailed for guard duty. “We are enjoying ourselves hugely here,” wrote Shephard. “Nothing to do but to stand guard once in a while and then play.”**

**image: [https://public-media.smithsonianmag.com/filer/e8/22/e822e2f6-1e9e-4ab3-9601-31d5e22172db/nov2016\\_b02\\_nationaltreasurecivilwarletters.jpg](https://public-media.smithsonianmag.com/filer/e8/22/e822e2f6-1e9e-4ab3-9601-31d5e22172db/nov2016_b02_nationaltreasurecivilwarletters.jpg)**





**Cap worn by Union soldiers, a canteen, a regimental flag, a glass inkwell, a U.S. standard-issue brass belt plate, a vest pocket memoranda book, a cotton handkerchief, a wooden nib holder and metal nib for writing, a hardtack cracker used in soldiers' rations and a crate for shipping the hardtack. In the field, the crate often became a makeshift table, perfect for letter writing. (Claire Rosen)**

**The Michigan troops camped outside the city near Fort Lyon. Shephard was mightily impressed by the post's firepower:**

**"The North is getting up some Savage Cannons to shoot. They will shoot one mile through a target of six feet solid Oak and six inches solid iron. Bolted together they are Capable of doing execution at the distance of six miles and a half. They only carry 1000 lb. Slug Balls there is 18 Cannons on Fort Lyons that is from 16 to 18 feet long and one long tom 22 feet. Rifled Cannons all but 8 and them look like a sugar [loaf?]."**

**He wrote about the weather ("It is Rain one day and Shine the next"). He wrote about not getting paid ("We have been fooled so much that we won't hear any more of their gas"). He wrote about running into his brother-in-law, Gus Perry of Michigan's 5th Cavalry ("He is as Fleshy as I ever saw him"). He described a recruit who had been shot in the chest: "He is dead now, it was an accident." (Army records confirm that a Pvt. Ira A. Nash of Company I died in Alexandria due to a friendly-fire incident on January 25, 1863.)**

**Shephard closed the note by reassuring his family. "Don't get downhearted for I feel just as well contented As I ever was since I left home. I am not in any danger here. All the Rebels are a great ways off from here." In his own hand, he added a postscript for his brother, who was 9 or 10 at the time: "Albert you must be a good Boy and go to school and I will try and send you something."**

**The entire regiment bivouacked around Alexandria until April 20, when it boarded the steamer *Zephyr* and descended the Potomac. At Suffolk, a Union outpost under siege by Confederate troops, droves of**

wounded passed their camp en route from the front to the hospital. It was there that Shephard and his comrades first confronted the visceral horror of war.

The regiment left Suffolk in mid-May and tramped ten miles to Windsor, where, on May 23, it engaged in a skirmish. A few days later, in a letter to his parents, he described the exhilaration of combat and the spoils of foraging:

"I received your kind letters both of them I was so glad to hear from you. I have been where I could not answer them or I should have written before. I am well as ever we have been out on a 11 days Campaign we went as far as the Blackwater River we had two prety [sic] hard fights we whipped them both times we destroyed everything we came to. I tell you we lived high Chickens Turkeys Geese Pigs fresh Beef and smoked hams and every thing nice."

After alluding to Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1856 novel *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, he mentions a Southern girl he met along the way:

"This War in my mind is one of Gods judgments on the South for they are certainly one of the most Ignorant set of people I ever saw. I got partialy [sic] acquainted with one of the handsomest girls I think I ever saw she did not know her own age she could remember planting Corn as many times as she had fingers and one more."

In the fog of combat, Capt. John Culver from Company E was mortally wounded while scouting the woods. "His loss will be severely felt in this Regiment," wrote Shephard. "He was a good and kind man and a good Soldier. He was shot through the Arm he bled so much that when he had his arm taken off it killed him."

Private Shephard was a devoted son, assuring his relatives that he could read their letters and promising that he would keep out of harm's way. He was sure that a Union victory was within grasp. He refers to the

**recent death of Rebel Lt. Gen. Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson and makes the undocumented claim that “He said on his dying bed that the North would gain the day.”**

**Death is always within earshot: “The guns were making an awful noise both times when I got your letters.”**

**In July 1863, Company C boarded a train for New York City, where riots had broken out in opposition to a new draft law. Lincoln had ordered extra conscripts to be raised in the Northern states. The Enrollment Act made most males between the ages of 20 and 45 subject to military draft, but excused any draftee who could pay \$300 to buy his way out of service or pay the same amount to an acceptable substitute. This left the poor, often immigrant masses to fight a war many didn’t support.**

**After names of draftees were published on July 13—a sweltering day—the streets very quickly were convulsed in a saturnalia of lawlessness. What began as a draft riot quickly became a racist rampage, with mobs burning the homes of blacks and lynching them from lampposts. Large parts of the city went up in flames. The Michigan volunteers arrived around July 14 and were quartered in Manhattan, then Staten Island. There, during the monstrous pogrom, the third of Shephard’s letters was probably written. “I have seen some of the most disgusting sights I ever saw in my life,” he wrote. “Women going through the streets so drunk they would almost fall down. Little ragged Children leading their fathers home so drunk that they would Roll into the ditch, get up and try to Whip the Child for pushing him over. So you can [see what] liquor can do, it is as common to see a woman drunk as it is a man.”**

**Exulting in the latest string of Union victories, Shephard predicted that the war would end within two months. He wasn’t much of a clairvoyant: the South proved tenacious, and fighting would drag on for nearly two more years.**

**On October 13, 1863, the 26th hopped a train and rejoined the Army of the Potomac. The Michiganders joined the assault on the Confederate**

**works at Mine Run, Virginia. Shephard's final letter was composed as the regiment prepared to make winter quarters 13 miles due north at Stevensburg. Apart from his family for a second Christmas, he directed one side of the page to little Albert:**

***"My Dear Brother,***

***I wish I was there.***

***I wish I could see you all.***

***I would willingly make you a dozen sleighs."***

**The 26th remained in Stevensburg until the following spring. It saw action in Virginia at the Battle of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, North Anna, Totopotomoy Creek, Cold Harbor and—at Petersburg on June 16, 1864—began helping to destroy the track of a vital Rebel supply line, the Weldon Railroad. On August 25, the Confederates attacked the Union position along the rail line at Reams Station. Yankee losses in this action totaled 140 killed, 529 wounded and 2,073 captured or missing.**

**Shephard was one of 14 taken prisoner from the Michigan 26th. He was held at the notorious Belle Isle Prison, west of Richmond, on the James River. Conditions were brutal. According to the testimony of one surgeon, the "great majority" of POWs were afflicted by "such diseases as chronic diarrhea, phthisis pulmonalis, scurvy, frost bites, general debility, caused by starvation, neglect and exposure."**

**When Belle Isle Prison was evacuated that October, Shephard was transferred to a military prison in Salisbury, North Carolina. Established in 1861 as the only Confederate penitentiary in the state, the converted cotton factory was designed to house 2,500. By the time Shephard arrived, prisoner exchanges had ended, the population had swollen to 10,000 and most of the structures had been converted to hospital rooms to care for Union soldiers suffering from starvation and disease. Inmates found shelter from the cold, wet winter under buildings, in overcrowded tents or by burrowing into the earth. In 1864, the bodies of perhaps 5,000 were heaped upon each other in 18 trenches, each 240 feet long.**

**Shephard died at the compound on December 18, 1864. He was 21 years old.**

**Lori Boes is hoping that disclosure of the extraordinary packet she opened that day will help to solve a tantalizing mystery: Who was the anonymous individual who mailed the cache of letters to Newaygo? The identity remains unknown; there was no return address.**

**Not long ago a fellow postmaster proposed to Boes that the envelope may have been dislodged from ancient postal machinery.**

**Boes is skeptical. "A hundred fifty years to deliver a letter is a little long," she says, "even for the U.S. Postal Service."**

***Editor's Note: This story continues with the discovery of the person who mailed the Civil War letters to her local post office. [Here's the follow-up](#) with Smithsonian curator Nancy Pope.***

**Read more: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/newly-discovered-letters-bring-insight-life-civil-war-soldier-180960784/#hUsby1IEy1tAulAk.99>  
Give the gift of Smithsonian magazine for only \$12! <http://bit.ly/1eGUiGv>  
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**THE FIRST PAGE OF DR. CHARLES LEALE'S  
REPORT ON TREATING PRESIDENT  
LINCOLN AFTER HE WAS SHOT!**

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Having been the first  
of our profession who arrived to the assistan-  
ce of our late President, and having been  
requested by Mrs. Lincoln to do what I  
could for him I assumed the charge un-  
til the Surgeon General and Dr Stone  
his family physician arrived, which was  
about 20 minutes after we had placed him  
in bed in the house of Mr. Peterson oppo-  
site the theatre, and as I remained wi-  
th him until his death, I humbly sub-  
mit the following brief account.

I arrived at Ford's

# 2017 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Association Inc.

*The world... can never forget what they did here"*

*A. Lincoln, Nov. 19, 1863, Gettysburg*

The 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry (WVI) Association began with the purpose of preserving America's Civil War heritage through reenacting and performing "living history". We further that purpose by offering a scholarship to family members.

## Background

The 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry (WVI) Association began with a handful of members in 1960 dedicated to the purpose of preserving American Civil War heritage through re-enacting and performing "living history". In 1990, the Unit was re-established as a result of a general rekindling of interest in the Civil War. Through the use of authentic-styled uniforms and equipment, along with drills, battles, and camp life portrayals, we believe the general public might become more accurately aware and ponder what life might have been like for the average Northern soldier during America's greatest trial. Further, and with great pride, the Unit attempts to depict and honor one of the greatest Union regiments to take to the field, The 2nd Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. With the 6th and 7th Wisconsin, the 19th Indiana, and later the 24th Michigan, they eventually became known as the famous "Iron Brigade" with their legendary "Black Hats". The original men have long since concluded their Rendezvous with Destiny in such places as Bull's Run Creek, Fredericksburg, the "Cornfield" at Antietam and "McPherson Wood" at Gettysburg.

The Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Association Inc., in recognition of the importance of keeping this history alive in modern times, is proud to offer two college scholarships with 1<sup>st</sup> place receiving **\$1,000** and second place receiving **\$500** to current Association members and relatives of Association members.

## Timeline

Closing date for submission of the application is **Friday June 2nd, 2017** (all applications must be post marked by that date). If you are the recipient of this scholarship, you will be notified by email by Friday June 30th, 2017.

## Eligibility

All of the following conditions must be met for consideration as a recipient of the 2017 Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Association Inc. Scholarship:

1. You must be enrolled/accepted in an accredited College, Tech school or University.
2. You must list your intended field of study.
3. You must be a member, or be related to a member in good standing of the Second Wisconsin Association Civil War Re-enactors. (Member, Child, Spouse, Grandchild, Niece, Nephew, Sibling)
4. Attach a complete transcript of your grades (including cumulative Grade point average).
5. Attach a listing of your non-academic activities (extra – curricular, volunteer/community work, club memberships with offices held etc.).
6. Attach a separate sheet, containing a short essay (500 words or less) on the following topic.  
**“Some Wisconsin soldiers changed their opinion of African-Americans during the course of the war. What experiences may have led to these changes”?**

Once awarded, the funds can be used for tuition books and fees at the college or University you are attending. The scholarship check will be made payable to you and your school.

## Award Criteria

All applications will be evaluated on meeting the above requirements. The Second Wisconsin Association Scholarship Committee will make the selection of the scholarship winner. All decisions made by this committee are final.

Financial need is not a relevant consideration in this award.

## 2017 Scholarship Application

***Scholarship applications must be post marked by June 2nd, 2017.***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School enrolled/accepted for the 2017-2018

Academic year: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended field of study:

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to a Second Wisconsin Association Member:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please include all of the following when applying:

- Application Page
- Copy of your Grade/GPA Transcript
- List of Volunteer/extra curricular activities
- Essay (500 words or less)
- **“Some Wisconsin soldiers changed their opinion of African-Americans during the course of the war. What experiences may have led to these changes”?**

*I will provide a photo of myself if selected and authorize the publication of the photograph and the essay of the Civil War, which I wrote for this scholarship. I also specifically waive any right to any compensation I may have for any of the foregoing other than the award of the scholarship.*

Email address:

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Signed:

---

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2017

**Mail to:**

2nd Wisconsin Association 2017 Scholarship Selection Committee Attention: c/o Dave  
Sielski—Association Secretary

2316 Serenade Lane Green Bay, WI 54301

**Scholarship applications must be post marked by June 2nd, 2017.**