

The INDIANA LEGION

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA • ALAN TELLER, COMMANDER



Volume 20

Winter 2003

Commander's Thoughts

I hope yours was a Merry Christmas! Mine certainly was merry and white, eight inches of white in Kokomo.

The New Year is staring us in the face with all of its opportunities and challenges.



Alan Teller

Over the past six months I have visited all of the Camps. I relished meeting many of you for the first time. I was encouraged to hear about your projects, witness the attendance, and delighted in listening to your discussions. I will be back to each Camp in 2003. I appreciate that everything starts at the camp level and take pleasure in witnessing these meetings.

We all have the same problems of membership, and getting those members to participate as officers and in activities of the Camp. I want to challenge all of you to bring in a new member in 2003. I further encourage you to participate beyond attending a meeting. We need officers and project participation at all levels of the SUVCW. I personally am a relatively new member. However, I have served as Camp Guide, Camp Secretary, Camp Commander, Department Secretary-Treasurer, Department Junior Vice Commander, Department Commander, and Central Conference Region Historian.

I have traveled a lot, met a slew of nice people, learned many of the "ins and outs," and

continued on the next page

Mark your Calendars! Mid-Winter Encampment This Month

On Saturday, 25 January, the Champion Hill Camp No. 17 will once again host the Department of Indiana's Mid-Winter Encampment in Huntington.

Held in the historic G.A.R. Room in the County Court House, the session promises songs, merriment, food, entertainment and, yes, important Department business.

Every member of any Indiana SUVCW Camp is most cordially invited.

Mid Winter Encampment Agenda Saturday, January 25, 2003

- 9:00-9:30** Coffee, doughnuts and good fellowship
- 9:30-11:30** Business Meeting
- 11:30-12:00** Kent Smith will discuss "Researching Civil War Ancestors." Kent, author of *Russiaville & the Civil War*, is currently writing his second book.
- 12:00-12:30** Lunch will be served by the Champion Hill Camp — donations will be appreciated.
- 12:30-1:30** Sing-a-long and game, "Didn't You Used to be Abe Lincoln." Prizes will be awarded.
- 1:30-3:00** Finish Business Meeting

**Come and join us for a great day!
See some old friends; meet some new ones!
Learn, Play and Participate with the SUVCW!**

*Remembering the sacrifices made by the soldiers and sailors of the Civil War who fought to preserve the Union,
we are dedicated to continuing the patriotic work begun by our parent organization,
The Grand Army of the Republic*

Commander's Thoughts *continued*

enjoyed all of it. I tell you this because what I do is fun; and you are missing it. But 2003 is a new year. Come join the fun. It all starts at Huntington, on Saturday, January 25, 2003, at 9:00 AM. It's the Mid-Winter Encampment in a real GAR Room.

For those of you who have not been to Huntington to see this, you simply will not believe it. When you walk in and scan the vista before you, it will blow you away. You have stepped back in time.

This is where our forebears met. This is their room. You are standing on sacred soil. We are accorded the honor of meeting here. Of sharing their room with those who have gone before us. For one day we are allowed to bask in their chamber, in their time, with them. Come to Huntington and savor the feeling. I look forward to seeing you among the memories of the "Boys in Blue" on January 25th.

— Alan Teller

If *The Legion* is to grow and prosper we need an **Advertising Manager** who will find advertisers and set an appropriate fee schedule.

Even modest advertising revenue would allow us to add pages to the

This is an opportunity for members to introduce themselves to our brotherhood. It is a chance for members to recount with pride the adventures of the ancestors from whom they are descended, to write a book review, to collect historical material, to pass on Indiana or national Civil War news of interest, or just to express ideas and policies for our organization.

Contributors need not worry overmuch about spelling, usage and style. The computer knows how to spell, and the editor *thinks* he knows about such arcane topics as the possessive "its" having no apostrophe or the difference between "that" and "which."

It would be great, too, if Camps would assign people to send in news of Camp activity specifically written for *The Legion*.

From time to time I have received very helpful suggestions about our publication (I am particularly indebted to Gib Young of the Champion Hill Camp). Suggestions are always welcome.

Let me hear from you!
—David Wiley

Directions to the Mid-Winter Encampment

Huntington County Court House

From the South

Take I 69 to the Warren Exit at IN 5; follow IN 5 North to US 224, turn left, and take that street, South Jefferson Street, all the way to the Court House.

From Fort Wayne

Take I 69 to the Markle Exit, US 224; take US 224 west to IN 5. Continue West on IN 5, South Jefferson Street, all the way to the Court House.

From the West

Take US 24 to Huntington. At the junction of IN 9 & IN 37 continue straight on Park Drive into town. At the intersection with North Jefferson St. turn right, and go three blocks to the Court House.

From the North

Take IN 5 South; it becomes North Jefferson Street. Follow all the way to the Court House; or, as a last resort, take IN 9 South, till it T's at BUS. 24. Turn right for two city blocks, veer to right at the Y. This is First Street; go South to Market Street, turn West, right, onto Market Street. Take Market to North Jefferson Street. Turn left for one block to Court House.

Park anywhere around the Court House, but enter the West Jefferson Street doors.

The GAR Room is on the second floor.
There is an elevator if needed.

A Word from the Editor

During the Mid-Winter encampment I will ask for volunteers—and authorization—to help out with *The Indiana Legion*.

In Memoriam

Brice Stetzel

Champion Hill Camp No. 17
October 2002

publication, possibly to print in color, and ultimately to reduce the overall cost to the Department.

We also need a **Circulation Manager** who will provide a stable address in order to secure a postage permit, and to see the publication through the press and into the mail. These are not impossible or time consuming jobs, but they will free me—and subsequent editors—to do necessary writing, assembly, and layout chores with some degree of efficiency.

Increased attention to circulation and advertising will have the added virtue of developing *The Indiana Legion* as a recruitment tool.

The Legion continues to need contributions from the membership.

The **INDIANA LEGION**

is a newsletter of the
Department of Indiana
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
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Camps should send news items, photographs, and ancestor accounts, and so on, to the editor by E-mail or regular mail on or about
31 March 2003

A Boy's Grave Marked

In a ceremony on 9 November 2002, at the Connorsville City Cemetery, the grave of a mere boy, but a Civil War soldier nevertheless, was at last recognized with a government headstone—largely through the efforts of Charles Hughes of the Ben Harrison Camp.

Oscar Wetherhald, the son of Henry and Ann Wetherhald, enlisted on 25 March 1864, and after a sojourn at the Camp of Instruction in Indianapolis, he participated in engagements in middle Tennessee with the 40th Indiana Infantry Volunteers.

The young soldier contracted typhoid fever and was hospitalized in Nashville. He died on 6 December 1864.

When his mother claimed his body, the Army discovered that Oscar was only thirteen years, eight months of age. Sadly, she would also relate that Oscar's older brother, age twenty, had died in the battle of Kennesaw Mountain just six months earlier on 19 June 1864.

"It took 138 years to get the stone," Charles Hughes told a local newspaper, "but he finally got it." Hughes credited Norma Buckley, Secretary of the Fayette County Veterans Service Office, for help in securing the marker for young Oscar from the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Department Commander Alan Teller, Vice Commander David Wiley, and Charles Hughes represented the SUVCW at the ceremony.

Also participating in the occasion were Connorsville Mayor Mauri Connell, Loren Sturgeon, Executive Director of the state AMVETS; the Fayette County Color Guard, and representatives of the Urban-Winkler Funeral Home who set the headstone in place.



Charles Hughes, David Wiley, and Alan Teller at the dedication of the memorial to Oscar Wetherhald

The Story of Richard Teller

On a rose-colored tombstone in Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville, Kentucky, is engraved "Richard Teller, Born September 10, 1844, Died October 22, 1938." Mysteriously it also says "G.A.R." G.A.R. in a real sense held the meaning of his life of 94 years.

Back in August of 1862, this little blue-eyed, Hoosier boy marched across the Ohio River and into history. A first generation American of German parents he had joined an all-German Regiment, the 108th Ohio.

Now he lies buried on that same south side of the Ohio River he crossed before officially mustering in.

His regiment was being rushed south to defend Covington, Kentucky, from the threat of Kirby Smith's

raid into the state. Unprepared greenhorns, being led from Ohio soil to Kentucky soil to set up defenses. What did they know of defenses?

He was about to celebrate his 18th birthday on September 10. It was exciting; he was young; he was with his friends; he was brave. Of light complexion, this lad had probably never crossed the Ohio River before. The organization of his regiment had begun at Camp Dennison near Cincinnati, Ohio. He was finally mustered in on the 13th day of September 1862, at Camp Salyer near Newport, Kentucky. The 108th also trained at Camp Salyer. The original four regiments grew to eight regiments in Kentucky. He became a member of Company G. Richard had traded his cooper's tools for a uniform and musket. He was a soldier now; he was a Yankee.

The next several months saw the regiment crisscrossing Kentucky: Louisville, Shelbyville, Frankfort, Lawrenceburg, Bardstovon, Bowling Green, Glasgow, Tomkinsville, and escape to Hartsville, TN. They had

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At the Orlando A. Somers Camp October meeting Bill Jenkins, a camp member, spoke about collecting Civil War artifacts. Brother Jenkins displayed many items, including Union and Confederate swords, guns, canteens and uniforms. Seth Kirchner, a junior member was lucky to be able to try on a Union Cavalry jacket for a picture. Seth's 3rd Great-Grandfather was in the Pennsylvania 4th Cavalry and was at Antietam and Gettysburg.

The Story of Richard Teller

continued

marched and camped, marched and camped. It was ten days from Frankfort to Bowling Green: ten foot-weary days for a young recruit. Marching fifteen to twenty miles a day was not unusual.

The 108th had tried before to capture John Hunt Morgan near Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, but these endeavors did not succeed. Another regiment did not arrive on time. Morgan escaped. Now, November 28, they had escaped Morgan and were at Hartsville.

At Hartsville the commander of the 39th Brigade shifted to Colonel Absalom B. Moore of the 104th Illinois, and so did its fortunes. On December 7, 1862, General Morgan captured the entire brigade. Hereafter, the 108th regretted having anything to do with the "Hartsville affair." It was a permanent blemish on its record. A "scar" it would carry along with the 106th Ohio, 104th Illinois, 2nd Indiana Cavalry, 13th Indiana Battery (section), and 11th Kentucky Cavalry, Company E.

This young man, whose father had been murdered five years earlier, was now a prisoner of war on his way to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, south of the Cumberland River. On December 8, 1862, the prisoners were paroled. John Hunt Morgan was commissioned a Brigadier General and married to twenty-one-year-old Martha Ready on December 11, 1862.

Richard was taken to Camp Chase at Columbus, Ohio, (I assume by train) in disgrace. The regiment was then sent to Camp Dennison, where it all began for the 108th for reorganization. Finally, they were exchanged on

January 12, 1863. They next were ordered to Lexington, Kentucky, and stayed in the Central Kentucky area until May 1863.

For now we are going to leave this ordinary young American soldier who grew up on the banks of the Whitewater River and Canal. Though he lived in Indiana on the Indiana/Ohio border, he had probably never been more than fifteen miles from home. Now he had crossed the Ohio and Cumberland Rivers, marched as much as 20 miles a

the next regular meeting on 19 January in the splendid G.A.R. room of the Huntington County Court House, and the camp will soon be busy cooking, sprucing up, and rehearsing surprises for the Mid-Winter Encampment that it will host on Saturday, 25 January, in that same room—the envy of the entire Department.

Camp Commander Gib Young promises fun, food, singing and games at the Encampment.

"There will be a very special unveiling that I guarantee will draw the interest of each true brother. And if that is not enough to excite every red-blooded man, we will bring in the original June Taylor dancers' chorus line from the Jackie Gleason Show. Those still living at the Miller's Merry Manner Nursing Home, that is."

News has been mixed on the effort to establish a monument to the distinguished Civil War leaders from the Huntington area.

The good news is that \$500 has been donated by the SUCVW national organization, which grandly supplements the \$250 that the Camp has already raised. Donations have reached some 70% of the estimated cost. More has been promised by the Colonel Link Camp in Ft. Wayne, and the Camp welcomes any and all contributions from the other camps across the state.

The less-than-good news is that the Huntington Park Board has inched away from the original monument idea in favor of several types of plaques and markers.

The Camp leadership is at work with the Park Superintendent to resolve these difficulties. We shall see what ensues.



The Champion Hill Camp of Huntington invited Phil McClure's G.A.R. to its October meeting. Here they are pictured on the western steps of the Huntington County Court House. The men of the unit were urged to start a SUCVW camp in Columbus.

day, been in battle and taken prisoner, and carried the shame of Hartsville.

He had duty before him, adventure in his step, and a sense of belonging to something big. Where was he headed? Where would history take this lad?

—Alan Teller

To be continued in a future issue

News from the Camps . . .

Champion Hill Camp No. 17 of Huntington

As we have come to expect, and as the fine Camp newsletter attests, Champion Hill is as busy as ever.

New officers will be initiated at



David D. Porter Camp No. 116 of Valparaiso

The editor of the D. D. Porter *Camp Monitor* has once again produced another attractive newsletter for October, with color photos, no less, and lots of information and opinion.

The Camp has been very energetic, as we have come to expect. Brother Robert Griffin, Commander, initiated two new members at the Camp's Mishawaka meeting in October.

Initiated were Paul H. Lamirand, Jr, a newspaper editor, who derives his membership from his great grandfather, Joseph Lamirand, who served in Company H of the 156th Illinois Infantry Volunteers, and Randall Eckley, a public school administrator. His great-great grandfather was Louis Ladauer who served as a private in Company F, 9th Regiment Indiana Volunteers and as Sergeant in Company A of the 151st Indiana Infantry Volunteers.

The same meeting saw a presentation by Brother Paul R. G. Smith entitled "The Southern Mind," an account of the outlook of the southern population since the end of the war.

Central Region Conference

The Central Region Conference, made up of SUVCW departments from this portion of the country, hosted this year in St. Louis, by the Department of Missouri.

The conference is held every year by the Central Region Association. It is open to all members of the Allied Orders of the G.A.R., of which the Sons of Union veterans is, of course, a key entity.

PDC Russ Kirchner, the current Commander of the Association, was accompanied to the meeting by Department Commander Alan Teller

and three other representatives from Indiana: PDC Tom Crawford, who was elected as the new commander, PDC Ron Gill, and PCinC Ed Krieser.

The purpose of the conference is to share information, interests, activities, and aims of its members. This year the conference focused on developing leadership skills.



**COME ON YE SONS OF INDIANA!
Volunteer for Camp Leadership!
Camps without leaders may have
adequate funds; they may have
plenty of members, but without
officers they will be dissolved & their
funds and property will revert to the
Department.**

Knightstown Visitation

In October, the Department of Indiana paid its annual visit to the Knightstown Children's Home—a custom that arises from the support given the school by the G.A.R. and carried on by the Sons and the Allied Orders of Indiana.

Originally, the school was founded to care for the children of veterans of the war who had died or become disabled. This purpose is emblazoned in the two magnificent windows in the schools Abraham Lincoln Auditorium.

For more information about the Children's Home see the January 2000 issue of *The Indiana Legion*, p. 1-2.

The facility was first known as an orphanage but now is available for "at risk" children of veterans.

Present at the visitation were Department Commander, Alan Teller; PDC Tom Crawford; PCinC Ed Krieser, and PDC Ron Gill. Seven members of the Daughters of Union Veterans also attended.

As in previous years the group was given a tour of the institution and lunch in the school cafeteria.



Pictured from the Orlando A. Somers Camp No. 1 meeting in November are guest speaker John Weaver of Kokomo and Camp Commander, Ned Baker. Weaver presented a talk entitled "A Legacy of Brick and Stone: A Study of American Coastal Forts of the Third System, 1816-1867."

Book review in brief . .

Margaret E. Wagner, Gary W. Gallagher, Paul Finkleman, eds. *The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002.

This is an extraordinary work, that draws upon the resources of the Library of Congress, including letters, diaries, and maps that have never before seen print. Divided into chapters that evoke broad themes, ranging from the antebellum era to the influence of the great rebellion on our time, the book can be treated on a surface level as a fascinating narrative. At the same time, it deals with topics specific enough to suggest further avenues for investigation and research by the serious reader.

There are many other reference works dealing with the Civil War, but this one is essential, not only for our bookshelf or desk, but for the hands of the next generation.



On the skirmish line

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