



In Fraternity,
Charity and
Loyalty

Lest We Forget

A publication of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp, #443, and dedicated
to the memory of those who fought to preserve the Union, 1861-1865

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Special Holiday
Issue

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Trivia #1

True or False?"

Christmas was celebrated in the Confederacy (the South) during the war, but frowned upon in northern states like Massachusetts.

Want the answer? Find the second trivia question.



From the Editor

This special holiday issue of *Lest We Forget* is primarily focused on celebrations of Christmas and a look back at the past year. The holiday season is typically a season of faith and a good time to step back from the insanity and noise of the world around us and take note of the blessings we experience; whether it is your family, friends, a job, getting that green light at an intersection. Sometimes, it is the small blessings that occur that mean the most at the time.

I like to watch holiday movies this time of year. While *It's A Wonderful Life* is my favorite and most meaningful in reminding me of my blessings, I also traditionally watch the A&E movie *The Crossing* with Jeff Daniels as it recounts Washington's crossing of the Delaware River and his defeat of the Hessians in Trenton, New Jersey Dec. 26, 1776. It was truly a masterstroke by Washington and a turning point in the war when his Army was, perhaps, at its weakest point during the entire war. While I could point out a thing or two that may not be completely accurate in the film, I find it powerful in that I feel the cold as I watch the actors and historic characters "endure." What I marvel at the most is the faith and stamina members of the Continental Army must have had in those conditions. I don't know if it was their faith in God, their commander or the cause, a combination of the three or some other reason that drove them to stay despite hunger, sickness, and a lack of shelter and winter clothing.

Leading up to that point, they experienced only losses against British forces during the summer and fall of 1776 like the battles at Long Island and Kips Bay. Defeats, along with the capture, death and desertion of 90% of the army itself from approximately 35,000 troops in August to about 3,000 during the retreat from New Jersey in early December should have been enough for most to call it quits. But they stayed. This same type of will power and faith must be the same that helped keep men enlisting in the Union Army to the end of the Civil War. Faith in a cause bigger and more important than our own comforts is the biggest reason I'm a Veteran. Thank you to all of our ancestors for helping preserve our Nation, and to our brothers in the SUCVW, I say thank you for keeping our ancestors' sacrifices alive for continuing generations.

Thank you for your readership of this newsletter, also. Please share it far and wide with anyone you feel may have an interest. It is also free to subscribe. Just email lestweforget1861@outlook.com. Article submissions are also accepted at this email address.



Lest We Forget is a publication of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUCVW). It is the only SUCVW Camp south of Springfield, Illinois, covering the "Little Egypt" part of the state.

For more information about the camp and how to become a member, please visit the Website at:

<http://www.heckercamp443.us/>

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ColFriedrichKHecker-Campsucv/about/?ref=page_internal

You may also send a message to info@heckercamp443.us.

More about the SUCVW is here: www.sucv.org

Camp Commander: Brother David Wildermuth

Sr. Vice Commander: Brother Russel Schleicher

Jr. Vice Commander: Brother John Stanton

Secretary and Editor: Brother Gerald Sonnenberg

Treasurer: Brother Richard Piper

Camp Guide: Brother Justin Ottolini

For submissions or to subscribe to the newsletter, email:

lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

On the cover: Thomas Nast, renowned artist, depicted Union soldiers receiving Christmas boxes in camp in 1861 on this original cover of *Harper's Weekly*. By the end of the war, joyous scenes like this will be just a memory for most.



Commander's Corner

By Dave Wildermuth
Camp Commander

Greetings Brethren,

Since our last newsletter in October, Hecker Camp observed Veterans Day. As your Commander I would like to say, "thank you" to all our camp brothers who served our Nation. I would also like to congratulate the 2023 Camp Officers elected during our November meeting.

I will be serving my fifth term as commander. Others elected are Senior Vice Commander (SVC) Russell Schleicher, Junior Vice Commander (JVC) John Stanton,

Treasurer Richard (Dick) Piper, Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg.

This is my official welcome aboard to our new members for their official initiation into the SUVCW; Brothers David Moss and Jack Wightman. I will be appoint all other open positions in our Camp at the January meeting.

In closing, my family and I would like to wish you and your family a healthy and safe holiday season and happy new year.

Please share your adventures and your civil war family stories to keep the memories of the boys in blue alive and the Union forever. Lest we forget.



Our 2022 Camp activities in review

January – Meeting was canceled. I was asked to sit on a committee to work at fundraising to restore Col. Hecker Monument in St. Louis.

Feb. 2 – First 2022 Camp meeting.

March 4 – At the camp meeting, the camp voted to fund an Illinois State Historical Marker for Col. Hecker which was placed in Summerfield, Illinois, not far from where his farm was located. A dedication is planned for March 25, 2023.

March 13 – Brother Gerald Sonnenberg and I participated in Gen. Sherman's Remembrance Day service at his gravesite at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

March 24 – Placed Camp wreath at Col. Hecker's gravesite in remembrance of his death date. We plan to observe this annually.

April 9 – Past Camp Commander (PCC) Greg Zelinske and I participated at the U. S. Grant Historic Site in St. Louis, for Grant's 200 birthday observance.

April 16 – Treasurer Richard Piper and myself attended and participated in both the Lincoln's Death Day Observance in Springfield, Illinois and Dr. Stephenson Remembrance Service in Petersburg Illinois.

May 14 – I attended the Department Annual Encampment in Bloomington where I was elected to the Department Council.

May 15 – Brothers Piper, Sonnenberg, Boo and I participated at Palmier Cemetery in Columbia, Illinois at a dedication of an Interpretation Marker for soldiers buried there since the French and Indian War.

May 30 – Brothers Sonnenberg, Stanton, Ottolini and I participated in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day parade. A

wreath was placed at the St. Clair Co. Civil War Monument and one at Col. Hecker's gravesite.

June 4 – Hecker Camp set-up a display at Koerner House in Belleville for Old Belleville Days. PCC Ladd, Brother Piper and I participated with a camp site setup

June 11 – My wife and I promoted Hecker Camp by participating in the Worden, Illinois parade.

June 14 – I presented SUVCW Flag certificates to three businesses, then Brother Piper and I presented a Flag Day program and certificate at William Holliday Grade School Summer Camp in Fairview Heights, Illinois.

June 26 – Hecker Camp hosted the dedication of two Civil War Veterans who were brothers in Worden. Eight Brothers from our camp participated.

July 4 – We placed a wreath at the St. Clair Co. Civil War Monument in Belleville.

July 23 – We placed our camp wreath at the Grant's Death Day Remembrance at the U.S. Grant Historic Site in St. Louis.

Aug. 6 – I participated in the Mascoutah, Illinois Homecoming Parade promoting Hecker Camp.

Aug. 11-13 – I attended the National SUVCW Encampment in Grand Rapids Michigan. I received a Gold Star Merit Award from the commander in chief.

Sept. 18 – Brothers Piper, Stanton, McKee and I welcomed the German Consul General from Chicago to Summerfield to show him the project work at Hecker's Gravesite and to view the new Historical Marker we placed in town.

Oct. 2 – PCC Zelinske, with his reenactment group, the 17th Missouri Infantry Regiment, participated in the filming of a pilot movie (Untamed Justice).

Oct. 8 – I attended the Department of Illinois SUVCW Mid-term Encampment in Springfield. At this meeting our Camp received funding of \$1,000 from the department to help with the Hecker Memorial project.

Oct. 21 – PCC Zelinske participated and I attended the Remembrance Service for the 170 soldiers of the 56th USCT that are buried in a mass grave at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis.

Nov. 2 – Camp elections were held for 2023.

Nov. 5 – Brothers Boo, Sonnenberg, Wightman and I participated in the Veterans Day parade in Columbia.

Nov. 11 – I attended a Veterans Day Service at the Fairview Heights City Hall Veterans Plaza and later met Brother Sonnenberg to participate in the O'Fallon, Illinois Veterans Day parade.

Nov. 12 – Annual Camp Installation Banquet was held at Crehan's Banquet Center in Belleville.

Dec. 7 – I attended the Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day service in Swansea, Illinois at Messinger Cemetery

Dec. 10 – Laid holiday wreaths at the St. Clair County Civil War Monument and Hecker Gravesite.

Several of our brothers are reenactors also and participate in several reenactments each year. If you have attended or participated in any event please share your event or experience with us in our newsletter by contacting Brother Sonnenberg, our editor, at lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

We encourage our members not able to attend our meetings in person to join us on the Zoom call.





Hecker Camp has much to be proud of as it was very busy over the last year supporting a variety of events. At left, in this photo by Sheila Wildermuth, individuals representing Illinois' Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 SUVCW; 17th Missouri Vol. Infantry Regiment; Alton Jaeger Guard reenactors; 114th Illinois Vol. Infantry Regiment; Grant Camp #68 SUVCW Department Of Missouri; and others came together for a group photograph following a dedication ceremony June 25.

The following pages have a few more images of just some of our efforts for us to reflect on as we begin 2023. Happy New Year and thank you for helping remember the sacrifices of our Union ancestors!

2022 Year in Review in Pictures



Remembering General Sherman – A Graveside ceremony was held March 13 in Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri to remember the life and service of Gen. William T. Sherman. SUVCW Department of Missouri U.S. Grant Camp #68 hosted the 1 p.m. event. Camp Hecker and several of the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) were represented and participated. (Photo left) Grant Camp Commander Bob AuBuchon and Hecker Camp Commander David Wildermuth display their camp banners while Brother Gerald Sonnenberg represented Hecker Camp #443 in the firing team below (second from left). (Courtesy photos)





Dedication – On May 15 (left to right) Hecker Camp Commander (CC) Dave Wildermuth, PCC Grant Camp #68 Walter Busch, Brother Dick Piper, Grant CC Bob AuBuchon, Brothers Gary Boo and Gerald Sonnenberg participated in the unveiling of a new interpretive sign in Columbia, Illinois at Palmier Cemetery. (Photo by Sheila Wildermuth)



Memorial Day – Hecker Camp brothers (left to right) Justin Ottolini, John Stanton, Gerald Sonnenberg and Camp Commander Dave Wildermuth (in red van) participate in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day Parade. (Photo by Ben Sonnenberg)



New Hecker Monument – (Photo left) On April 5, Camp Commander Dave Wildermuth (right) met with Bruce Hecker and members of the Hecker family on the future sight of the marker in Summerfield Park. (Left) Then, on Sept. 18, individuals representing Illinois' Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 SUVCW and the German Council General from Chicago stand next to the newly-installed Col. Hecker marker in Summerfield, Illinois. (Photos by Gerald Sonnenberg and Sheila Wildermuth)



Educating the Community – (Right) Image of the Hecker Camp display at the Koerner House on June 4. (Below) In attendance was Brother Garry Ladd, whose uniform is that of a Union regimental surgeon because of his military experience as a hospital corpsman. He set up a field hospital display on the property. (Photos by Sheila Wildermuth)



(Photo right) Hecker Past Camp Commander Greg Zelinski and his wife Diane participated in a Zoom call May 11 with 87, 4th graders from Spoede Elementary in the Ladue, Missouri school district. (Courtesy image)



Flag Day – On June 14, Hecker Camp members Camp Commander David Wildermuth (right) and Brother Richard Piper presented a program at William Holliday Elementary School Summer Programs in Fairview Heights, Illinois. They conducted a flag changing ceremony and presented a certificate to the school. (Photo by Sheila Wildermuth)



Honor in Michigan
– In August, Hecker Camp Commander Dave Wildermuth (left) was presented the Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star by then Commander in Chief Michael A. Paquette during the 141st National Encampment, hosted by the Department of Michigan. (Courtesy photo)



Keeping it Real – Members of the 17th Missouri Volunteer Infantry Regiment, including Hecker PCC Greg Zelinski (seated), participated in the reenactment of the Battle of Prairie Grove in Arkansas on Dec. 3 and 4. Zelenski and others also answered the call in to participate as extras in a new film called “Untamed Justice” in September. (Courtesy photo)



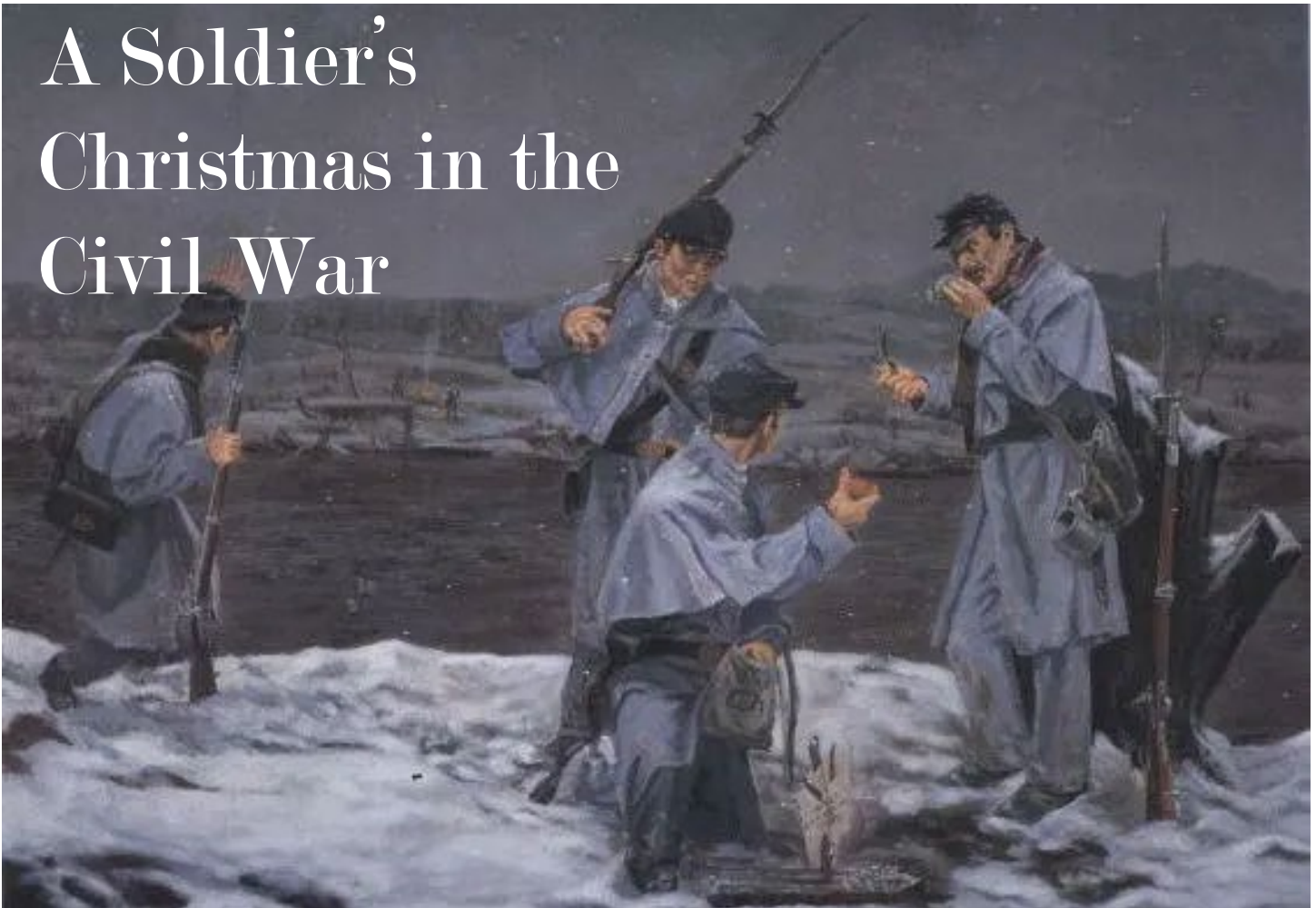
Honoring Veterans – (Above, left to right) Brothers Jack Wightman, Gerald Sonnenberg, Gary Boo and Camp Commander (CC) Dave Wildermuth participated in the Veterans Day parade in Columbia, Illinois Nov. 5.



(Photo above) Brother Sonnenberg marched while CC Wildermuth and his wife Sheila promoted the camp with their van and trailer during the O’Fallon, Illinois Veterans Day Parade Nov. 11.



A Soldier's Christmas in the Civil War



The following is published with the permission of author Tara McClellan McAndrew of the Illinois Times. Minus a dated lead, it is published as originally printed.

We begin with the accounts of two men in the 84th Illinois Volunteer Infantry who wrote about their experiences in the fall and winter of 1863. It had been a tough time for the group. They had spent September through November in battles.

First they had fought at Chickamauga, Tennessee, which was the war's second

deadliest battle. The Union was trying to repel Confederates, but lost and retreated to Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Confederates attacked them there and battled for two months. The south nearly encircled the Union troops and shut off their supply lines, so the Union's leader halved his soldiers' rations.

Then the 84th fought the Confederates up Tennessee's Lookout Mountain, only to lose again.

James P. Suiter, a private with the 84th from Eldorado, Illinois recounts the rest of the story, which is chronicled in his diaries that are now in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (ALPL).

On Nov. 30, with just a few days' rest after the Lookout Mountain loss, Suiter's brigade started marching 10 miles back to Chickamauga, "to bury the dead who had lain there for more than two months without burial ... The battlefield was a sad spectacle

and burying the remains of our dead was the most melancholly [sic] duty I ever performed."

On Dec. 2, Suiter's group marched to camp at Whiteside Station, Tennessee, where they remained until May. There his days became a monotonous blur of "going on picket," regimental inspection, reading, letter writing and "usual duties." Christmas Day was no different.

"December 25 – Cloudy day – Dull. Christmas – Dined on bean soup, pork and 'Hard Crackers' at noon." ("Hard crackers" were likely the ubiquitous "hardtack" crackers that were a staple of soldiers' diets. Unfortunately, the crackers were often months old and as a result were hard as a – yes, tack.)

Three days after Christmas, Suiter received what might have been holiday gifts from home: one pair of socks and 13 postage stamps.

Hiram P. Roberts was a chaplain for Company E of the 84th. Six days before Christmas he wrote his daughter,

See CHRISTMAS, next page...



CHRISTMAS, continued ...

Nellie, back in Quincy, Illinois for her birthday. He told her that he was looking at photographs of her and her mother as he wrote.

On Christmas Day, he wrote again: "Darling Nellie...Did Kris Kringle bring you anything last night? I don't believe he comes down this way at all for I haven't heard anything about him. I haven't any thing to send you for a Christmas present, so I will put in 25 cents and you may get what you want or what mama thinks is best ... A Merry Christmas to you from Papa."

He wrote a separate letter to his wife: "A Merry Christmas to you dear wife.

Since I cannot wish it you by word of mouth, I will by word of pen and paper. No doubt you are enjoying yourself finely today with the abundance of good things which are so plenty and so cheap in the peaceful north.

"A few extras would not go badly in this region to day but as they are not comestible, we content ourselves with what we have and by tomorrow no doubt we shall feel, as well as though we had stuffed ourselves full of roast turkey and plum



Soldiers from the 84th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Company B. (Photo courtesy Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, Illinois)

pudding.

"I'll tell you what we – that is Capt. Gasternicht and myself, propose to have today for dinner. First the universal 'sowbelly' (bacon) and coffee, then boiled beans with bread and butter. This last is an extra, the result of the captain's foraging expedition outside of the picket lines yesterday. He succeeded in getting about

3/4ths of a pound of white stuff they called butter and a canteen of milk all for the small sum of 50 cents and had to go three miles for that...."

A year later, Albert J. Blackford from Clinton, Illinois was resting in camp near Columbia, Tennessee. He was a captain with Company F of the 107th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, which mustered out of Camp Butler near Springfield. His regiment had been battling the Confederates throughout Tennessee. On Christmas he wrote to his wife. His letter is also at the ALPL.

"When I look back over the last year and think of the danger I have passed through, the many hardships and privations I have endured, I wonder that I am living today, for I have seen so many good men shot down, so many die of sickness. I have seen so many, very many fresh covered graves, that I feel I have indeed been fortunate."

All three men were fortunate; each survived the war.



(Left) Union soldiers pause for a photo outside their makeshift cabins. (Courtesy photo)



The answer to Trivia #1 is True. Christmas in areas of the North was considered an unnecessary expense and there are instances of people being fined in Massachusetts. It was thought to be a day of fasting by the Puritans and Lutherans. Next question: Which of these Christmas carols existed before the civil war? a. "Deck the Halls," b. "Jingle Bells," c. "We Three Kings of Orient Are," d. "Up on the Housetop."

Want the answer? Find the third trivia question.



What's for Supper? A Civil War Diet

Asa Bean, a surgeon in the Union Army, wrote describing his holiday dinner on Nov. 27, 1862:

"There has been a surprise party here today for the Benefit of Soldiers and Nurses they were furnished with a Holiday Dinner roast Turkey; Chicken & Pigeon & Oysters Stewed. ... I had a good dinner of Baked Chicken and Pudding, Boiled pota-

toes, Turnip, Apple butter, cheese butter, Tea & Trimmings."

The Confederate soldier's rations consisted of corn bread, mule meat or a meat substitute of "rice and molasses." There are reports of men existing for days on handfuls of parched corn or field peas. "Cush" or "slosh"—a

dish of necessity—was made by putting small pieces of beef in bacon grease, then pouring in water and "stewing it." Next, corn bread was crumbled in it, and the mixture was "stewed" again until all the water was cooked out."

Union soldiers dish out a meal from an iron kettle while in camp. (Courtesy photo)



Another dish combined Irish potatoes and green apples boiled together and mashed and seasoned with onions.

The Union soldiers' rations were somewhat better. Salt pork, ham, beans, split peas, dried fruits, hardtack and desiccated vegetables were on the list. The unpopular desiccated vegetables were often called desecrated vegetables. These were layers of cabbage leaves, turnip tops, sliced carrots, turnips, parsnips and a few onions; they were dehydrated in large blocks in ovens and then cut into one-ounce cubes. Issued to prevent scurvy, they were made into soup or fried.



Civil War Apple Pie Recipe

Below is an apple pie recipe from the Civil War era to help you enjoy the rest of this season and the seasons to come.

Apple Pie Ingredients:

Filling	Crust
8 medium-sized apples	1/2 cup butter
1 Tbsp butter	2 cups flour
1 cup white sugar	Pinch of salt
1/2 cup culinary rose water	Cold water
A little grated nutmeg	1 egg

Instructions:

Core the apples, chop coarsely and stew until softened — about 15 minutes. When done, add the butter, sugar, rose water, and nutmeg, and mix well.

Prior to making the apple filling, make the dough. Rub the butter into the flour, add the salt and mix in enough cold water (a few tablespoons at a time) to make a nice dough. Roll out enough dough to line a deep pie dish. Line the dish with the dough and fill with the apple mixture.

Roll out the remaining dough and cover the dish. Glaze with beaten egg and bake for 30 minutes in a moderate oven (375° F).

Source: William C. Davis, *The Civil War Cookbook* (Philadelphia, CLB Publishing, 1993).



The pie above is by Denise Sonnenberg. (Courtesy photo)

Trivia #3

The answer to question #2 is b and c. "Deck the Halls" (1862), "Jingle Bells" (1857), "We Three Kings of Orient Are" (1857) and "Up on the Housetop" (1864)

Last question: What camp food(s) would more commonly be used to decorate a Christmas tree in camp?

The answer is salt pork and hard tack.

Christmas Time in St. Louis

The following is an excerpt from a blog post by Douglas Harding with the National Park Service in St. Louis, Missouri.

Violent skirmishes in the streets of St. Louis, Missouri in May and June of 1861 resulted in numerous deaths. Martial Law was declared in August, lasting until the end of the Civil War. Citizens were forced to take an oath of loyalty to the United States, and residents had to obtain a pass from the Provost Marshall to enter and leave the city.*

The Confederacy's blockade of the Mississippi River south of Memphis brought river traffic to a standstill putting tremendous strain on the people and the commerce of St. Louis, the nation's second busiest port.

Over 2,000 of the 4,000,000 Americans held in slavery lived in the St. Louis area. Slavery had become unpopular in St. Louis, but the city remained the largest market for slave trade in Missouri; the seeds sown so deeply that they encompassed four generations of some black families – families torn and dessicated by trade.

In St. Louis, the first Confederate prisoners of war began arriving at the 7th Street Train Depot on Christmas Eve and were marched to the Gratiot Street Prison (formerly McDowell's Medical College).



A family; some of the 4 million enslaved people freed by the Union Army's victory are pictured here. (Courtesy photo)



Pictured above are Confederate prisoners held in St. Louis, Missouri in the Gratiot Street Prison. (Courtesy photo)

Over four years of war it grew horribly overcrowded, becoming the largest Union prison in Missouri for Confederate soldiers and spies. Many of them died of exposure to extreme heat or cold, and of disease.

Christmas 1861 found the fathers and sons of many St. Louis families away at war; some families split right down the middle for the Union or the Confederacy. Mothers, wives, sisters could be arrested, imprisoned or deported for aiding – sending food, bandages and letters – to Confederate family members.

But St. Louisans did what they could to keep Christmas in the festive way revived by Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* in 1843. "Jingle Bells," "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Deck the Halls" were popularly sung.

Homes like the Campbells' in Lucas Place, where no one went to war, were festooned with bright ribbon and greenery.

With Missouri ranking third in the number of Civil War battles fought within its borders and forty-five percent of those



An image of the Battle of Wilson's Creek in Southwest Missouri in 1861. (Artwork by Kurz and Allison - Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.)

fought in the first year of the war, St. Louis was inundated with refugees – former slaves and rural inhabitants whose homestead farms had been destroyed. Aid societies were formed to feed and clothe the destitute and St. Louisans were not only asked but required to contribute.* It was a desperate time and it would continue to be. If New Year's celebrations were subdued on Dec. 31, 1861 they nevertheless endured in hopes of a brighter future.

As 2022 draws to a close, may the specter of a Christmas more than 150 years past, remind St. Louisans how much we have to celebrate, not the least of which, that we survived civil war. And that we remain in the 21st century one nation under God, more ethnically diverse than ever, and resolve to make whatever future we are given better.

New Year's Eve Civil War Style

The following article was published on the blog American Civil War Voices. --author unknown

The turn of the year from old to new has long been celebrated in a variety of ways sometimes with frivolity and sometimes with spirituality, and sadly, sometimes on the battlefield. This is true of the Civil War period also.

Celebrating with Frivolity

According to Alexis McCrossen, writing for *We're History*, men and women belonging to what were then known as the "sporting fraternity" caroused much as they did throughout the year by visiting taverns, drinking, dancing and singing. However, in 1862, a group of celebrants dubbed themselves "The Baxter Muffins" (the name likely used for comedic ragtag militia, added some wild costumes to the mix and paraded through the streets of New York playing horns and drums.

Celebrating with Spirituality

Meanwhile, other people gathered in churches to pray the new year in. Attending church services and holding "Watch Nights" was a tradition in many denominations. But on Dec. 31, 1862, a special event occurred. Abolitionists and the free black community waited for President Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation, which he did on Jan. 1, 1863.

One such vigil occurred in Tremont Temple in Boston, Massachusetts where Frederick Douglass, Anna Dickinson and other notable abolitionists spoke to a mostly African-American crowd. By the morning of the 1st, thousands had gathered, and when word was received, Douglass led the audience in singing Blow Ye Trumpet, Blow. For many years after, African American congregations held Watch Nights, a practice that has continued to this day in some churches.

Celebrating While at War

But we must remember that while some rejoiced, in 1862, a war was going on to make the freedom for the slaves a reality. In Murfreesboro, Tennessee, the battle of Stone's River was being waged on a chill, foggy New Year's Eve. The forces of General Bragg and General Rosecrans met from Dec. 30 to Jan. 1 in a battle involving over 80,000 men, and with casualties numbering 23,500.

However, even in the midst of battle, the soldiers took time to mark the occasion. During the night of New Year's Eve, the Union troops played "Yankee Doodle," followed by "Hail Columbia." The Confederate soldiers hearing the music played "Dixie" in return. Songs went back and forth across the battle lines throughout the night. The exchange of music ended with the Union playing "Home Sweet Home" and the Confederate band joining in.

From the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, (SUVCW), we wish you and yours blessings in the New Year.

