



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*

Volume 3, Issue 2
October 2023



Remembering CC Wildermuth

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From the Editor

We have come to another fall season with it's bright colors and cooler temperatures. But we enter this season down one man. You will notice that the featured image on page one of this issue has text that starts with, "Remembering." As an organization developed for that very purpose of remembering our ancestors who served the Union, we do that alot. This time we take time to remember our Camp Commander David Wildermuth who fought his own battle, but lost his war with cancer.

As usual, I try to provide a variety of topics and stories in *Lest We Forget*, but please take note of special content about CC Wildermuth and his contributions, of which several are included. The brothers of Hecker Camp wish to thank the Wildermuth family, especially his wife Sheila, for all their support and contributions to the camp and the ample work Dave put into his role as commander. We are better because of his friendship and dedication.

As a reminder, we have our new website at <https://heckercamp443.org/>. I also signed us up for an updated general information email, info@heckercamp443.org. For anyone who may be new to our camp and this newsletter, this camp was first chartered in 1884 as a camp of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp, #443 is one of 10 camps in the Department of Illinois. However, it is the only representation for the SUVCW in southern Illinois. The camp was chartered as part of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) in 1996. The SUVCW is a fraternal organization dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of heroes who fought and worked to save the Union. In 1881 the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) formed the SUVCW as the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America (SV) to carry on its traditions and memory long after the GAR ceased to exist. It became the SUVCW in name in 1925 and is the legal successor to the GAR, first founded in 1866.

This newsletter is used to help educate readers, as well as continue the tradition of providing camp members, and others interested in maintaining our history, news about the SUVCW, our treasured American history, and what we can all do to help preserve and honor the memories of the Americans who sacrificed to preserve our Union so many years ago. The Hecker Camp history is [here](#). We hope you share this newsletter with anyone you feel may have an interest. It is also free to subscribe. Just email lestweforget1861@outlook.com. I want to say thank you for your readership of this newsletter and/or your participation in Hecker Camp, and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW).

Trivia #1

When was Abraham Lincoln born?

- a. 1799
- b. 1809
- c. 1812
- d. 1808

Want the answer? Find the second trivia question.



Lest We Forget is a publication of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). It is the only SUVCW 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, visit our Website: <http://www.heckercamp443.org/> Our Facebook page is [here](#).

For more information or interest in joining, you may also send a message to info@heckercamp443.org.

More about the SUVCW is here: www.suvcw.org

Camp Commander: vacant until elections

Sr. Vice Commander: Brother Russel Schleicher

Jr. Vice Commander: Brother John Stanton

Secretary, Editor, Webmaster: 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: Our late Camp Commander David Wildermuth is pictured on the cover in his official portrait with the Fairview/Caseyville Illinois Township Fire Protection District. He passed away in his home on July 20 after a battle with cancer. (Courtesy photo)

The Corner

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

Greetings Brethren (as Dave would say),
It seemed fitting to change the name of this column, at least temporarily. This will be a mixture of camp information, and I wanted to share a few thoughts.

Camp in Review

July—Camp meeting was held. This meeting was the first without CC Wildermuth's participation, as he went into the hospital. We did discuss ongoing business and a request from Shiloh representative Sue Quitmeier about her request for volunteers for the Shiloh Homecoming. Three volunteers were available: JVC John Stanton and Brothers Richard Piper and myself. We also discussed the picnic for our September meeting.

August—Camp meeting was held. This was the first since CC Wildermuth's passing July 20. The primary items that were announced were changes in responsibilities, at least temporarily. Br. Piper and myself are primarily working with the Hecker committee to work to restore the Col. Hecker Monument in St. Louis, and working with them and Walt Busch in receiving the Hecker sign for the Summerfield, Illinois cemetery.

September—Camp meeting was held. However it was preceeded with the annual camp picnic at 6 p.m. It was held in tribute to CC Wildermuth, and we had numerous guests including Sheila and Rachel Wildermuth. The Hecker Memorial event in the Summerfield cemetery is postponed until March so we can have it installed.

October—Upcoming elections and Christmas party were discussed.

Our next meeting is Nov. 1.

Please keep the newsletter in mind if you have an article or idea to share and if you have attended or participated in any event as a reenactor or representative of the Camp. Contact me at lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

We encourage our members that are not able to attend our meetings in person to join us on the Zoom call. We need six attendees for a quorum.

Camp Project Status

Highland Project — On hold.

Walnut Hill Restoration — On hold.



United We Stand

United We Stand is used often in relation to difficult times, and it applies today in our nation, our world and here in our organization.

I think the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) had it relatively easy as an organization in a few ways when it began.

Fresh off victory in the Civil War, the Union had hundreds of thousands of possible members to turn to. The horrors and sacrifice of the war were fresh in the minds of Americans North and South. Damage to homes, cities and the countryside would take years to heal and be rebuilt; constant reminders of the war. The fervor to honor loved ones, friends and comrades who fell during the war would last for a few generations.

Then came the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) in 1881; the successor to the GAR, which would seemingly have an endless stream of recruits coming from succeeding generations of original GAR members. I think that worked for a while.

However, as these later generations became involved in their own worlds, and families spread out around the country, the importance of remembering the past faded. And, because of the frailness of human memory, the influence of new technology, the politics of the day, different social interaction and other reasons, people forget about the sacrifice of their ancestors, and the importance of the Constitution the Union Army defended. We wouldn't be here without their efforts.

Because of their sacrifice and victory, we were united during world wars and other crises over the last 160 years. Now, we are engulfed in division, bickering and a lack of common decency and resolve to maintain our constitutional republic.

I've heard this quote all my life. But, in

whatever way it is said by whomever, it still rings true.

"Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

This version by Winston Churchill is even more true today. I worry about the future at times. However, worrying gets you nowhere unless you're doing something about it.

I'm proud to be a Veteran, a member of the SUVCW and to serve alongside my Hecker Camp brothers. I gladly participate and donate my time and skills toward the SUVCW mission of "preserving the history and legacy of Veteran heroes who fought and worked to save the Union in the American Civil War."

My great great, grandfather, his two brothers and nephew who fought then knew that unless Americans united to defend our Constitution and the sacrifice of the Founding Fathers, the U.S. would fall. Both of his brothers were wounded at Petersburg, Virginia, and his brother James died of his wounds and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. I feel it is my duty to carry on in their stead. Their sacrifice is primarily why I'm here.

Hecker CC Wildermuth's loss is terrible for his family, and it will be difficult for the brothers of Hecker Camp to work through.

Our efforts to actively and diligently recruit new members is essential. We must ensure this difficult time makes us stronger as a group and come together to support each other and the SUVCW by not only completing ongoing projects, but coming up with new endeavors that promote our ongoing mission. In fraternity, charity and loyalty; **united we stand.**





*A tribute
in photos
to CC David
Wildermuth*

Photos by Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor; and
Sheila Wildermuth





(Above right) On July 29, Hecker Camp Commander Dave Wildermuth's Union Army uniform stood alone as part of a display at the Fairview Heights, Illinois Fire Department during his Celebration of Life event held in the large conference room of the firehouse. (Inset top) CC Wildermuth's urn. (Inset below) Some of CC Wildermuth's awards and honors. (Photos by Gerald Sonnenberg)

Hundreds pay tribute to fallen Hecker Camp commander

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

Nearly 400 family members, friends, former coworkers and Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) brothers attended a Celebration of Life event July 29 for Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp Commander David Wildermuth. The event was held at and hosted by the Fairview Heights, Illinois Fire Department where CC Wildermuth previously worked.

Born Nov. 20, 1959, CC Wildermuth was a life-long resident of the Fairview Heights, Illinois area. He passed away July 20, surrounded by family, after a battle with cancer.

A member of the SUVCW and Hecker Camp since May 2013, he was serving his fifth term as camp commander when he passed. He was also recently selected as the SUVCW Department of Illinois junior vice commander. He worked for 14 years at Belleville Memorial Hospital, and he retired from the City of Fairview Heights Street Department after 30 years. He also retired as a lieutenant after 37 years as a part-time, on-call firefighter for the Fairview/Caseyville Township Fire Protection District in Fairview Heights.

His leadership of Hecker Camp most recently led to the camp being named Camp of the Year for the SUVCW Department of Illinois for this past year.

In a Facebook post, the family said, "To all friends and family. From Sheila, Rachel and Eddie Wildermuth. We would like to thank everyone who attended today's life celebration of David Wildermuth. What an amazing turn out it was. Dave was loved by so many. Thank you again for the amount of support that everyone has given us this past six months."



Hecker Camp Treasurer Richard Piper spoke brilliantly at the event on behalf of the Camp. (Photo by Gerald Sonnenberg)





The day I met Abraham Lincoln and Dave Wildermuth

By Br. Garry "Doc" Ladd, PCC

I remember meeting Abraham Lincoln and Dave Wildermuth on the same day. That day was April 20, 2013.

Leading up to that date, the Col. Hecker Camp, along with our friends from the Lt. Dixon Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), had been presenting living histories and displays to recognize the War of the Rebellion each April since 2011; the 150th anniversary of the war's beginning. Together, both camps met across five Aprils to educate the public and remember the sacrifices of our respective ancestors, with a few members of each camp being descendants of both the Northern and Southern soldiers and sailors. The theme for these sesquicentennial annual events was taken from the 1964 book by Irene Hunt, "Across Five Aprils," a book that takes place in southern Illinois where Dave's ancestors lived, and one could easily find supporters for both sides of the war; even within the same family.

In 2011, the first event was held at

Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) in Belleville, Illinois. It was a two-day event that started the five-year program.

At this event, which included lectures, displays, artifacts and living history reenactments, a proclamation was read by the college president recognizing the sesquicentennial of the war and the sacrifices made by both sides.

The Across Five Aprils theme was continued for the four subsequent Aprils. In April 2012, The Civil War Day and Living History Hecker and Dixon camps' encampment was held in the Quad at SWIC.

In April 2013, the Hecker and Dixon Camps created a living history display at SWIC during a double-header baseball game between SWIC and John A. Logan College of Carterville, Illinois.

In April 2014, the camp participated in a living history display at the Gustave Koerner house. And, on April 9, 2015, the last of the five April events to recognize the 150th anniversary of the end of the war, we met in Waterloo, Illinois with our friends from the Dixon Camp. We paused our busy, present-day lives to remember

Union and Confederate soldiers whose graves in Waterloo had been marked as part of an Eagle Scout project.

With these soldiers from both sides lying in their final resting places, we remembered their service. The significance of April 9 marked the fifth April of the war and surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, under General Robert E. Lee to Union General Ulysses S. Grant. Now, back to meeting Dave and Mr. Lincoln on April 20, 2013.

It was at the SWIC event where we played host to Mr. Lincoln, who was portrayed by Randy Duncan of Carlinville, Illinois, and he threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the baseball game. He remained amongst the troops during the rest of the day. I distinctly remember meeting Dave at the event.

Who can forget meeting Dave, right? I can remember talking to him about Civil War medicine, and he had several questions about the camp, who we were, and what we did. I don't recall when Dave

See MET, next page...

FRIEDRICH HECKER (1811-1881)

A Voice for Liberty



Hecker at the battle of Kandern, 20 Apr 1848
Friedrich Hecker Papers, Western Historical Manuscripts, University of MO-STL

A man of principle, Friedrich Karl Franz Hecker fought for democracy and freedom in both Germany and America. Born in Eichersheim, Germany to an educated and distinguished family, Hecker studied history and earned a law degree in his early twenties. In 1842 he was elected to the Baden State Assembly, where he made a name for himself as a charismatic and eloquent speaker.

Revering America's Constitution and Bill of Rights, Hecker sought the same ideals for Germany. In March 1848 he was a prominent leader calling for a democratic government, reducing the role of nobility. In April, he led a general armed rebellion against the Baden government.



Hecker, 1875

When this revolt failed, Hecker fled to America under a charge of treason. Thousands greeted his arrival in New York that October. Traveling west and feted by German-Americans along the way, he settled near St. Louis, in Summerfield, Illinois, and quickly won widespread fame for his speeches, writings, and political activity. As a national leader of the German-American community, he helped form the emerging Republican Party. Like other German political refugees and former revolutionaries of the time, he was known as a *Forty-Eighter*.

During the Civil War, Hecker's opposition to slavery and commitment to democracy led him to enlist at age 50 in the Union Army. Initially serving in the 3rd Missouri regiment, he saw action in the Camp Jackson Affair. Hecker subsequently rose to the rank of Colonel, commanding first the 24th and then the 82nd Illinois regiments.



Hecker, as a Union Soldier, ca 1861
St. Louis Mercantile Library, University of MO-STL

While rallying his troops, Hecker was wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville. He recovered in time to rejoin his regiment at Gettysburg. Hecker later commanded the 3rd Brigade, XI Corps, which supported troops in the Chattanooga Campaign.

In poor health, Colonel Hecker was honorably released from the Army in March 1864 and returned to his Illinois farm. After the war, he remained an influential international figure, writing and lecturing on politics and democracy. His audiences especially loved his impassioned 4th of July speeches.

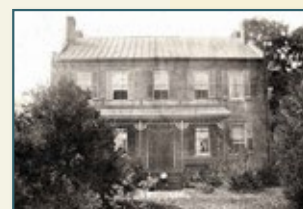
"The Union [is] a giant tree with broadly spreading branches, casting a shadow under whose protection human rights and human happiness flourish. Three cheers for the principle of unity and liberty for all on earth, for the stars and stripes, the symbol of the equality of mankind!"

—Friedrich Hecker
4 July 1873 Stuttgart, Germany

Hecker is remembered for his ardent defense of democracy and his patriotism to two countries: Germany in 1848 and the United States in 1861. These dates are inscribed on the sides of the Benton Park monument, erected by the German-American community the year after Hecker's death to honor his devotion to liberty and the ideals of the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights.



Hecker speaking at the Second Chamber, Grand Duchy of Baden, ca 1846
Friedrich Hecker Papers, Western Historical Manuscripts, University of MO-STL



Hecker birthplace, Summerfield, Illinois

VISITING HECKER:

Summerfield Park Plaque, Summerfield, IL: Mitchell Street entrance by the flag poles.
Summerfield Cemetery, Summerfield, IL: Summerfield South Road, St. Clair County.
Friedrich Hecker Monument, Benton Park, St. Louis, MO: Granite obelisk near intersection of Wyoming and Missouri Streets.
Illinois Monument at Orchard Knob, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Orchard Knob Reservation, Chattanooga, TN: Plaque listing Hecker's Brigade inside the memorial, North Orchard Knob Avenue.

Washington Park Monument, Cincinnati, OH: Marble bust portrait, 1225 Elm Street.
Hecker's Dream, Sculpture, Angelbachtal, Germany: Front of the Friedrich Hecker House, Friedrich-Hecker-Strasse 3, 74918.
Hecker Monument, Konstanz, Germany: Majolica relief commemorating Hecker's speeches for recruitment, east side of the Bürgersaal, Stephansplatz 17, Old Town.
For Freedom Monument, Sinsheim, Germany: Granite column celebrating the five most important Sinsheim fighters for democracy, Hauptstraße 92, 74869.

FURTHER READING

Freitag, Sabine. *Friedrich Hecker: Two Lives for Liberty*. St. Louis: St. Louis Mercantile Library, 2006.

This marker was funded through a partnership of local Civil War groups, German-American heritage groups, and members of the Hecker family. Copyright © 2023 by the German American Heritage Society of St. Louis.

Hecker Memorial update

Pictured above is an image of the graphic panel for the Summerfield, Illinois cemetery honoring Col. Hecker. An identical panel will eventually be installed by the refurbished Hecker monument in Benton Park in St. Louis, Missouri. The panel depicts, through text and images, Friedrich Hecker's life. It includes information on his efforts to bring more democracy to Germany, followed by his emigration to the United States and his service to this country. The panel for the Summerfield Cemetery is on it's way. Once it is installed, we will arrange a dedication ceremony.



MET continued...

joined the camp as a brother, but I remember him and Sheila being at the September camp picnic in Swansea, as well as attending the camp's Shiloh Homecoming displays in the fall of 2013, so I believe he became a member either in late spring or during the summer.

In the ten years I got to know Dave, there are two times he was a passenger in my truck. The first was during the Smithton Homecoming of 2014. About half way into the parade he became overheated, and we got him into my air-conditioned truck which I was driving as a trail vehicle in the parade because of the heat. He got in and sat in the front seat, and I reached over to unbutton his uniform to help him cool off. He said he was fine, but my Navy Corpsman instincts told me differently as I also handed him water.

With the A/C blasting, I was busy convincing him to get his jacket unbuttoned, and I told him I would have told his Marine father the same; you are my responsibility now. We chatted a little bit during the rest of the parade. Well actually, he chatted, and I listened, as he recovered.

The second time he was a passenger in my truck was when we

drove to Rockford, Illinois for the department encampment in May 2015.

If you know Dave, you can envision him doing 95% of the talking and me doing 95% of the listening. What was funny is that he would stop talking, apologize for talking so much, then continue right on talking. Over the years, his passion for talking became an on-going joke between the two of us.

During the 10 years I knew Dave, I saw him become involved in many aspects of the camp's comings and goings. He became a camp officer, was active at the department level, and attended national encampments.

He never forgot his Civil War ancestor, Pvt. John N. Waite, who joined the 44th Illinois Vol. Infantry Regiment Co. I, on Sept. 1, 1861 in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Pvt. Waite lost an arm during the war.

In addition to recognizing that Civil War ancestor who sacrificed his arm for the Union cause, he also spoke about his dad, a WWII Marine, for whose service Dave was very proud.

Dave embraced and lived the SUVCW's mission doing honor to all who have patriotically served our country in any war. Rest in peace Brother Dave.



Hecker Camp named Illinois Department Camp of the Year

During the May encampment with the SUVCW Department of Illinois, the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 was named camp of the year for 2022-2023 by Department commander Gary Gunderson. The award will be presented at the mid-year encampment in Ottawa, Illinois on Oct. 21.

The award was submitted by the late CC Dave Wildermuth and listed the numerous efforts the camp participated in like assemblies to remember Gen. Sherman, Memorial Day parade, Veterans Day parades and the Worden, Illinois cemetery grave marker dedication event among many other events and efforts too numerous to mention.

Thank you to the Department for this recognition and to all of Hecker Camp that contributed toward this achievement. It is definitely something to be proud.



Pictured above (left to right) CC Wildermuth, Br. Gerald Sonnenberg, Br. Bob Aubuchon (PCC) of Grant camp, Brothers Gary Boo and Richard Piper at a ceremony at Palmier Cemetery in Columbia, Illinois in 2022. (Photo by Sheila Wildermuth)

Pike County, Illinois history

Senior Vice Commander Russell Schleicher participated in Abe Lincoln Project's [Lincoln Days](#) Civil War Reenactment June 2-4 in Pittsfield, Illinois. The event first started in 2001. (Photos by Donna Rees)



Homecoming volunteers

The city of Shiloh, Illinois is very thankful to the members of Hecker Camp who were able to help them during their annual homecoming event Sept. 8-9. Brothers Richard Piper and Gerald Sonnenberg, as well as Junior Vice Commander John Stanton were available to help local police explorers from O'Fallon, Illinois park hundreds of vehicles.

A reminder that Sue Quitmeyer, Events Coordinator for the Shiloh Senior Center, is looking for volunteers for the annual Treasures in the Park Craft Fair on Oct. 21 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Volunteer times start at 6:45 a.m. to help crafters unload and park cars, and they should be done by 9 a.m. or so once everyone is unloaded and set up. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Br. Gerald Sonnenberg.



Educating Boy Scouts about the Civil War

CC Greg Zelinske was involved with an event at S-F Scout Ranch (pronounced S bar F) near Farmington, Missouri on July 18. Approximately 70 Boy Scouts were divided into five groups and received a presentation regarding the Civil War. Two groups received presentations outdoors before rain occurred. The other three groups were able to have the presentation indoors.

From the S-F website we learn, "Renowned as one of America's finest Scouting facilities for over five decades, accommodations at 'The Ranch' can now be reserved by the general public as well. Within its 5,200 acres of pristine woodlands, the crown jewel of this remarkable property is the 270-acre Nims Lake, a haven for visitors to relish an abundance of exhilarating water activities."



Meet Brother Donn Cooks

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

In this issue, we highlight Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 member Brother Donn Cooks. Donn is a Belleville, Illinois native, who was born in 1988 to Donnie Cooks and LaWanda Miller of St. Louis, Missouri.

Now residing in Collinsville, Illinois, Donn is a member of the Illinois National Guard and an Intelligence Analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Involvement in the SUVCW and Family Ties

Donn had been doing his family genealogy, and discovered he had several ancestors who fought in the Civil War.

"I wanted to join a group centered around the Civil War and the descendants of Civil War Veterans."

He searched for a group and discovered Hecker Camp, which he joined in 2022.

"I am a descendant of several Union soldiers. One of my relations is Joseph (Joe) Bracken," said Cooks. "He lived in Ballard County, Kentucky and served in the Union Army in the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT). He and other soldiers from Ballard County were written about in the book 'Ballard's Brave Boys,' by M. Juliette Magee."

Other Interests

He has an MA in military history, and the Civil War is one of the conflicts that particularly catches his interests.

"I am wanting to explore more of the history of the war, and I have a personal interest due to my family's involvement."



Brother Donn Cooks is pictured here in his uniform. He is a member of the Illinois National Guard. (Courtesy photo)



Trivia #2

**The answer to Trivia #1
is 1809.**

The tune was so popular that a poet, who was uncomfortable with the lyrics, ("John Brown's body lies a mold'ring in the grave, his soul is march'ing on!... They will hang Jeff Davis from a tree/as they march along!"), wrote a new set of words to it under the title, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." The poet replaced the lines about John Brown's body lies a mold'ring in the grave and Jefferson Davis' imminent hanging with, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed his faithful lightning of His terrible swift sword; His truth is march'ing on."

Next question: Who wrote The Battle Hymn of the Republic?

- a. Harriet Beecher Stowe
- b. Julia Ward Howe
- c. Clara Barton
- d. Harriet Tubman

Want the answer? Find the third trivia question.



Object 63: Disabled Union Veterans

By Jeffrey Seiken, Ph.D.

Historian, Veterans Benefits Administration

Editor's Note: The following is an article produced by a historian at the Veterans Benefits Administration within the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is published here with their knowledge and is part of the History of [VA in 100 Objects](#). The article link is [here](#).

The North's victory in the Civil War came at an enormous cost to the more than two million men who fought for the Union cause. Over 350,000 lost their lives due to battle or disease. Almost as many were wounded in action. Some escaped with minor flesh wounds, but others suffered more lasting injuries that left their bodies scarred, damaged or worse. According to Northern medical records, Union surgeons performed just under 30,000 amputations during the war, although the actual number was almost certainly higher. Roughly 75 percent of the patients survived these operations and returned to civilian life missing one or more limbs, or other body parts.

Congress made provisions to provide monetary compensation to the wounded

or disabled at the beginning of the war.

In July 1861, lawmakers hastily passed a law for recruits who answered [President Abraham Lincoln's call](#) for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion, making them eligible for the same pension allowances as soldiers in the regular army. A year later, after it became apparent that there would be no speedy end to the conflict, Congress enacted a more comprehensive pension act called the General Law. It was modeled on the pension legislation passed for Veterans of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Mexican War, although it was more liberal in one important respect. For the first time, a pension law explicitly granted benefits not just to men wounded in battle, but also to those suffering from "disease contracted while in the service of the United States." This stipulation vastly increased the pool of eligible claimants, as sickness and disease ran rampant in the ranks during the war. Over the next 36 years, almost 60 percent of the more than 400,000 pensions awarded to Civil War Veterans would be for non-battlefield causes.

In other respects, the 1862 act followed the practices of previous pension laws. As had been the case since the American Revolution, payment rates depended on rank (at the time of injury) and the severity of the disability. If fully disabled, privates and non-commissioned officers received \$8 a month; an amount fixed by law back in 1816. At the other end of the payment spectrum, officers at the rank of lieutenant colonel or higher received \$30. Proportionally smaller sums were awarded for injuries that were determined to be less than completely debilitating

Surgeon's certificate from 1875 stating that Union Veteran William Martin deserves three-eighths of a full pension for a gunshot wound to his left hip. His 1863 claim for the same injury was denied because the wound was expected to heal in three months. (NBER.org)

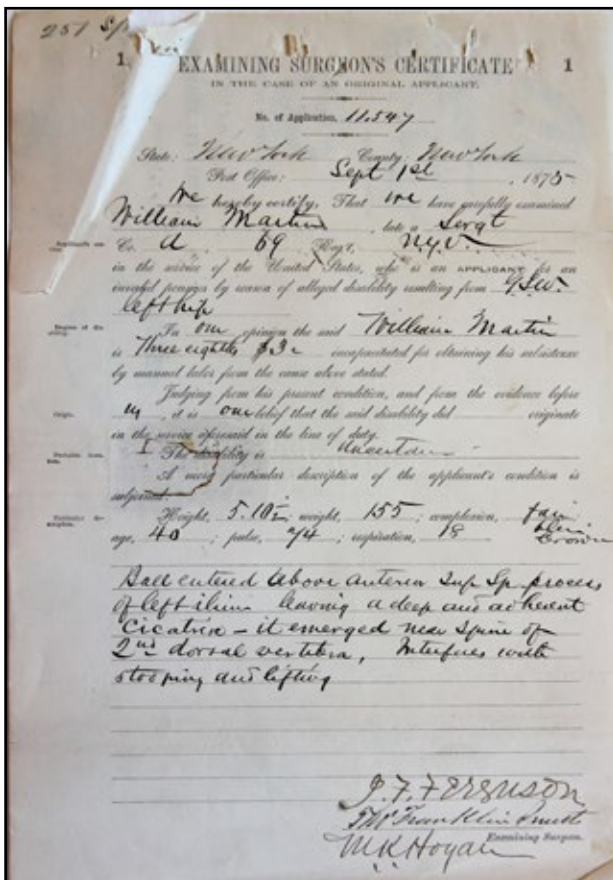


Three Union Veterans and left-leg amputees pose for a picture, circa late 1860s. All three were wounded during the fighting in 1863. (Library of Congress)

by examining physicians. In evaluating a Veteran's condition, medical officials used the criteria that had been in place since 1806: they assessed the "nature of such disability, and in what degree it prevents the claimant from obtaining his subsistence"—meaning a living—by manual labor.

Congress diverged from this simple, if highly subjective formula for calculating pension rates later in the war as casualties and the carnage on the battlefield mounted. In mid-1864, legislators approved an act establishing fixed rates that applied to all ranks for specific types of severe and permanent disabilities. The new law covered three conditions: the loss of both feet merited a monthly pension of \$20, while the loss of both hands, or the sight in both eyes, was worth \$25. Two additional laws passed in 1865 and 1866 added 14 other kinds of disabilities that qualified for a pension at a fixed rate of between \$15 and \$25. These rates were periodically increased in a series of later laws enacted between 1872 and 1904.

The modifications to the 1862 General Law were intended to provide clarity and consistency to the pension



See UNION next page...

STATUTORY RATES FOR PERMANENT SPECIFIC DISABILITIES¹

Disabilities	From July 4, 1864	From Mar. 3, 1865	From June 6, 1866	From June 4, 1872	From June 4, 1874	From Feb. 28, 1877	From June 17, 1878	From Mar. 3, 1879	From Mar. 3, 1883	From Mar. 3, 1885	From Aug. 4, 1886	From Aug. 27, 1888	From Feb. 12, 1889	From Mar. 4, 1890	From July 14, 1892	From Jan. 15, 1903	From Mar. 2, 1903	From Apr. 8, 1904
Loss of both hands	\$25.00			\$31.25	\$50.00		\$72.00						\$100.00				\$100.00	
Loss of both feet	20.00			31.25	50.00		72.00											\$100.00
Loss of sight of one eye, the sight of the other having been lost before enlistment	25.00			31.25	50.00		72.00											
Loss of one hand and one foot		\$20.00		31.25	50.00		72.00											100.00
Loss of a hand or a foot			\$25.00	31.25	50.00		72.00											
Loss of an arm at or above the elbow or a leg at or above the knee			15.00	18.00	24.00		36.00										60.00	
Loss of either a leg at the hip joint or an arm at the shoulder joint, or so near as to prevent the use of an artificial limb				18.00	24.00				\$24.00		\$30.00						40.00	
Loss of leg at hip joint			15.00	18.00	24.00				30.00		36.00						46.00	
Loss of an arm at shoulder joint			15.00	18.00	24.00													
Total disability in both hands			15.00	18.00	24.00				\$37.50		45.00						55.00	
Total disability in both feet			15.00	18.00	24.00				\$37.50		45.00						55.00	
Total disability in one hand and one foot			20.00	24.00	36.00												60.00	
Total disability in one hand or one foot			15.00	18.00					24.00		30.00						40.00	
Total disability in arm or leg			15.00	18.00					24.00		36.00						46.00	
Disability equivalent to the loss of a hand or a foot (third grade)			15.00	18.00					24.00									
Incapacity to perform manual labor (second grade)			20.00	24.00					30.00									
Regular aid and attendance (first grade)*			25.00	31.25	50.00		72.00							\$72.00				
Frequent and periodical, not constant, aid and attendance (intermediate grade)															\$50.00			
Total deafness				13.00								\$30.00				\$40.00		

¹From Laws of the United States Governing the Granting of Army and Navy Pensions, 110. (Compiled under the direction of the Commissioner of Pensions, 1916 edition.)

*\$72 from June 17, 1878, only where the rate was \$50, under act of June 18, 1874, and granted to date prior to June 16, 1880. First grade proper is \$50, amended by act March 4, 1890, which increases rate to \$72.

Compilation of rates for specific disabilities as set forth by laws passed between 1864 and 1904. The table appears in *Federal Military Pensions in the United States (1918)* by William Glasson. (Google Books)

system, while also awarding more generous compensation to enlisted personnel and lower-ranking officers who suffered grievous injuries. But the new statutes introduced their own set of complications and ambiguities. Many of the disabilities covered were straightforward and simple to ascertain—for instance, loss of a leg at the hip joint, or an arm at the shoulder joint, earned the injured Veteran a monthly pension of \$15. But the 1866 act also awarded \$15—soon after increased to \$18—for a “disability equivalent to the loss of a hand or foot,” a category of impairment that was open to interpretation.

It also specified a payment of \$20 for “incapacity to perform manual labor,” which seemed at odds with the terms of the 1862 law. An attempt to codify all existing pension laws in 1873 added another layer of complexity by empowering the Pension Bureau to establish fixed payment rates of between \$1 and \$17 for specific disabilities that fell short of being equivalent to the loss of a hand or foot.

Despite its shortcomings, the Federal government applied the Civil War-era pension regulations to all who served in the U.S. Army and Navy after 1865, including those who fought in the Span-

ish-American War and Philippine Insurrection (1898-1902).

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, however, Congress devised a different methodology for compensating service-connected injuries and placed it under the direction of a new agency in the Treasury Department, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance (BWRI). The BWRI calculated compensation for Great War Veterans according to a published rating schedule based on state workmen’s compensation laws. This process became the basis of the modern compensation system employed by VA today.




Trivia #3

The answer to trivia question #2 is Julia Ward Howe.

Last question. True or false. Abraham Lincoln was the first president born outside of the original 13 colonies.

a. True or False

The answer to trivia question #3 is true.



The Battle Hymn of the Republic

By Julia Ward Howe, 1861

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal";
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat;
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! Be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Our God is marching on.

A battalion was dispatched to Murray, Kentucky, early in the Civil War, and Julia Ward Howe heard this song as 'John Brown's Body' during a public review of the troops outside Washington, D.C., on Upton Hill, Virginia.

Rufus R. Dawes, then in command of Company "K" of the 6th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, stated in his memoirs that the man who started the singing was Sergeant John Ticknor of his company. Howe's companion at the review, the Reverend James Freeman Clarke, suggested to Howe that she write new words for the fighting men's song. Staying at the Willard Hotel in Washington on the night of Nov. 18, 1861, Howe wrote the verses to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." [Source is Wikipedia](#)

