



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 6, Issue 1
Spring 2026



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This building, Dietz Memorial Hall located in Belleville, Ill., was the headquarters for Hecker Post # 443 of the GAR and their auxiliary the Woman's Relief Corps. This picture of the Hall and about 60 members of the Post was taken in 1912 during the Belleville Memorial Day celebration.

About this Newsletter

For anyone new to our camp and this newsletter, this camp was first chartered in 1884 as a post of the [Grand Army of the Republic \(GAR\)](#). Today, the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp, #443 is one of 11 camps in the Department of Illinois for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). It is the only SUVCW camp in southern Illinois. The camp was chartered as part of the 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 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 who are 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. Some of the history of Hecker Post #443 and the GAR is [here](#). Please share this newsletter with anyone who may have an interest. It's free to subscribe and/or send submissions. Just email lestweforget1861@outlook.com. Thank you for your readership of this newsletter and/or your participation in Hecker Camp, and the SUVCW.

If you are not a member and have an interest and/or a direct connection to the civil war, or know of someone else who may, please consider applying for membership and passing the word along to others. [Click here to learn more](#). As usual, I try to provide a variety of topics and stories in *Lest We Forget*, as well as highlight camp activities and members.



Trivia #1

The single shot rifled musket was the mainstay of troops on both sides during the Civil War. How many shots per minute was regarded as a fast rate?

- a. 2
- b. 3
- c. 4

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.
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For submissions or to subscribe to the newsletter, email: lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

On the cover: This painting by Don Troiani of the 69th New York Regiment of the famed Irish Brigade at the Battle of Antietam is only one example of Irishmen fighting in the Civil War both North and South. Illinois had its own "Irish Brigade." Learn more on page 6.



The Corner

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

Hello Brothers, Camp in Review

January—Camp meeting was held Jan. 7. We had no guests. We then read the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes.

As no meeting was held in December, we discussed the results of the Veterans Day Parade in O'Fallon, Illinois in November, where Brothers Ladd, Russell, Zelinske, Piper and Sonnenberg participated, as well as Donna Rees who drove the trailing vehicle.

On Dec. 6, we held our Installation/Holiday Party upstairs at Klucker Hall in Shiloh, Illinois. The building is just across the parking lot from our normal meeting place at the community center. We held it during the day so more brothers would be able to join us. After installation of our officers for 2026, attendees were also treated to a presentation on John C. Frémont by Brother Greg Wolk. He is a retired civil trial lawyer and author who recently released his second book, *John Frémont's 100 Days: Clashes and Convictions in Civil War Missouri* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2025). A life member of the SUVCW, he is a member of U.S. Grant Camp #68 in St. Louis and the Lt. Col. J. Felix St. James camp #326 in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. Eight brothers and four family members attended.

We also introduced our first updated recruiting poster. It is based on a great idea from a former member of the camp. Photos were taken last year of other members of the camp to be used in additional posters. **See far right corner.**

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed Brothers in arms a century apart comparing Civil War Veterans to Vietnam Veterans. **See page 5.**

February—Camp meeting was held Feb. 4. We had no guests. After the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes, we discussed any upcoming events.

PCC Garry Ladd suggested that with our annual picnic in September, we could have a special celebration considering 2026 is the 30th anniversary year of Hecker Camp #443. The suggested plan is to invite



current and past members for a reunion picnic. Tentative date would be Saturday Aug. 29 at noon.

We also received word from SVC John Stanton that the 100th anniversary of the town of Glen Carbon, Illinois is taking place June 20. We are awaiting more details, but Hecker Camp is being asked to provide a display on that date in their local park.

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed the book *The Words Lincoln Lived By*, and focused on three themes from the book; compromise, flexibility and tact.

March—Camp meeting was held March 4. We had no guests. After the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes, we discussed any upcoming events.

Brother Sonnenberg mentioned an event suggested by Brother Winkler regarding a three-day celebration in June in Murphysboro, Illinois, in honor of the nation's 250th anniversary and the 200th birthday of Gen. John Logan. A parade of .8 miles will occur June 6, and we discussed marching in it. There is also the avenue of having our Civil War and Revolutionary ancestors recognized on placards during the parade. What is needed regarding the ancestor is their name, unit, company and their residence at the time if known. Also needed is the descendant's contact information.

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed "What ifs of the civil war."

Upcoming Events - For a full list of upcoming events, **see page 10.**

Next scheduled meetings - Our next scheduled meetings are April 1, May 6 and June 3 at 7 p.m. at the Shiloh, Illinois Community Center. A Zoom option is usually also available for those who cannot attend in person.

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 living historian or representative of the Camp. Contact me at lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

Make the Connection

There were 2,213,263 Union Civil War Soldiers and Sailors. Chances are you have a connection to one of them.

Join us in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443
and help preserve their honor and memory.

Website
www.heckercamp443.org
on Facebook
ColFriedrichKHeckerCampsuvcw

Feature

Doc's Notes:

Hospital stewards – Unsung heroes of the medical department

By Dr. Garry "Doc" Ladd
Hecker Camp Past Camp Commander

Hospital stewards played a crucial but often overlooked role in the American Civil War by serving as the backbone of military medical care.

Appointed within both the Union and Confederate armies, hospital stewards were non-commissioned officers responsible for assisting surgeons and managing hospital operations. Their position was formally recognized by the U.S. Army in 1861, reflecting the growing need for organized medical support as battlefield casualties increased dramatically. Without hospital stewards, the already strained wartime medical system would have struggled even more to function effectively.

Everyday work

The daily duties of hospital stewards were wide-ranging and demanding. They managed medical supplies, prepared medicines, kept patient records, supervised orderlies, and ensured cleanliness in hospitals and field stations. In an era before antibiotics and modern sanitation, these responsibilities were critical to preventing disease, which killed more soldiers than combat wounds.

Hospital stewards often worked long hours under dangerous conditions, espe-



cially in makeshift field hospitals close to active battle zones. Hospital stewards also acted as a vital link between surgeons and enlisted soldiers.

Many stewards had prior civilian experience as pharmacists or medical assistants, making them invaluable during surgeries and emergency treatments. They frequently assisted with amputations, wound dressings and patient transport. Their organizational skills allowed surgeons to focus on medical procedures, improving efficiency and survival rates.

In this way, hospital stewards helped professionalize military medicine during the Civil War.

Despite their importance, hospital stewards rarely received public recognition for their service. Their work, however, laid the groundwork for future developments in military medical corps and hospital administration. By maintaining order, sanitation and medical supply systems during one of the deadliest conflicts in American history, hospital stewards significantly improved the care of wounded soldiers. Their contributions remain an essential part of understanding how Civil War medicine evolved and how armies learned to manage large-scale medical crises.

References:

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- United States War Department. *Revised United States Army Regulations of 1861*.
- Adams, George Worthington. *Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War*. Henry Schuman, 1952.
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The answer to Trivia #1 is b. 3.

The U.S.S Rhode Island managed to rescue 47 men on Dec. 30, 1862 as what famous ship foundered in a storm and went down off Cape Hatteras?

Want the answer? Find the third trivia question.



Hospital Stewards of the 2nd Division, 9th Corps, Petersburg, Virginia. (Courtesy Library of Congress)



Brothers in arms a century apart

By Richard Piper
Hecker Camp Treasurer, Patriotic Instructor

On March 29, we will celebrate National Vietnam War Veterans Day. March 29 was chosen as National Vietnam War Veterans Day because on March 29, 1973, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was disbanded and the last U.S. combat troops departed the Republic of Vietnam.

On March 29, 2012, President Barack Obama proclaimed March 29, 2012, as Vietnam Veterans Day. Then, on March 28, 2017, President Donald Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017. This act officially recognizes March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

As many of the early Baby Boomer Generation turn eighty this year, let us compare the soldiers of the civil War to those Boomers who served during the Vietnam War era. We'll do this using the statistics of the times.

Socio-Economic Status

Of course, the America of the 1960s and 70s was quite developed and different from Civil War times, but we will compare what we can.

For Northern soldiers, about 25% were mechanics and almost 50% were farmers. The remainder were laborers (16%), business and salespeople (5%), professionals (3%) and the others (4%).

Examinations of the muster rolls of scores of Union companies showed more than three hundred occupations and specialties that included bookkeepers, brokers, brakemen, artists, chemists, contractors, dancing masters, ditchers, grocers, glass blowers, hairdressers, iron workers, landlords and locksmiths.

The typical Northern regiment had carpenters, shoemakers, clerks, printers and

blacksmiths who, together, with former railroad men could do all kinds of things.

Union troops were the most literate army in history to that time since more than 90% of the white Union soldiers could read and write, even if they did not write or spell very well.

In the Vietnam era, 76% of those who served were from lower-, middle- or working-class backgrounds. About 75% had family incomes above the poverty level, and 50% were from middle income backgrounds. Some 23% of Vietnam Veterans had fathers with professional, managerial or technical jobs. Approximately, 79% of the men who served in Vietnam had a high school education or better when they entered the service.

Age and Honorable Service

In the first year of the Civil War, most of the enlisted men were teenagers. Better than 98% of the enlisted men were between the ages of 18 and 46. The median age was 24 years old, while the average Civil War soldier was 26 years old, weighing 143 pounds and standing five feet eight inches tall.

The Union had a population of 22,339,989, and of that number, 2,772,408 (12.41%) served in some branch of the army. Some 199,045 Union soldiers deserted with many reenlisting under a different name for the bounty.

The average age of the Vietnam War GI was twenty-two. Some 97% of Vietnam-era Veterans were honorably discharged. Vietnam Veterans represented 9.7% of the males of their generation. During the Vietnam era, 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the war (Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975).

Race and Ethnic Background

About 76% of Union soldiers were born

in the U.S. The 23rd Ohio was mostly native born with all speaking English. Other regiments had soldiers from many countries, and usually with Germans first, then Irishmen, in numbers.

As for foreign born soldiers in the Union Army, there were 175,000 to 200,000 Germans; 144,000 Irish; 45,000 British; 4,000 Norwegians; and 3,000 Swedes. French, Polish, Scots, Canadians, Belgians and Hungarians also contributed to the remainder of the foreign born. In 1863, Union armies began formally organizing African American regiments. About 179,000 blacks would serve in the Union Army, and 10,000 blacks would serve in the Union Navy.

During Vietnam, the age of foreign-born Americans serving in the thousands had passed. Differences were shown primarily by race. Of the 2.7 million who served during Vietnam, 83.2% were Caucasian; 5.2% or about 170,000 were Hispanic; 10.6% or 275,000 were Black and 1% were other races.

Draftees vs Volunteers

During the Civil War, a draft began in March 1863. However, a man who was drafted could pay a commutation fee of \$300 and be excused from service. The \$300 fee was close to a year's income for an unskilled worker. In all, about 75,000 men were hired by drafted civilians as "substitutes." About 6% of total strength of the Northern Army were draftees.

In Vietnam, 25% or 648,500 of total forces were draftees.

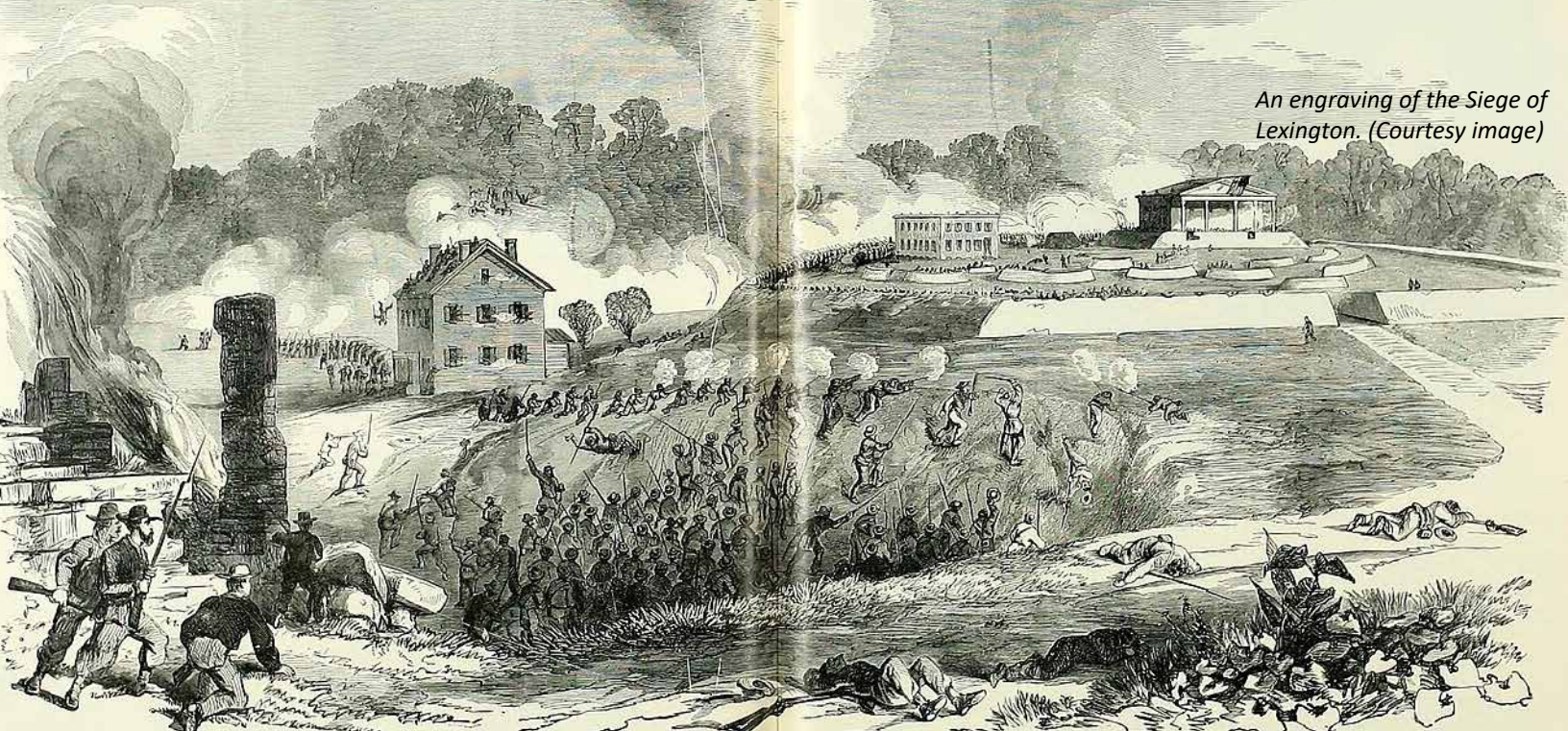
Casualties

It's estimated that 360,000 officers and men lost their lives fighting for the Union. Of these, 110,000 (less than 1/3 of

See **BROTHERS**, page 7 ...



Illinois' own Irish Brigade



An engraving of the Siege of Lexington. (Courtesy image)

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

While the fame of Irish units like the 69th New York is well known in Civil War circles, other states had their own "Irish Brigades." In Illinois, it was the 23rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment; the "First Irish," whose first battle is probably their most famous.

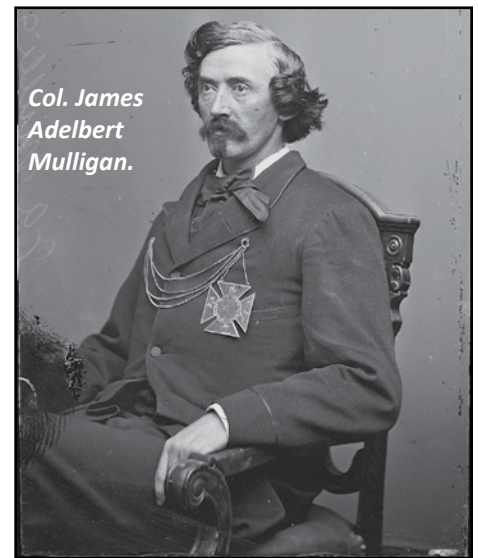
The 23rd Illinois Infantry was raised by attorney James Adelbert Mulligan and organized at Chicago, Illinois. It was mustered into Federal service on June 15, 1861. They were moved to Quincy, Illinois, July 14, then to St. Louis, Missouri, and finally, to Jefferson City, Missouri July 21 until Sept. 8.

Led by, now, Col. Mulligan, the regi-

ment was then marched to Lexington, Missouri in the northwest of the state to counter the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard under Sterling Price fresh off his victory over Union forces under Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon in August at Wilson's Creek.

The 23rd was then joined by a detachment of the 27th Missouri Mounted Infantry under Lt. Col. Benjamin W. Grover. On Sept. 11, the 13th Missouri Infantry and Maj. Robert T. Van Horn's battalion returned to Lexington. Mulligan now commanded 3,500 men. However, the 23rd and the rest of the defenders were besieged and attacked by Price's army, which was five times their size.

See IRISH next page ...



Col. James
Adelbert
Mulligan.



Feature



BROTHERS continued ...

the total) were killed in action or mortally wounded. For the rest, 200,000 died of disease; 25,000 died as prisoners of war; 10,000 died from accidents; 16,000 died of other causes; and 500,000 had non-fatal injuries; in many cases, amputations.

In Vietnam, 86.1% of those who died were Caucasian; 12.4% or 7,265 were Black; 5.2% or 3,070 were Hispanic; 1.5% were others. Of those killed in action, 86.8 were Caucasian (including Hispanics); 12.1% were Black; and 1.1% others or not reported. Some 14.1% of non-combat deaths were among Black troops.

In Vietnam, total deaths among Americans were 58,275, with 47,528 being in action. In addition, eight nurses died (one in action). Among the dead, 17,215 were married men. Of those killed, 61% were 21 years old or younger.

Draftees accounted for 17,692 deaths or 30%. While reservists suffered 5,771 deaths and National Guard with 97.

The wounded totaled 303,704, of which 153,329 were hospitalized. In the end, 75,000 Americans became disabled; 23,214 were 100% disabled, while 5,283 lost limbs and 1,081 had multiple amputations.

Finally, of the 778 Americans captured

during the conflict, 117 died in captivity. Sadly, as of early 2025, 1,573 Americans remain missing and unaccounted for with 1,235 in Vietnam, 283 in Laos, 48 in Cambodia and 7 in Chinese territorial waters.

Brothers in arms who served a century apart. Some were drafted and some were not. They came from different backgrounds, social classes and races to serve in the armed forces. A century is a long time, but in many ways, the soldiers had many of the same fears and hopes. They wanted to do their duty, survive and see their loved ones again. Duty, honor, country. We salute them all for their service.

Sources:

**Private Soldiers and Public Heroes*, by Milton Bagby

**Touched With Fire*, by James M. Perry

**Men at Arms Series – American Civil War Armies – Union Troops*, by Philip Katcher and Ron Volstad

**The American Story – War Between Brothers*, Time-Life Books Editors

**The Union Soldier in Battle*, by Earl J. Hess

**Vietnam Troops: A Profile from the book, Brutal Battles of Vietnam: America's Deadliest Days, 1965-1972*. VFW's contribution to the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.



IRISH continued ...

After a week, the siege of Lexington, also known as the first battle of Lexington or the battle of the Hemp Bales ended with Mulligan's surrender.

After being paroled, General John C. Fremont (commanding the Department of Missouri) had the 23rd Illinois mustered out of service, but in December General George McClellan (then supreme commander in chief of all Union armies) had it restored.

After being reconstituted, the regiment left camp in the spring of 1862 for western Virginia, where it spent most of the rest of the war. However, just like at Lexington, the 23rd fought courageously in more than a dozen battles and other actions.

In May 1864, the unit joined Gen. Philip Sheridan's army in the Valley Campaign. Several battles occurred during this campaign, and one of them, the Second Battle of Kernstown, happened on July 24. This fight claimed the life of Col. Mulligan when he was shot by a Confederate sniper

as he stood up in his saddle to spur his men on. Mulligan's soldiers endeavored to carry him to safety, but the unyielding Confederate fire made this an impossible task.

Mulligan was well aware of his situation, and the danger his men were in, and so he famously ordered, "Lay me down and save the flag." Mulligan's men reluctantly complied. Confederate soldiers captured Mulligan and carried the mortally wounded colonel into a nearby home, where he died two days later, July 26, 1864. He was later buried at Calvary Cemetery in Evanston, Illinois.

At the end of 1864, the 23rd headed to the Richmond area, led by Lt. Col. Samuel Simison, for the Siege of Petersburg and was present at Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

In all, the regiment suffered four officers and fifty enlisted men who were killed in action or who died of their wounds and two officers and ninety-three enlisted men who died of disease, for a total of 149 fatalities.



(Above) Col. James Quirk was the Lt. Col of the 23rd Illinois Infantry. (Courtesy photo)

It happened in March:

Battle of Pea Ridge 164 years later

*By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor*



The photo on the opposite page shows the battlefield at Pea Ridge in Arkansas as it looks during almost any summer day; picturesque and warm. Looking at it, you can almost feel the breeze gently moving the tall grass and the smell of flowers and trees. However, 164 years ago, this battlefield was anything but warm and sunny.

Located near Leetown, just below the Missouri border, the weather conditions during the Battle of Pea Ridge were characterized by cold temperatures and harsh winter conditions. Both Union and Confederate armies faced long marches through knee-deep snowdrifts and stinging winds, which significantly impacted their morale and performance.

Despite Union losses at Lexington, Missouri and the Battle of Wilson's Creek in 1861, Union forces in Missouri needed a win. So, during the latter part of 1861 and early 1862 they pushed the Confederate Missouri State Guard under Maj. Gen. Sterling Price out of the state. By spring 1862, Federal Brig. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis determined to pursue the Confederates into Arkansas with his Army of the Southwest.

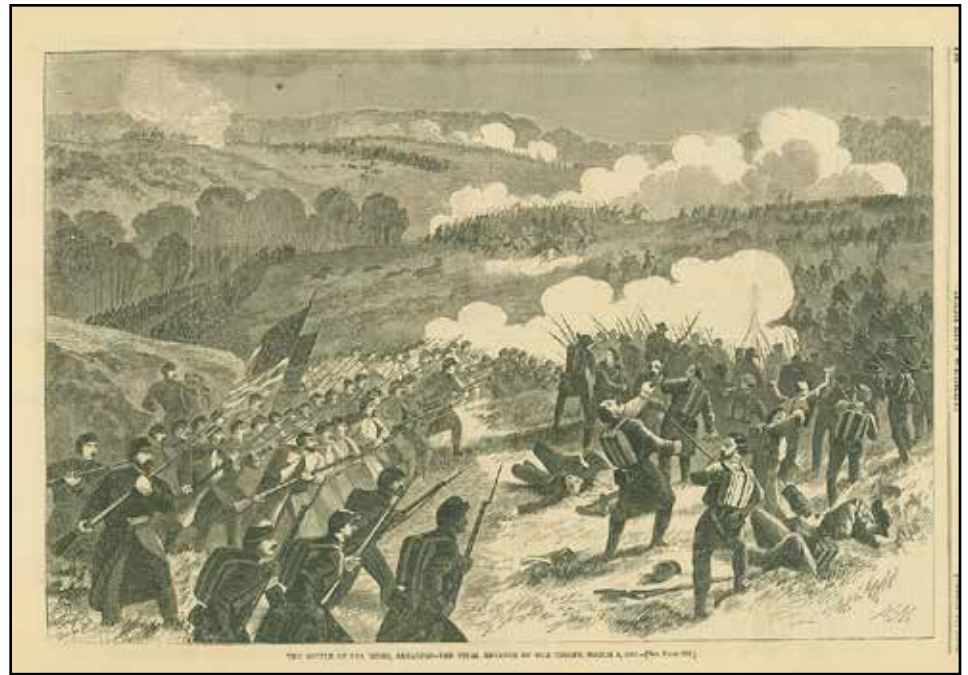
The first week of March 1862, thus, became a game of strategy with both Union and Confederate commanders deploying, redeploying and moving units like a game of chess.

Curtis moved his army of approximately 10,250 soldiers and fifty artillery pieces into Benton County, Arkansas, and along Little Sugar Creek. These Federal forces consisted primarily of soldiers from Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. The Illinois regiments were the 25th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 44th and 56th volunteer infantry regiments, as well as the 3rd Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment.

Over half of the Union soldiers were German immigrants, grouped into the 1st and 2nd Divisions, which were under the command of Brig. Gen. Franz Sigel, a German immigrant who had expected to command the army forces into Arkansas.

Upon learning that General Curtis was appointed in command, Sigel threatened to resign. The predominantly native-born regiments were assigned to the 3rd and 4th Divisions to create an ethnic balance among divisions and their commanders.

Confederate General Price and his troops, victors at both Wilson's Creek and Lexington, had pulled back into



The final advance of Union troops, March 8, 1862. (Harpers Weekly)

Arkansas with Curtis not far behind. There were skirmishes between Federal and Confederate troops at Potts Hill and Little Sugar Creek as Confederate reinforcements reached Price to combine forces against Curtis.

Confederate Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn had been appointed as the overall commander of the Trans-Mississippi District to quell a simmering conflict between Price of Missouri and Brig. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch of Texas. The combined Rebel force continued farther into Arkansas, thinning Curtis's supply line.

On the night of March 6, 1862, Van Dorn and his 16,000-man Army of the West set out to counterattack the Union position near Pea Ridge. His force included some eight-hundred Native American soldiers from the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek tribes out of present-day Oklahoma.

Hoping to move quickly, in what would be a fateful decision, Van Dorn ordered the supply trains far to the rear. Curtis learned of Van Dorn's approach, and his 10,000 Federals marched to meet the Rebel advance the next day.

The forces finally clashed on March 7 near Elkhorn Tavern just three miles south of the Missouri border. Two Confederate generals, Brig. Generals. McCulloch and James McQueen McIntosh, were killed in the action, halting the Rebel momentum.

Rebels would achieve small victories during the course of the battle by utilizing their cavalry, and by nightfall, the Confed-

erates controlled Elkhorn Tavern and the Telegraph Road.

Curtis consolidated his force during the night and planned to counterattack. The next morning, Sigel's men extended into a long line to the left of Col. Jefferson C. Davis. By 8 a.m., Brig. Gen. Alexander Asboth's division took its place on the far left, then came Col. Peter J. Osterhaus, and Col. Eugene Carr, with the Federal line generally facing north. The entire Union army was visibly deployed in one continuous line of battle from flank to flank.

Sigel now massed twenty-one cannons on an open knoll to the west of Elkhorn. During the bombardment, Sigel's infantry edged forward so that by 9:30 a.m. his divisions had executed a right wheel and faced the northeast. At 10:30 a.m., Sigel sent his two divisions forward into the attack. On the far left, Asboth's regiments drove the 2nd Cherokee Mounted Rifles from the point of Big Mountain.

The combination of the counterattack near the tavern and successfully employing his artillery slowly forced the Rebels back. Running short of ammunition due to the absence of his supply train, Van Dorn abandoned the battlefield, leaving Arkansas virtually defenseless.

With the Confederate defeat, the Union controlled the border state of Missouri for the rest of the war.



Around the Community

Annual Lincoln remembrance, Stephenson memorial event April 11

All are invited to participate in the 70th Annual Lincoln Tomb Ceremony. It is held by the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U.S., or often known as the Loyal Legion, or today as MOLLUS.

This event commemorates the 161st anniversary of President Lincoln's death. It will be held at the Lincoln Tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 11.

Wreaths may be ordered from local Springfield florists. Instruct the florist to have the wreath delivered c/o the Lincoln Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois by 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 11.

Luncheon venue: VFW Hall, 2349 Stockyard Rd. Meal will be boxed lunch, including a 6" sub sandwich, chips and a cookie. Cost \$16. Reservation Form with sandwich choices [is located at this site](#), along with additional information.

For event information contact Nick Kaup at nick.kaup@gmail.com.

Services will be held at the Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson Grave site in Petersburg, Illinois at 2:45 pm. Dr. Stephenson was the founding father of the GAR on April 6, 1866 in Decatur, Illinois.



Grand Celebration June 5, 6 and 7

Friday, June 5- Exhibition Cricket Game, Riverside Park 5:30 p.m.

Following the game, players will teach and organize a community game for all those interested. Food trucks start serving at 5 p.m.

Saturday, June 6 – Grand Parade 1 p.m. – Begins at the corner of 22nd St. and Walnut. Parade features Revolutionary War reenactors, Civil War reenactors, cannons, antique cars and more. Following the parade, there will be cannon firings at the General John A. Logan Museum, 1613 Edith St. Be sure to sign up for the opportunity to fire a cannon! Music and more!

Sunday, June 7 – Liberty Theater, 2pm – Author Gary Ecelbarger (Black Jack Logan, and George Washington's Momentous Years, Vol. 1 and 2) and storyteller and singer Chris Vallillo will transport us to the time of our nation's birth and the Civil War.

[For more information.](#)



Upcoming Camp Events

Please contact Brother Sonnenberg if interested in participating.

***BELLEVILLE, Illinois** - Memorial Day is coming up in Belleville. The parade this year is Monday May 25 at 10 a.m.

***MURPHYSBORO, Illinois** - We're also planning to go to Murphysboro, Saturday June 6 for another parade. It is .8 miles in length. **See ad below left.** If you have a Revolutionary patriot or Civil War Union ancestor, they can be recognized on placards for this event. What is needed regarding the ancestor is their name, unit, company and their residence at the time they enlisted if known. Also needed is the descendant's contact information. Submit the information to Brother Sonnenberg, and he will submit the list. There is a deadline of May 15 to submit this list.

***GLEN CARBON, IL** - We plan to participate in the 100th anniversary of Glen Carbon, Illinois by setting up a display on June 20. Awaiting more details.

***SHILOH, IL** - We plan to present the colors before a concert in the Shiloh, Illinois park, Wednesday, July 1. At this time, the event will happen at 5 p.m. July 1 is the same day as our scheduled July meeting, and the event happens at the park outside the community center.



Grant anniversary

On March 10, 1864, the U.S. Senate confirmed President Abraham Lincoln's nomination of Ulysses S. Grant for the revived rank of lieutenant general, authorizing him to command all Union armies. Lincoln signed the bill re-establishing the rank on Feb. 29, 1864, and formally nominated Grant that same day. This rank was previously held only by George Washington.

In this photo, Hecker Camp Brother Glen Bower (left) stands with his friend and 2nd Great Grandson of Ulysses and Julia Grant, Ulysses Grant Dietz. *(Story submitted by Glen Bower)*



Civil War museum begins speaker series

By Kristen M. Kenshalo
Missouri Civil War Museum

The Missouri Civil War Museum (MCWM) is located at Jefferson Barracks 222 Worth Road St. Louis, Missouri 63125.

This month, the Saturday Speakers Series will kick off at the Missouri Civil War Museum. On one Saturday per month at 1 p.m., the museum will feature an historian who will present on a topic relevant to Missouri in the American Civil War. We have four presentations lined up for the Saturday Speakers Series, so far:

*March 28: "Enslavement and the Underground Railroad in Missouri & Illinois" (Historian & Author Julie Nicolai)

*April 18: "Civil War as the First Modern War" (Historian Chris Ketcherside, PhD)

*May 30: "The U.S.S. Sultana Disaster" (Historian & Educator Barbara Kay)

*June 13: "Ulysses & Julia Dent Grant in Missouri" (Historians James & Vicki Erwin)

Tickets are free for active Missouri Civil War Museum members and just \$10 for the General Public, and will include light snacks and refreshments. More information on ticket purchases, event details, and upcoming speakers will be on the Missouri Civil War Museum's website at mcwm.org.

The museum facility consists of two structures: the 1905 Jefferson Barracks Post Exchange/Gymnasium Building and the 1918 building.

The first is two stories and was designed in 1903 by the United States



(Left to right) The museum consists of two structures. The 1905 Jefferson Barracks Post Exchange & Gymnasium Building is two stories and the 1918 Building was originally constructed as a dining and gathering space for the U.S. Army. (Photo courtesy of the Missouri Civil War Museum)

government and built a short time later in 1905. It was originally designed primarily as an athletic and activity center for soldiers. It opened as the Missouri Civil War Museum in June 2013.

The 1918 building recently underwent a historic renovation to create the Missouri Civil War Museum's event center located adjacent to the museum facility. Constructed during the First World War, the 1918 Building was originally constructed as a dining and gathering space for the U.S. Army.

Now restored to its original function, this venue is equipped with a beautiful open-floor plan, featuring a caterer's kitchen, high-definition sound system and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment,

including a 12-foot projector screen.

Due to its proximity to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, the 1918 Building is equipped to host celebrations of life for Veterans and family members being buried there. Other suitable events for the facility include military promotion/retirement ceremonies, family gatherings and corporate events.

More information on reservations, capacity and pricing can be found at our website at 1918building.org or by calling the Missouri Civil War Museum at 314-845-1861.



The answer to trivia question #2 is the U.S.S. Monitor. Like its famous antagonist, the C.S.S. Merrimac (later the Virginia), she met an ignominious end. Sixteen men and officers died. The Virginia was scuttled of Craney Island near Norfolk, Virginia on May 11, 1862 to keep it from being captured.

On Dec. 30, 1862, 42,000 troops of the Army of the Cumberland under Gen. Rosecrans arrived at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, which had been held by Confederate forces since mid-July. On the eve of the battle against Gen. Bragg's army, soldiers on both sides joined in singing "Home, Sweet Home" together. Is this true or false?

The answer is, True.

Bands traveled with many regiments on both sides throughout the war, though more commonly with Union forces. On this particular December night, there were bands present on both sides. The armies were encamped close enough to hear one another's music. What began as a musical contest to drown out one another with "Yankee Doodle Dandy" versus "Dixie" and other songs, ended with the plaintive sounds of "Home, Sweet Home" rising through the darkness.



Two Worlds Combine: Ulysses S. Grant, Friedrich K. Hecker in Wartime Missouri

By Greg Wolk, J.D.

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Louis and the Lt. Col. J. Felix St. James
camp #326 in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri

In the early days of the Civil War in Missouri, the contestants were frightfully disorganized. This was true for volunteer regiments that the Union Army hastily enrolled, as it was also for the Union Army's principal adversary, the Missouri State Guard. The Guard was established in May 1861 by secessionist state legislators and the administration of Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson, at a time when no one knew if Missouri would join the Confederacy. The situation was static for a few weeks, then things changed late in July 1861 when organized Confederate troops invaded Missouri from Arkansas and Tennessee.

The Union Army in the West had a new man in charge. On July 25, 1861, John C. Fremont arrived in Missouri to take command of the Army's Western Department. Three days later, on the 28th of July, Confederate armies entered the state



(Above) Maj. Gen. U.S. Grant.

at Keetsville, near the southwest corner of Missouri, and at New Madrid, in the far southeast part of the state.

At roughly the same time, Gen. William J. Hardee brought Confederate troops north from Arkansas to Greenville, seat of Missouri's Wayne County. This move put Hardee 65 miles inside Missouri's border and less than 50 miles south of Pilot Knob, Missouri. Pilot Knob (and Ironton just to its south) was a point of extreme strategic importance for the Union. This area was chock-full of iron ore. What is more, it had the furnace to smelt it and a railroad to transport pig iron to St. Louis.

Hardee's force at Greenville was smaller than those that had passed through Keetsville and New Madrid, but Hardee's incursion set in motion a series of events that brought together two legendary warriors. One of these men, Ulysses S. Grant, was at the very beginning of his service in the Civil War, which set him on a course to international fame. The second man was Friedrich Karl Franz Hecker, who earned his fame at an earlier time on another continent.

In his native Germany, Friedrich Hecker was a leader in a movement espousing pro-democratic reforms and a unified German republic. In the 1840s, first as a legislator in the Baden State Assembly, then later at the so-called "pre-Parliament" in Frankfurt am Main, Hecker spoke forcefully in favor of his ideals. After these efforts ultimately failed, Hecker organized a citizen uprising that ended in October 1848 at the so-called "Battle of Kandern" in the southwest corner of the modern German state. The general commanding the government troops at Kandern was killed. Hecker soon fled to Switzerland, then in 1848 he emigrated to the United States and settled in Illinois, near Saint Louis.

As war clouds gathered in 1861, the fame that Hecker carried with him to America permitted him to recruit and organize the first Union infantry regiment raised in Chicago, the 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry.



(Above) Col. Friedrich K. Hecker.

The regiment entered the war zone from Alton, Illinois on July 4, 1861, as ordered by Brigadier General of Volunteers John Pope. Col. Hecker was dispatched to the town of Mexico, in north central Missouri. The presence of the 24th infantry preceded by a week or more the arrival in Mexico of another colonel, Ulysses Grant, leading his 21st Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

The 24th Illinois, known as the "Hecker Regiment,"¹ was next assigned to Pilot Knob. Hecker's men departed Mexico on July 31, 1861 for their new post. Col. Grant and his regiment, along with several other regiments, remained in Mexico until Grant was notified that he had been nominated and Senate-approved for promotion to the rank of Brigadier General. By this time, authorities in Washington were focused on Hardee's presence in Greenville. Grant was rushed to the front below Pilot Knob, by an order from Gen. Frémont that declared:

"Aug. 8, 1861 – morning.

Brigadier-General GRANT, Charged with the Command of the Ironton Force:

A special train will be sent to take up your regiment to Jefferson Barracks this morning at 9 o'clock. You are directed to proceed with it to Pilot Knob, and take command of the force stationed there un-

¹ There were two regiments that bore Hecker's name. The 24th Illinois is sometimes referred to as the "1st Hecker Regiment," to distinguish it from the 82nd Illinois Infantry, which Friedrich Hecker raised in Chicago in 1862.

See WORLDS next page ...

It happened in March:

Recalling the Battle of Hampton Roads



The Battle of Hampton Roads, also referred to as the Battle of the Monitor and Merrimack or the Battle of Ironclads, was fought 164 years ago on March 8 and 9, 1862, in Hampton Roads, a roadstead in Virginia where the Elizabeth and Nansemond rivers meet the James River just before it flows into Chesapeake Bay by the city of Norfolk.

The battle was a part of the effort of the Confederacy to break the Union blockade, which had cut off Virginia's largest cities and major industrial centers, Norfolk and Richmond, from international trade.

On the first day, the Virginia was able to destroy two ships of the Union flotilla (wooden hulls), U.S.S. Congress and U.S.S. Cumberland, and was about to attack a

third, U.S.S. Minnesota, when darkness fell. Virginia retired to take care of her few wounded—which included her captain, Flag Officer Franklin Buchanan—and repair her minimal battle damage.

Determined to complete the destruction of Minnesota, Roger Jones, acting as captain in Buchanan's absence, returned the ship to the battle the next morning, March 9. During the night, however, the ironclad U.S.S. Monitor had arrived and had taken a position to defend Minnesota. When Virginia approached, Monitor intercepted her. The two ironclads fought for about three hours, with neither able to inflict significant damage on the other. The duel ended indecisively, Virginia returning to her home at the Gosport Navy Yard for repairs and strengthening, and Monitor to her station defending Minnesota. The ships did not fight again, and the blockade remained in place.

The battle received worldwide attention, having immediate effects on navies around the world. The preeminent naval powers, Great Britain and France, halted further construction of wooden-hulled ships, and others followed suit.



WORLDS continued ...

der Colonels Brown, Hecker, and Bland" ...²

The 21st regiment spent the night of Aug. 8 at Jefferson Barracks south of St. Louis. By the evening of Aug. 9, Grant and his regiment reached his assigned post, where he would take command of his first brigade: four infantry regiments that included the 21st and 24th infantries.³

Gen. Grant came to Pilot Knob with an aggressive plan to address the threat posed by Hardee. It was believed that Hardee's troops were venturing north from Greenville. Therefore, Grant planned to divide his available attacking force in two; one column to converge upon a place on the map called "Brunot" from the west. The other column – dominated by Hecker's regiment – would approach the same place from the east, using the Fredericktown Road. Gen. Grant was ready to move on Aug. 15, but his plans began to unravel. On the 16th, Gen. Grant re-assigned Col. Hecker's regiment,

² Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Ser.1, Vol.3, Ch.10 (Government Printing Office. 1881), 430.

³ Grant also took command of the 6th Missouri and 9th Missouri infantry regiments.

sending it cross-country to the valley of Marble Creek, where Hecker's men came to rest in a position five miles due south of Ironton. The Marble Creek site was already occupied by the 21st Illinois regiment when Hecker arrived.

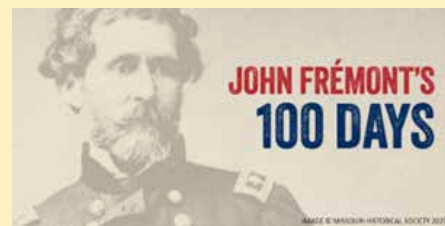
Seemingly, Gen. Grant was poised to move directly on Greenville with all his offensive strength, but by the end of the day it was obvious that Gen. Hardee was in full retreat toward Arkansas. Grant's first campaign in command of a brigade thus ended along Marble Creek, where his two Illinois regiments went into camp.⁴

It is likely that the powers in St. Louis knew more about Hardee's withdrawal than they were telling Gen. Grant. On Aug. 17, 1861, Grant was relieved of his command when another new Illinois

⁴ The location of the joint camp south of Ironton is extrapolated from messages from Col. Hecker contained in annotations in John Y. Simon, "The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 02: April-September 1861" (1967) 120. Hecker had first declined to cross over to the position occupied by the 21st Illinois because a "narrow defile" separated his position from the 21st. He feared that the defile was occupied by Confederates. In a postscript to the same message, Hecker said "after some reflection I will and cannot retire, I shall enter the defile 6 miles above Coldwater (sic) and try to come to marble creek." Ibid.

brigadier came to Ironton to replace him.⁵ No satisfactory explanation for his replacement has since surfaced, except Gen. Frémont claimed it was a result of an error in calculating Grant's seniority.

⁵ Brig. Gen. Benjamin Prentiss of Quincy, Illinois.



Greg Wolk's new book is available online and at the gift shop at the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis, 5700 Lindell Boulevard. Look for it as well at your nearest Barnes & Noble.

John Fremont's 100 Days: Clashes and Convictions in Civil War Missouri (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2025). (ISBN 979-8-9855716-5-3)

