



THE DISPATCH

FALL 2017

PUBLISHED BY SUVCW DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN

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Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

SUVCW

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

Brothers'



We have concluded another successful department encampment. PCC Kirby Scott and PDC Tom Brown were elected, respectively, as JVC and Council. The rest of the officers were re-elected for another term. SVC-in-C Mark day was present and attempted to explain the 501(c)3 / 501(c)4 setup. The only entity in the SUVCW that has the new tax status is National. All the camps and departments and SVR units are still operating under the old classification. Over time they will be brought into the new category, in two or three years. Meanwhile, keep filing your 990 / EIN statements as usual. Two of our camps are out of compliance with this according to the national treasurer. Your department officers

I hope to have this rectified soon.

The national encampment in Lansing was also a great success. Wisconsin had ten delegates in attendance this year. SVC-in-C Mark Day, whom we met in June, was elected C-in-C

A major topic of discussion lately is the removal of Confederate monuments nationwide.

Currently the mayor of Madison, Wisconsin is trying to remove two Confederate monuments, located at Forest Hill Cemetery there and succeeding in his scheme. Brothers are reminded to read national general order #2 before proceeding. Brothers can call on the media, write letters, protest, attend city council meetings and contact the mayor directly, but you are not allowed to make any references to the SUVCW or use its emblems. All official SUVCW positions and statements will come from the C-in-C only. You can proceed locally in the name of the SUVCW with the explicit permission of the C-in-C.

We also mourn the passing of PCC Ronald Knaus. He was an active member of Harndon Camp #2 for many years. He will be missed.

In F., C., & L.,
Alan O. Petit
DC, Dept. of Wisc.

Obituary

Virgil Matz

1934 - 2017



The National Meritorious Service Award presented to Virgil Matz by then CinC Campbell for his efforts to enter names in the National database over many years

Virgil Matz did meticulous walkthroughs of every cemetery in multiple counties from the very outset of the SUVCW graves registration database, and probably even earlier than that. He was in on the early planning of the database and became part of the national committee that oversees it. Virgil, 83, of Black Earth, died Sept. 28 at the age of 83. He joined Camp 2 in 1984 and was a Life member of the Sons, and also did decades of work with local history, patriotic and civic groups.

He was a Cold War veteran of the Army, serving in Germany from 1958 to 1960, and a member of the Black Earth American Legion Post 313.

We all will salute him on Saturday, Nov. 11 (a few days after his birthday). A noon ceremony will be held at Veterans Memorial Park in Black Earth, followed by a luncheon at the nearby Shack Bar & Grill, his favorite haunt.

Bruce Frail of Rhode Island, national graves registration officer, says he will come to Wisconsin to honor one of his most trusted colleagues. "His database account was created on 16 June 2005, which is about four months after the project's database went online," Frail says. "The collection portion of the graves registration project started in 1995," using paper submissions. Matz became graves registration officer for Camp 2 of Madison in 1996, and said in an article in the Department Dispatch in 2005 that he had made 3,000 submissions so far. He had just become Department GRO.

"I had seen Brother Virgil's name on some emails and had helped him with some research; he impressed me with his true desire and dedication to the graves registration project and to the database," Frail adds. "... It is because of that dedication that I recommended him for a national aide position on the Graves Committee and soon found him a place as a full member of the committee when one of our members passed away in 2011." The panel has five members.

Frail continues: "Brother Virgil was very active in bouncing ideas around during the database re-design and giving me his input and that of others he worked with on the project. He also helped dozens, if not over 100, submitters from outside of the Allied Orders; some were large projects, some were smaller. He did them all with no complaints."

Matz's final numbers are beyond stunning – he made nearly 25,000 entries, plus "2,206 updates, and he approved 5,289 incoming submissions from other submitters, Frail says.

The number of Wisconsin graves in the database hit 34,000 in the week that Matz died. Nationally, the number is nearly 718,000.

Matz's work on the graves part of the Sons' mission always impressed Tom Brown during his three years as Department commander, 2011 to 2013. "Virgil was very conscientious and always followed through. That area was in very good hands," Brown says.

Virgil once described his work this way in a report: "I walked all the Dane County, Sauk County, Richland County, Vernon County and Iowa County cemeteries and also worked with the veteran's service officers of each county. I also walked most of Columbia County, the Juneau County townships that border Sauk County and the top half of Green County."

He did many more counties via examining their entire Find-a-Grave listings. And he loved finding lists of anything and everything involving Civil War veterans, GAR posts, newspaper stories from the 1930s about remaining veterans, etc., and then tracking down their burials via Find a Grave. He did much of the recent work in which our Wisconsin list of Last Soldiers was extensively updated.

His projects never really ended – he thought Vernon County had a good number at 246 after working on it over the years, and then got it to 615 via other methods a few years later.

His bag of research tools was deep, led by pension databases and tombstone applications, often finding handwritten ones from the 1920s and even earlier. Virgil recently helped solve a question from Haugen in Barron County, where there were two stones that said only GAR on them. After Department GRO Tom Mueller urged a caller to start by asking all 80-year-olds in the area for any clues they might recall, two names surfaced. Virgil searched census and pension numbers and found the stones were for one man – the vet had changed his name from Chapin to McCloud after his first marriage ended, then filed for a pension as Chapin a few years later. He died in 1914.

Virgil provided the key item to get a tombstone: the pension certificate number. The stone was installed in September.

At Wood National Cemetery in Milwaukee, Mueller found a grave for a possible Civil War man whose name was not in the VA database, and turned to Virgil for help. Matz took the grave number and did a reverse search, finding the soldier actually had a different name than was on the stone, and that he had died in 1913 at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home in his 80s – meaning he indeed was in the Civil War. He gathered other evidence, and the VA duly replaced the stone last spring, switching the last name from Curran to Carroll.

Virgil Oswin Wilbur Matz was born on his parents' farm in the Town of Berry in Dane County on Nov. 7, 1934, the son of Erwin and Olga Matz. He graduated from one-room New Halfway Prairie Grade School in 1948, Mazomanie High School in 1952 and Madison Business College in 1969.

He worked the home farm until 1965 and then went into the food and bar business, including owning the Red Door Supper Club and Virgil's in Mazomanie and Black Earth.

He had two siblings, never married and has few surviving local relatives. After his last sibling died at the age of 93 in 2016, and as his own health declined, Virgil asked two trusted friends to help arrange his final affairs.

One of them, Holli Harrington, a bartender at the Shack, says he wanted only a short death notice in the Wisconsin State Journal. He opted to put his full obit in the News-Sickle-Arrow, the weekly newspaper in Black Earth, and began arranging an outline of what he wanted to include, eventually filling a binder with that and his many other last tasks and last wishes.

Virgil was a steady advertiser in the Camp 1 Patriotic Luncheon booklet, saluting his ancestor, Pvt. Frederick Matz, of the 11th Wisconsin Infantry, Co. E. The soldier was drafted and served from March 6, 1865, to Sept. 4 of that year. He was from the Town of Berry.



Camp News

Camp 1



Camp 1 was joined by Brothers from Camps 15, 4 and 8 in honoring the last Civil War veteran to die in Milwaukee County. Pvt. Charles Blanchard died in September 1942 at the age of 96 and is buried at Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee. He served in the 40th Wisconsin Infantry, a 100-day unit, in 1864. The unit

helped repulse Nathan Bedford Forest's raid on Memphis on Aug. 21, 1864.



Camp 1 helped the family of Pvt. William Kolbow find his grave, and then set the tombstone. Kolbow, 38, who served in the 28th Wisconsin Infantry, was killed in an accident in 1885 and buried at St. John's Lutheran Church in Oak Creek but never got a tombstone. Succeeding generations lost track of where the grave was. Family reported the situation to Camp 1 and it was quickly found. Kolbow's great-great grandson, Dean Honadel (middle) helps Brother Tom Ludka (bottom) and son Andrew Ludka place the stone.



PDC Tom Brown helps a patron learn how to load a musket at a festival held by the Fond du Lac County Historical Society. The society event was held a few blocks from the grave of Col. C.K. Pier, whose name is on Camp 1.



Camps 1 & 15 cast long patriotic shadows in the South Milwaukee Days parade.

Camp 1 Gavel

By PCinC Steve Michaels

The meetings of C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1 are called to order with a gavel. The medal plaque on the gavel reads, "Presented to Badger Camp #1 Sons of Vets by Dr. Wm. C. Raynor taken from Battlefield of Mobile Bay."

Badger Camp #1, chartered in 1892, was one of two camps that merged in 1901. Interestingly, this gavel was

referred to in an article in the souvenir program of the 1899 Wisconsin Department Encampment, so Badger Camp received the gavel sometime during its first seven years. Perhaps the doctor presented it during Badger Camp's chartering. But who was this Dr. William C. Raynor, and how did he come about this gavel

Raynor was born Aug. 4, 1842, in Manchester, England, and came to Wisconsin in 1847, where he lived in Fond du Lac. His family later moved to Madison and, after the Civil War broke out, he enlisted in Company D, 23rd Wisconsin Infantry, on Aug. 14, 1862.

The regiment participated in various expeditions against the Confederates in north central Kentucky. In November 1862, it left for Memphis and then advanced down the Mississippi River, reaching Milliken's Bend, La., on Christmas Eve. Besides fighting there, the 23rd also participated in the Vicksburg campaign at Arkansas Post on Jan. 10-11, at Cypress Bend, Ark., in February and Duvall's Bluff, Miss., in March. Raynor was discharged on April 24, 1863.

He enlisted again from Arena, Wis., on Feb. 8, 1865, and was a sergeant in Co. A, 49th Wisconsin Infantry. Raynor could have been commissioned a lieutenant, but was not well off and knew he would have to invest more than \$100 in a uniform, sash, belt and sword. The war was almost over and so he declined the offer. The 49th was assigned duty in western Missouri and was mustered out on Nov. 8, 1865, at St. Louis.

William Raynor came to Milwaukee in 1872 and worked as a salesman of farm implements. The financial panic of 1877 probably caused him to seek work as a travel agent. He then earned enough money to attend medical school in Chicago. At age 39, he graduated from Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital in Chicago in 1881. He returned to Milwaukee and settled in Bay View.

Almost immediately, problems arose. The local medical society president accused him of practicing medicine without a diploma ... not a diploma from a medical school, but one from a local medical association. The one issued to him by the Dodge & Washington Medical Society was invalid. The doctor argued for establishing a state medical examining board, like the one in Illinois.

The situation escalated and by 1893, Raynor was in court every month, defending himself. His case finally was appealed to the state Supreme Court. A bill of exceptions was settled and signed.

The doctor practiced medicine again and had a successful practice. By 1892, he had an office at 4th and Wisconsin, downtown. He was able to frequently travel south to Mobile, Ala., where he owned extensive tracts of land. On one such visit in winter 1892-'93, he visited a home for



disabled rebel soldiers at New Orleans and was treated well by the old Confederates. He was made a guest of Lee Camp when he went from Mobile to New Orleans.

The doctor practiced medicine again and had a successful practice. By 1892, he had an office at 4th and Wisconsin, downtown. He was able to frequently travel south to Mobile, Ala., where he owned extensive tracts of land. On one such visit in winter 1892-'93, he visited a home for disabled rebel soldiers at New Orleans and was treated well by the old Confederates. He was made a guest of Lee Camp when he went from Mobile to New Orleans.

Dr. Raynor joined E.B. Wolcott GAR Post #1 in 1887 and served as the post surgeon the next year. He also was vice president and surgeon of the 13th Army Corps Association. He was a member of Damascus Lodge #296, F&AM, the Calumet Chapter of the Royal Arch Masons, Ivanhoe Commandery, Knights Templar and Wisconsin Consistory. The doctor was active politically, serving as the 4th Ward Republican delegate to the county convention in 1888.

The gavel came from the wood of a Confederate cannon carriage at the Battle of Mobile. How Dr. Raynor acquired it will remain a mystery. He had been discharged from the 23rd Wisconsin two years before the regiment participated in the siege, capture and occupation of Mobile on April 3 to 12, 1865. It could have been given to him by a comrade from the 23rd.

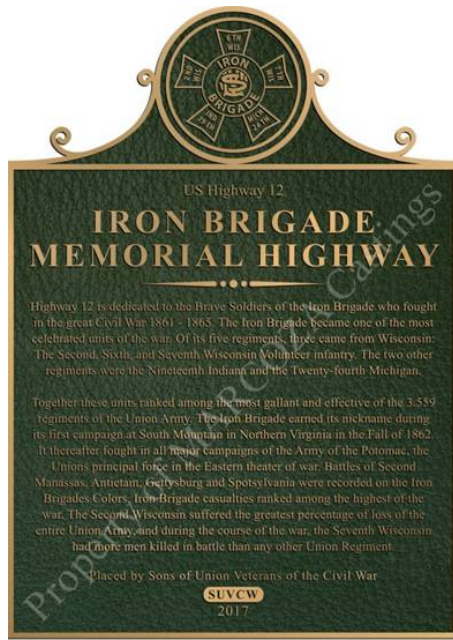
What may be more likely is that Dr. Raynor got the wood on one of his frequent trips to visit his land holdings near Mobile.

What we do know is that Dr. William C. Raynor was called an old-time and cherished friend by the members of Badger Camp #1.

Dr. Raynor died on May 12, 1915, at age 72 after a long disease. A service was held at his home at 279 Layton Blvd. He was buried in his wife's family plot, the Hawkins' plot, in Forest Home Cemetery.



IRON BRIGADE MEMORIAL HIGHWAY PLAQUE



Camp #15 is putting the finishing touches on its Iron Brigade Memorial Highway plaque and hopes to have the plaque erected before the end of the year at a veteran's memorial just north of Sauk City, Wis.

The plaque, memorializing the famous Civil War Iron Brigade that included three Wisconsin regiments, is largely the work of Camp #15 Commander Bob Koenecke. Koenecke was appointed the Iron Brigade Memorial Highway officer at the Department's summer encampment in June and immediately began work designing the plaque and finding a location to place the marker.

Last summer, Koenecke and three other Camp #15 officers visited the location chosen by Koenecke, a wayside memorial to veterans along U.S. Highway 12 just north of Sauk City, Wis. Highway 12 is designated as the Iron Brigade Highway and the veteran's memorial, near the Sauk Prairie Airport, already contains a Huey helicopter, an M-60 tank and a T-33 fighter jet.

The plaque is expected to cost between \$2,300 and \$2,400. The national SUVCW, the state SUVCW and Camp #15 are sharing the costs. The Iron Brigade was one of the most celebrated units of the Civil War. Made up of the Second, Sixth and Seventh Wisconsin regiments, and the Nineteenth Indiana and Twenty-fourth Michigan regiments, the Iron Brigade earned its nickname when it "stood like iron" in the battle of South Mountain, the opening round in what became the bloody battle of Antietam in the fall of 1862.

LAST SOLDIER MARKER



On Sept. 16th, Camp #15 dedicated the Last Soldier marker placed at the grave of Private Lewis Rolfson in Norway Lutheran Cemetery in Wind Lake, Wis. Rolfson, who served in the 15th Wisconsin Regiment under Col. Hans C. Heg during the Civil War, was the last Union soldier buried in Racine County.

Rolfson was born in 1841 near Oslo, Norway. Named Lars at birth, his name was Americanized to Lewis after he immigrated to America. Rolfson was a farmer living in Norway Township in Racine County in 1862 when he mustered into Co. C of the 15th Wisconsin Infantry, the so-called "Scandinavian Regiment" formed by Col. Heg, the namesake of Camp #15.

Rolfson served three years in the regiment, which took part in battles that included Murfreesboro, Perryville, Chickamauga and Kennesaw Mountain. After the war, Rolfson worked as a sailor on the Great Lakes, and then returned to farming near Lake Denoon in Racine County. Rolfson died in January 1936.

Sales of the Last Soldier marker designed by Camp Commander Bob Koenecke and Secretary-Treasurer Brian McManus are going well. So far, Camp #1 has purchased one marker, Camp #5 two markers, and markers were sold to camps in Michigan and New York at the National Encampment in August.

Camp #15 has two styles of Last Soldier markers available: a flat mounting style for \$40 and a flag-holder style, which includes a brass rod, for \$50. To order a marker, go to: suvlastvet@gmail.com.

BURLINGTON CEMETERY CIVIL WAR MONUMENT REDEDICATION



With a three-volley musket salute, Camp #15 helped rededicate the Civil War Monument at the Burlington, Wis., Cemetery on Sept. 16th.

The monument is built on a site in the cemetery donated in 1880 by Burlington to honor more than 250 Burlington area residents who fought in the Civil War. The Burlington Area Garden Club, which for more than ten years has cared for a small garden around the monument, also took part in the ceremony. The garden blooms in patriotic colors with flowers such as red begonias, white lamb's ear, and blue veronica.

Camp #15 Commander Bob Koenecke led the rededication ceremony. "This Memorial assures us that our dead are held in remembrance – those dead who gave their lives for the security of our citizens," Koenecke told the three dozen people attending the rededication. "The names of these honored Veterans who served in the cause of our Country are carved into these Memorial stones. Let us now take a moment to remember their sacrifices and to honor their memory."

More than a dozen members of the American Legion Riders Association of Wisconsin, a group of veterans who ride motorcycles and serve as honor guards at veterans events, also took part in the ceremony.



CAMP # 15 STANDS TALL AT NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT



Two of Camp #15's officers served as national officers at the SUVCW National Encampment in Lansing, Michigan in August, and two other officers were presented with awards at

the national gathering.

Brian McManus, Camp #15's secretary-treasurer as well as senior vice commander for SUVCW's Wisconsin Department, served as the National Color Bearer at the encampment and Camp Commander Bob Koenecke served as the National Guide. In addition, past camp commander and Council #1 officer Jeff Graf was presented with two awards at the encampment. Brother Graf was presented with a National Aide award for recruiting five new members for Camp #15 – the third time in the last four years Brother Graf has won this award.

Brother Graf was also presented with a meritorious service award for his work in trying to get the city of Muskego, Wis., to clean up weed-choked Luther Parker Cemetery. Camp #15's lawsuit against Muskego over the condition of the cemetery is moving forward, with a tentative trial date now set for next May.

Camp #15's Senior Vice Commander, Dave Daley, was also presented with a meritorious service award at the National Encampment for his work in publicizing the condition of Luther Parker Cemetery.



Q: What is the special story of the 11th Wisconsin Light Artillery?

A: It was organized as the "Oconto Guards" with the 17th Wisconsin Infantry at Madison, on Feb. 22, 1862, then transferred to 1st Illinois Light Artillery as Battery L that same month. The Wisconsin roster says: "Said regiment being full to maximum, Capt. (John) Rourke took his company to Chicago to be attached as a battery to Mulligan's Irish Brigade;" was temporarily so attached, and afterwards became Battery L."

25th Wisconsin story

By Tom Mueller
Department GRO

Of the 70 Wisconsin units in the war, which one had the highest death toll?

Was it one of the three Badger regiments in the Iron Brigade, with its long string of huge battles? Or one of the four cavalry units? The 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery or maybe one of the 13 light artillery groups? Or any of the other four dozen infantry regiments?

This research may surprise you: The Wisconsin unit with the highest death toll was the little-heralded 25th Infantry, with a total of 460 deaths (409 from disease).

This is derived from each unit's statistics at <http://www.civilwararchive.com/unionwi.htm> The 25th was in the siege of Vicksburg, Miss., and suffered from malaria, typhoid, dysentery, heat, humidity and other stresses of the period, including a particularly tough march in June 1863, three weeks before Vicksburg fell.

"The great amount of sickness which afflicted the regiment ... is attributed to the hardships of the rapid march from Sartartia to Snyder's Bluff, the regiment having accomplished two days' march in one," E.B. Quiner said in his definitive 1866 book "Military History of Wisconsin."

Sartartia, Miss., is east of Vicksburg on the Yazoo River, and its population today is not even 100. Snyder's Bluff, Miss., is on the Yazoo River north of Vicksburg.

"The excessive heat, and the exhausted condition of the men, with the unhealthy position at Snyder's Bluff to which they were assigned, was productive of disease, which, for many months, afflicted the command to a frightful extent," Quiner said. "On the 16th of August, the daily report showed but 90 men fit for duty."

Disease was the main determinant for most of the five Wisconsin units that had the worst total number of deaths. The top five for total deaths were the 25th Infantry, 4th Cavalry, 7th Infantry (an Iron Brigade unit), the 1st Cavalry and the 16th Infantry.

The status of the 25th Wisconsin is of particular interest to Camp 1 Brother Glen Grippen, who had two relatives in the regiment. His g-g-grandfather and relative of record in the Sons, Pvt. Adoniram Judson Grippen, is one of the statistics, dying of dysentery in Nashville, Tenn., on June 6, 1864. He is buried in Nashville National Cemetery, section J, grave 13789.

Brother Glen says he did not know of the 25th's unique place in history until being contacted for this story.



Pvt. Alexander Grippen, who like his brother Adoniram was in Co. G, was commissary sergeant – and thus would have been very involved in trying to curb diseases caused by sanitation issues – and served in that role from the start to April 1, 1864.

Alexander died in 1892 and is buried in Walworth County.

Both the Grippens were from Durand in Pepin County. The 25th was largely from western Wisconsin.

Overall, the regiment lost three officers and 46 enlisted on the battlefield or mortally wounded, plus seven officers and 402 enlisted to disease. Quiner's history gives the total as 460, although that individual breakdown falls two short of that number.

The 25th is little-heralded in the sense that no book has been written about it, although two of its soldiers wrote letters that were compiled into small books. Neither gives time to any substantial discussion of illnesses in the regiment as a whole.

Pvt. John Brobst of Co. G often wrote to towns-girl Mary Englesby, and the letters were compiled into "Dear Mary" in 1960 by their great-granddaughter, Margaret Brobst Roth. Brobst and Mary were married when he returned home; she was not quite age 16 at that time.

Brobst briefly discusses illness a few times, including how his doctors were using opium with quinine to fight malaria. He battled the disease for several weeks in early 1864 and was in the hospital several weeks in fall 1864.

The other book, "A Badger Boy in Blue: The Civil War letters of Chauncey H. Cooke," is difficult to obtain. Excerpts from his time at Camp Randall in Madison can be seen at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS3063>



Q: Why was Edwin Bryant Quiner such an important figure in Wisconsin Civil War history?

A: 1

Highest overall totals from battles and disease

460 – 25th Infantry
431 – 4th Cavalry
424 – 7th Infantry (Iron Brigade)
401 – 1st Cavalry
399 – 16th Infantry

Highest total from battles

281 – 7th Infantry (Iron Brigade)
244 – 6th Infantry (Iron Brigade)
238 – 2nd Infantry (Iron Brigade)
188 – 26th Infantry
157 – 36th Infantry

Highest total from disease

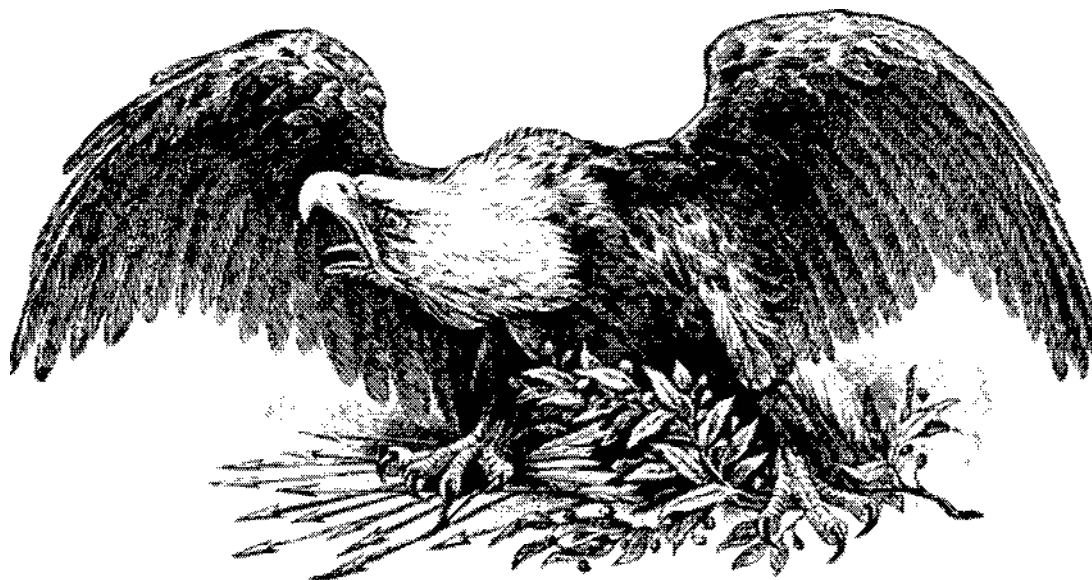
409 – 25th Infantry
328 – 1st Cavalry
314 – 4th Cavalry
274 – 35th Infantry
267 – 23rd Infantry



From 1860-'62, Quiner was a private secretary to the governor and collected newspaper clippings from all over the state, especially letters from soldiers to their families. Quiner utilized government files and facts from the 10,000 letters for the book. He died at age 51, only two years after the book was published. More about him is at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2580> Wisconsin Historical Society photo 79108

Read his work at:

<https://archive.org/details/militaryhistoryo00quin>





To reach either the Camp's page or its Face book Page, hold curser over the name, hold "Ctrl" and left click

[C.K. Pier Badger Camp 1](#) - Milwaukee

C. K. Pier Badger Camp #1 and Auxiliary #4 meet on the first Wednesday of the month (except August), at 7 p.m.,
Commander: [PCinC Steve Michaels](#)
C.K. Pier Badger Auxiliary 4

[Henry Harnden Camp 2](#) - Madison

Commander: [Fred J. Campbell](#)
Henry Harnden Auxiliary 2

[Major General John Gibbon Camp 4](#) - Waukesha

Meetings @ 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every month (except August)
Commander: [Timothy Kracht](#)

[Lt. Alonzo H. Cushing Camp 5](#) – Saukville

Meeting @ 7 P.M. last Tuesday of month
Commander: [PDC Tom Brown](#)

[Old Abe Camp 8](#) - Fox Cities

Meeting @ 7 P.M. 3rd Monday of odd months
Commander: [Dennis Jacobs](#)
Edward S. Bragg Auxiliary 6
[Face Book Page](#)

[Hans Heg Camp 15](#)

Meeting @ 7 P.M. 1st Thursday, monthly
Commander: [Robert Koenecke](#)

[L.G. Armstrong 49](#) – Boscobel

Meetings @ 7 P.M. 3rd Thursday, monthly
Commander: [Gary Young](#)

[William Colville Camp 56](#) - Minneapolis/St. Paul

Meeting held Quarterly, time, date place TBA
Commander: [Randy Nelson](#)



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Officers were elected at the 11 June 2016 Department Encampment at Wind Lake, Wis. and will serve until the 2017 Department Encampment.



SUVCW

NOTICE

Wisconsin Department Dispatch is published four times per year for members of the Wisconsin Department, SUVCW. articles, photos and news items may be submitted to:

Paul Johnson at

johnson@newnorth.net

Editorial deadlines are March, July, October & December

Visit us on the Web at

<http://www.suvcw-wi.org>

Winter Published January 5, 2018

Deadline December 26, 2017

Spring Published April 6, 2018

Deadline March 30, 2018

Summer Published July 6, 2018

Deadline June, 30 2018

Fall Published October 5, 2018

Deadline September 28, 2017