



## DEPARTMENT OF THE CHESAPEAKE NEWSLETTER THE CHESAPEAKE GAZETTE

**Volume 2, Number 2**

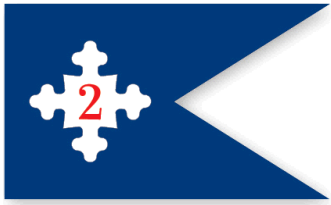
**April 2017 Edition**



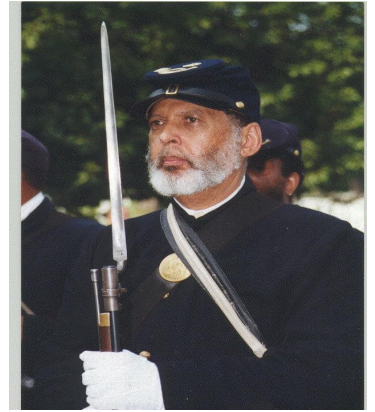
The Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.

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## From the Desk of the Department Commander

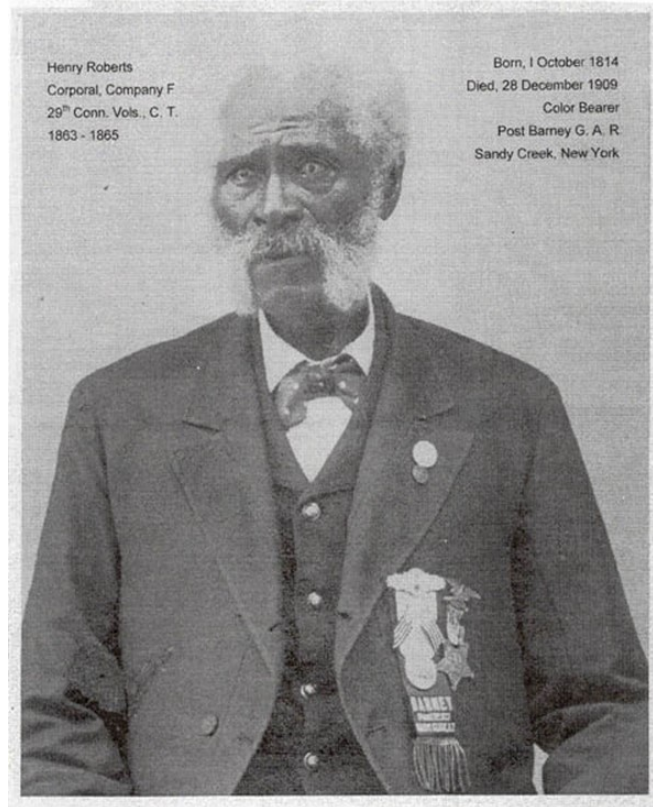


Brothers and Sisters, Welcome to the New Year 2017 and the April 2017 issue of the Chesapeake Gazette. In this issue we are featuring the story of Corporal Henry Roberts, 29th Connecticut Infantry Regiment (Colored). It is a page out of history from the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the acceptance of a Union Soldier of color into its ranks at a time when it was not popular. I am very proud of this fact and the GAR for its part in shaping a true reconciliation in these United States of America at the end of the Civil War.

I am in the last month of my tenure as Department Commander and have enjoyed the friendships and comradery formed while meeting and working with you. I am very proud to have been elected to this office and want to encourage each of you to continue to make 2017 a banner year for The Department of the Chesapeake. I have had the opportunity to visit several camps and extremely proud of the accomplishments and projects you have undertaken. I am delighted in the different Camps' interest in Dedication Ceremonies held in different cemeteries. This is what we're about and a hearty congratulations to those Camps for promoting this effort. Get involved. There is no better way to get to know your Brothers and Sisters than by serving as an officer, or on a committee, or project. Not happy with the way something is run? Be the change that you want to see happen.

*Charles (Ben) Hawley*

**Department of Chesapeake  
Commander**



Henry Roberts, the oldest member of A. J. Barney Post, Grand Army of the Republic, No. 217, Sandy Creek, New York, and a resident of this community for over twenty-nine years, died at his home on Lake Street, Monday, December 28, 1909, at the age of 95 years, 2 months and 27 days.

Mr. Roberts was born into slavery, October 1, 1814, at Hagerstown, Maryland. Henry gained his freedom before or about the time that the Compromise Law of 1850 (The Fugitive Slave Law) went into effect, for in 1851 he married Jane, the daughter of Cato Leonard, a Negro landholder of Northern New York.

Cato Leonard's farm was located on Grindstone Island, in the St. Lawrence River, so that Jane, born about 1834 and one of seven children, was a native of Canada. Cato Leonard had a brother, Thomas, who was a hotel waiter in Syracuse, New York and was known to have helped at least one fugitive slave to reach Cape Vincent, New York, one of the riverside communities near Grindstone Island.

Henry and Jane later moved to the fourth house beyond the cemetery on Lake Street, and from there to their own home, purchased about 1893, just within the west village line. This piece of property contained several acres that stretched back to the Little Sandy creek, where we know that Henry loved to fish.

(He may well have helped to wear the well-marked path on the now-wooded high bank of the creek, leading to the west end of Woodlawn Cemetery.

Henry Roberts was an honest citizen, working for the Village and the Union Cemetery Association (at Woodlawn) throughout an active old age. We believe that he may have been the night-watchman at the local tannery in September, 1883, when it took fire. He had the presence of mind to run to the (steam) engine room, and pulling the cord on the work whistle, alerted the village residents to the disaster, just as the roof started to collapse.

Henry Roberts was a veteran of Company F, 29<sup>th</sup> Colored Troops Volunteer Infantry (29<sup>th</sup> Connecticut), serving as a Private, later Corporal, from 1863 until after the close of the Civil War in 1865. (It is said that at least some of the 29<sup>th</sup> Colored Troops Volunteer Infantrymen were among the first Union troops to March into Richmond, Virginia when the Capital of the Confederacy fell, April 3, 1865.) Henry joined the local G.A.R. Post, about two years after the Post was organized, and was elected to the offices of Color Bearer and Color Guard, for a number of years.

As long as he was able, Mr. Roberts was a fixture of every Decoration Day parade with his spare, erect figure, snowy hair and whiskers, clad in the blue coat of the G.A.R., carrying the Stars and Stripes at the head of the other veterans and the ladies of the Women's Relief Corps," as they marched to Woodlawn Cemetery to place their floral tributes on the graves of their fallen comrades. This proud task, he carried out even though he was subject to serious eye problems in his later years. (He suffered from *Arcus Senillis*, a gradually deposited fatty coating of the outer eye, brought on by a life-long diet I animal protein.)

### **"HENRY ROBERTS"**

"Henry Roberts, the oldest veteran in the local G. A. R. Post, passed away yesterday morning.

"Mr. Roberts was born a slave and few more deeply appreciated the meaning of the victory which was won in the Civil War, declaring freedom to the slave, although he had gained his liberty some years before that struggle was fought. For many years he carried the Stars and Stripes at all the public gatherings of the G. A. R., and few of us have warmer friends in the community or will be more thoroughly missed than Henry Roberts. Mr. Roberts was 95 years old last October."

I have been researching the History of the 29th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Colored) for almost 20 years and wanted to share the story of one of it's members. I am very proud of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) for welcoming Union Soldiers of Color into their ranks. Pictured below is Corporal Henry Roberts (rear rank) and Private George Stevenson in the middle rank.



Photo Courtesy George Geder

## 29th CONNECTICUT VOLUNTEER INFANTRY REGIMENT (COLORED)

### REGIMENTAL HISTORY

Organized at Fair Haven and mustered in March 8, 1864. Left State for Annapolis, Md., March 19. Moved to Beaufort, S. C., April 8-13, and duty there till August 8. Attached to District of Beaufort, Dept. of the South, April to August, 1864. 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 10th Army Corps, Army of the James, Dept. Virginia and North Carolina, to December, 1864. 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, 25th Army Corps, to January, 1865. 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, 25th Army Corps, to April, 1864. District of St. Marys, 22nd Army Corps, Dept. of Washington, to May, 1865. 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, 25th Army Corps, Dept. of Texas, to October, 1865.

SERVICE. -- Moved from Beaufort, S. C., to Bermuda Hundred, Va., August 8-13, 1864. Siege operations against Petersburg and Richmond August 13, 1864, to April 2, 1865. Demonstration on North Side of the James August 13-20, 1864. Deep Bottom, Strawberry Plains, August 14-18. Duty in the trenches before Petersburg August 25-September 24. New Market Heights and Fort Harrison September 28-29. Chaffin's Farm September 29-30. Darbytown Road October 13. Battle of Fair Oaks October 27-28. Duty in trenches before Richmond till April, 1866. Occupation of Richmond April 3. (First Infantry Regiment to enter city.) Moved to City Point April 18, thence to Point Look-out, Md., and duty there guarding prisoners till May 28. Moved to City Point May 28-30, thence sailed for Texas June 10, arriving at Brazos, Santiago, July 3. March to Brownsville and duty there till October. Mustered out October 24, 1865. At New Orleans October 27-November 11. Honorably discharged at New Haven, Conn.,

Antietam Camp No. 3, Frederick, Maryland

## Antietam Camp holds 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Medal of Honor Ceremony

Antietam Camp No. #3, along with its Auxiliary Camp, held their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Medal of Honor Ceremony on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at Monterey Pass Battlefield in Blue Ridge Summit, PA.



**Antietam Camp #3 Members in attendance**

Approximately sixty people attended, including several members from the Col. J.M. Campbell Camp #14, and Clara Barton Tent #64 from Johnstown, PA; as well as several local dignitaries and a representative from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

This year's recipient was LTC Charles C. Capehart, who earned the Medal of Honor while leading the 1<sup>st</sup> WV Cavalry at the Pass during Lee's Retreat from Gettysburg. He led a sabre charge down the mountain, during a heavy downpour that resulted in many wagons and prisoners being captured.

The guest speaker was John Miller, Director of the Battlefield Park/Museum, who gave a very descriptive talk on the battle and the actions that led to Capehart's Medal of Honor.



### **Department Commander Hawley Addresses Group**

After the service, there was a wreath-laying, and “Taps” was played by Brother Paul McMillon of the “Gettysburg Blues”.

Afterwards, the group reassembled at “The Keystone Family Restaurant” in Waynesboro, PA for lunch and fellowship.

## James A. Garfield Camp No. 1

Sons of Union Veterans of Civil War

# Media Release



## GARFIELD CAMP TOURS STAR-BANGLLED BANNER FLAG HOUSE, WHERE ORIGINAL STAR-SPANGLED BANNER WAS SEWN

**BALTIMORE, MD, (February 4, 2017)** - Brothers from James A. Garfield Camp No. 1 participated in a docent-led tour of Baltimore's Star Spangled Banner Flag House, where Mary Pickersgill sewed the original "Star Spangled Banner" that flew over Fort McHenry in the summer of 1814, during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812.

During the tour, Brothers were provided detailed information on a range of fascinating historical items, including furniture and other antiques, dating from the period when Mrs. Pickersgill lived in the home. Brothers also viewed in the adjacent museum a video presentation about the battle-scarred history of our national flag, and posed for a Camp photo in front of a 30 by 42 -foot tall window that recreates the same color, size, and design of the original Star-Spangled Banner.

For more information about the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House, visit [www.flaghouse.org](http://www.flaghouse.org)

**Media contact:** Timothy S. McCoy, Garfield Camp Commander; mobile: 202-550-2369; email: [tmccoydc@yahoo.com](mailto:tmccoydc@yahoo.com)

*James A. Garfield Camp No. 1 is a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), serving Baltimore and areas within the Central Maryland region. The SUVCW is a fraternal organization, dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of heroes who fought and worked to save the Union. Organized in 1881 and chartered by Congress in 1954, we are the legal successor to the Grand Army of the Republic.*



## The James A. Garfield Camp No. 1



L-R: Brothers W. Faron Taylor, Bill Elliott, Gene Mortorff, Rick Knoepfler, Clay Matthews, John Ay-  
mold, CC Tim McCoy, Mark Newsome, Bill Leonard, Brad Sharpless, Larry Slagle  
(Photo courtesy of Br. Brian Quillin, II)

## Department of the Chesapeake, Irish Brigade Camp #4 Fredericksburg, VA



On Tuesday January 17, 2017, Irish Brigade Camp #4 Camp Commander Roger Leturno and Past Camp Commander Jay Rarick presented Fort Belvoir Firemen Jerry Jett Jr and Jon Card SUVCW Certificates of Commendation before their peers and leadership, in recognition of their selfless act on Memorial Day 2016.

These two firemen arrived at White Oak Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery in their dress uniform and placed GAR markers, flowers and American flags on the graves of three Union soldiers.

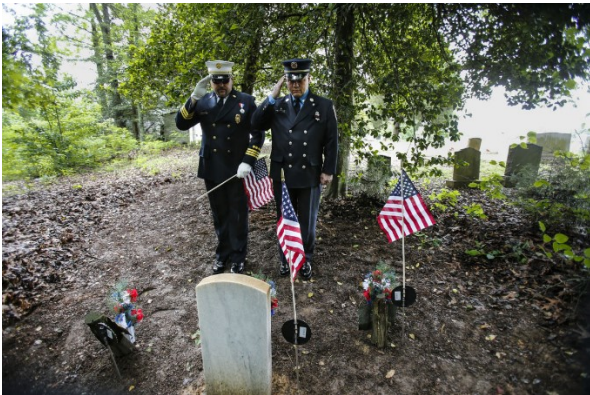
“This might be the first Memorial Day that these guys have gotten,” Card said. “They’ve laid here for about 153 years, and have never been recognized, as far as I know. So, it’s just important to take 10 minutes and come down say thank you.”

Fireman Card stumbled upon these graves while exploring White Oak. He immediately cleaned the site, uncovering two other graves in the process.

Card said, “It really upset me. As an Army veteran, it’s important to me that no soldier lie buried with a bunch of leaves and trash. That’s just not appropriate.”

The white headstone marks the assumed final resting place of Peter Vanderhoof, 15<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Infantry Regiment. The other two graves are unmarked. Card, himself a New Jersey native, didn't consider this discovery a coincidence. Vanderhoof's regiment came from around Card's hometown and many of the unit's dead are buried in the local cemetery. Card said, "Of all the Regiments and units that it could have been, it was from home."

Firemen Jett, who has ancestors buried in White Oak, was touched by his friend's idea to honor these neglected soldiers and together they performed this Memorial Day ceremony in tribute to civil war soldiers.



# Lincoln Cushing Camp No. 2

## Remembering Lincoln's Birthday

On Sunday February 12, members of Lincoln-Cushing Camp participated in observing the 208th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln during a ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial. At the completion of the ceremony our Commander in Chief, Don Martin, presented the SUVCW wreath while PDC Lee Stone carried the Commander in Chiefs Flag. In addition to the SUVCW, wreaths were also presented by The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, The Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, The Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and The Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Our own Brother Peter Arrott Dixon, chairman of the Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee, served as master of ceremonies. Speakers included Robin Nixon, Chief of Partnerships National Mall and Memorial Park. Lauren C. Vaughn, Secretary of the District of Columbia. Remarks and reading of the "Gettysburg Address" by the Honorable James J. Duncan Jr. U.S. Representative, 2nd District of Tennessee. The Military District of Washington served as color guard for the ceremony, and music was provided by the United States Army Band Brass Quintet.

Following the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in 1922, members of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States resolved to commemorate the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth each year at the Memorial, starting on February 12, 1923. The Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee continues this tradition, together with the National Park Service and the Military District of Washington.



Cinc Don Martin & PDC  
Lee Stone



Cinc Don Martin presents the SUVCW wreath  
while PDC Stone carries his flag



Brother Thomas  
Bohling carries the  
flag in the ceremony

# *Headstone Rededication Ceremony*

Story by Eric Atkisson, Camp Patriotic Instructor



**Camp Commander Dick  
Griffin places rose on grave**

On the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 4, volunteers from Lincoln-Cushing Camp No. 2 gathered at the Alexandria National Cemetery in Alexandria, Va. to dedicate a new headstone for Pvt. William L. Phillips, who died on May 21, 1865, shortly after the War of the Rebellion ended.

A farmer and native of Greenville County, S.C., Phillips was born about 1829. In August 1862, he left his wife and three young children and risked his life traveling to Huntsville, Ala., where he enlisted in Co. K, 1st Ala. Cavalry (Union) for three years. He was one of more than 100,000 Southerners who fought for the Union during the war, with every Southern state except South Carolina raising at least a battalion for the Union Army.

In May 1863, during Streight's Raid toward Rome, Ga, Phillips' unit was surrounded by Confederate forces and surrendered at Cedar Bluff, Ala. Phillips was sent to Libby Prison in Richmond, Va., where suffered the effects of poor diet and unsanitary conditions. After being paroled the following year, he rejoined his company and served in Gen. William T. Sherman's summer campaign on Atlanta.

Phillips spent time in and out of the hospital, still suffering the effects of his imprisonment, but by January 1865 he was able to rejoin his unit again and serve with them through Sherman's march into North Carolina. He was present for the surrender of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's army of 89,000 Confederates on April 25, which effectively ended the war.

The 1st Ala. Cavalry returned to Huntsville to be mustered out, but Phillips was sent to Slough General Hospital in Alexandria for medical treatment. Three days after he arrived, on May 21, he received an overdose of cyanate potassium (used for parasitic diseases at the time) and died within three hours. The following day he was buried in the Alexandria National Military Cemetery.

In the chaotic days and weeks that followed his name was misspelled in the death records as William H. Philips, with one "L" and an incorrect middle initial, and he became lost to future generations. At the request of a descendant, Brother Bart Smith--who is also the descendant of loyal Southern Unionists--agreed to search the cemetery. By a strange twist of fate, the very first gravesite he examined after arriving at the cemetery was Phillips', and the date was May 21, 2015--the 150th anniversary of Phillips' passing.

Lincoln Cushing Camp No. 2 and Guests in attendance



*L to R—James Perry, Jay Rarick, Bart Smith, Steve Bohling, Dick Griffin, Lee Stone, William Brunner, Thomas Bohling, John Higgins, Charles Acton, Paul Washington, Andy Johnson, Eric Atkisson*

## Need a speaker?

**Our Brothers can speak to several topics including:**

- **50th PA Infantry**
- **54th Mass.**
- **210th PA Infantry**
- **Battle of Balls Bluff**
- **Battle of Chancellorsville**
- **Battle of Fort Stevens**
- **Battle of Fredericksburg**
- **Civil War 101**
- **Civil War Artillery**
- **Civil War Cavalry**
- **General Phil Sheridan**
- **General U. S. Grant**
- **Loudoun Rangers**
- **Montgomery County, Maryland, during the Civil War**
- **Overland Campaign**
- **Reconciliation - Healing the Wounds of War**
- **United States Colored Troops**

**Send inquiries to: [Commander@IrishBrigadeCamp.com](mailto:Commander@IrishBrigadeCamp.com)**

## News of Interest

- **Talbot County Memorial - We have formed a Department committee to determine with the probability that any future activities would be led by either department or national level leaders. Should the project be approved, it could be staffed at the local level, but I do not believe that we have sufficient knowledgeable resources to complete this on our own. We do, however, believe that the project has merit and that further discussions are warranted. The Department will shortly form a committee to further discuss this matter. Brother Barry Famous is the point of contact for this project.**
- **June 10, 2017, New Castle, Delaware. The Delaware Camps will be holding a headstone rededication in New Castle, DE. on Saturday, June 10. The ceremony is for Private Isaac Bayard who was assigned to Company I, 3rd USCT. The ceremony has been incorporated into the town's Separation Day's festivities.**  
**Separation Day has a multitude of events for all ages. We wish to invite all Brothers and their families to attend. We especially wish to have as many people as possible attend in uniform or period dress. A parade will begin at 11 AM and all uniformed Brothers are invited to march. The rededication service will begin at about 1 PM at the Methodist Church at 140 East 4th Street.**  
**For any questions or more information, please contact Brother Barry Famous at [wayneguards97@gmail.com](mailto:wayneguards97@gmail.com).**
- **Memorial Service for Private Pleasant Richardson USCT will be held on Saturday, May 27, 2017 at 2:00 PM at First Baptist Church, Fincastle, Virginia. For more information contact Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain No. 20 Camp Commander Richard Uplinger at [rmpufish@embarqmail.com](mailto:rmpufish@embarqmail.com)**
- **Camp Commanders: Thank you all for updating our Department Websites. Please continue to forward all updates so our Department Website is current. Updates should be forwarded to Brother Mark Day @ [oscmbb64@msn.com](mailto:oscmbb64@msn.com)**



Register for the Department Encampment to be held April 21-22, 2017, at Front Royal Virginia.

<http://departmentofthechesapeakeuvcw.com/>