



The Pritchard Press

The Newsletter of the General Benjamin Pritchard, Camp 20, Department of Michigan, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Vol. XXXVI, No. 6

November, 2020

In This issue

Pg. 2 Eagle Scout Veteran Gravestone Cleaning Project-Mtn. Home Cem.

Pg. 4 Mount Rushmore-Brother Robert Townsend

October Camp Meeting

Pg. 5 Hopkins FFA Gravestone Cleaning Project-Gravestone Installation

Pg. 6 Eagle Scout Veteran Gravestone Cleaning Project-Vicksburg Cem.

Pg. 7 In Memoriam-Ed Bearss

Preservation News-Fort Reno

Pg. 8 Eagle Scout Update-Matt Walsh

Pg. 9 Our Ancestors-Pvt. Thomas Carrico

Pg. 11 Soldiers & Sailors 1908 Reunion- Pullman, MI

Pg. 12 "Who Are Those People" Answered

Pg. 13 General Benjamin Pritchard-Camp 20, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Join the Sons of Union Veterans

Abraham Lincoln Institute

2020-2021 Camp Schedule

Nov. 3, 2020	Election Day-Don't Forget to Vote
Nov. 7, 2020	Camp Meeting and Field Trip 12:00 PM GAR Memorial Hall-Eaton Rapids
Nov. 11, 2020	Veterans Day
Dec., 2020	No Camp Meeting Scheduled
January, 2021	January Thaw Luncheon-On hold -TBD
March 2, 2021	First Camp Meeting-Time and Location TBD



Hint: 32 years later they are still in Camp 20

Answer on page 12



CAMP ACTIVITIES

Eagle Scout Veteran Gravestone Project

Mountain Home Cemetery-Kalamazoo

Eagle Scout candidate Ethan C. recruited eighteen volunteers in late September to clean veteran gravestones in Kalamazoo’s Mountain Home Cemetery. Once again, the General Benjamin Pritchard Camp 20, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War provided all of the cleaning materials, tools, training and some of the labor which resulted in the cleaning and preservation of 66 veteran gravestones.



We also reset an additional seven veteran gravestones that were sunken or tilted . Stones were from the Civil War through WWI and WWII.



CAMP ACTIVITIES

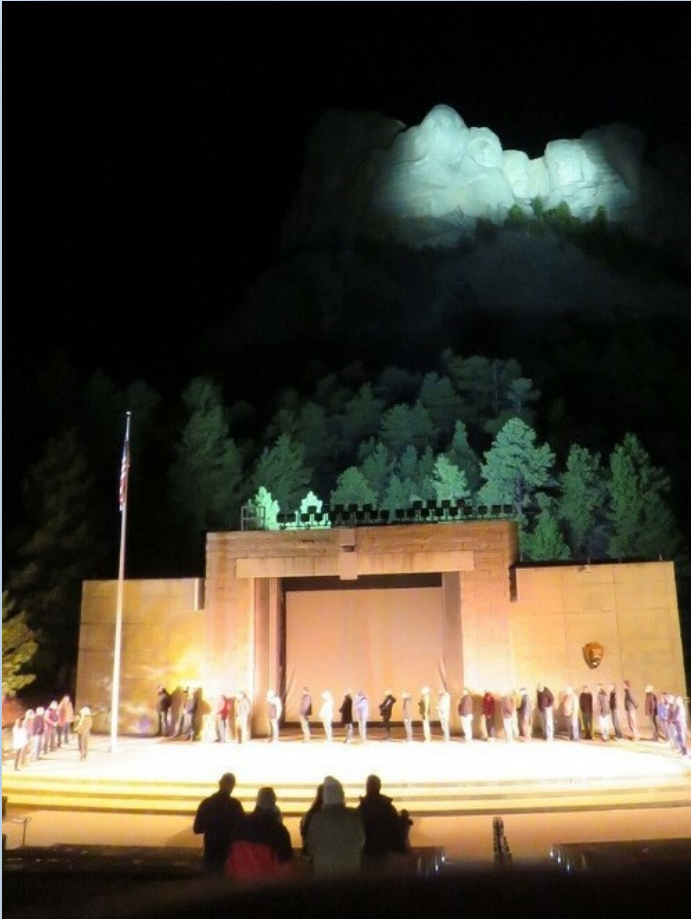
Erasmus Wilsey, a veteran of the 14th Michigan Battery, was a cooper when he died in 1871 and was buried in Kalamazoo's Mountain Home Cemetery. He received a government upright veteran gravestone in 1888. In the intervening 132 years the gravestone succumbed to the forces of gravity sinking into the ground by approximately 50% of its readable length. Camp 20 Brothers Doug Gilchrist, Mike Culp, Gary Swain and Rich Walsh, of the Marine Corp League, dug out the stone, cleaned it and reset it at the appropriate height. The former soil line is clearly visible on the gravestone.



CAMP ACTIVITIES

Mount Rushmore was the backdrop when Camp 20 Guide, Council Member and U. S. Army veteran Brother Robert Townsend was honored by the National Park Service with an invitation to participate in the closing ceremony at this beloved National Memorial. With the

majestic figures of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln illuminated and overlooking the ceremony Brother Townsend assisted in the lowering and folding of the flag.



Brother Robert Townsend (center and third from left) folding the flag of the United States at Mount Rushmore closing ceremony September, 2020

October Camp Meeting

The last 2020 outdoor camp meeting was held on October 6th at the GAR Monument in Kalamazoo's Riverside Cemetery. This "al fresco" venue has worked out well in allowing the camp meetings to continue during the Covid-19 era by allowing social distancing in an open air environment. In fact, the location has proven so popular that many wish to continue our warmer weather meetings in this environment in the future.

The final camp meeting for 2020 is scheduled for the GAR Museum in Eaton Rapids on Saturday, November 7th.



CAMP ACTIVITIES

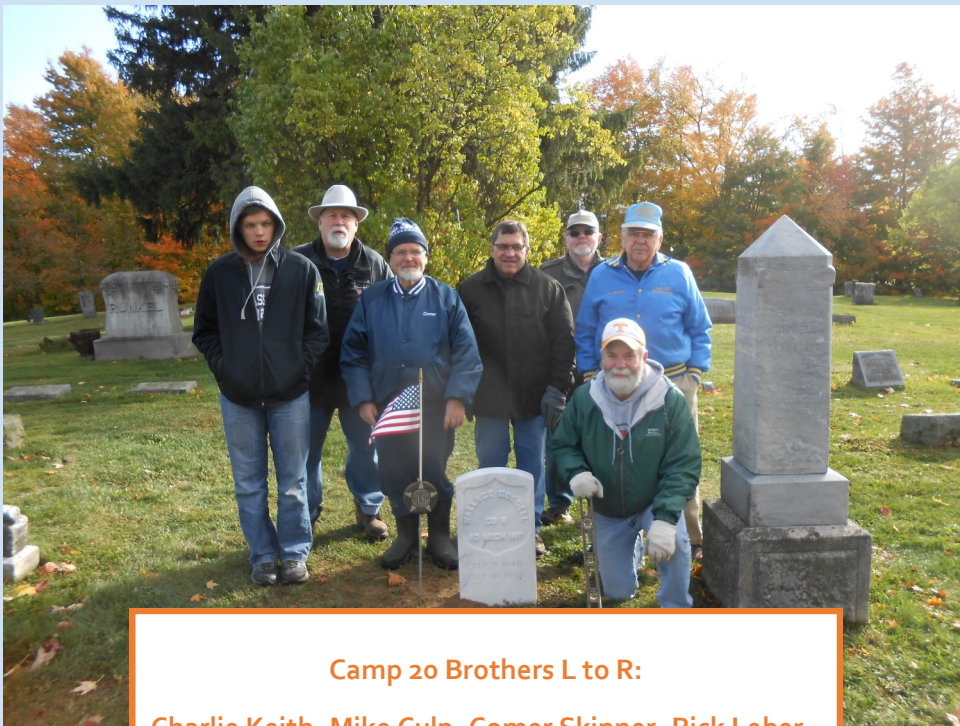
Hopkins FFA Gravestone Cleaning Project

Poplar Hill Cemetery, Monterey Twp., Allegan County



T

he Hopkins FFA (formerly Future Farmers of America) led by Camp 20 Brother Comer Skinner, worked to clean and preserve 20 veteran and pioneer gravestones in Monterey Township's Popular Hill Cemetery on a cool Saturday in mid October.



Camp 20 Brothers L to R:

Charlie Keith, Mike Culp, Comer Skinner, Rick Leber, Glenn Hall, Ron Bellinger and Bill Brennan (kneeling)

Six Brothers from Camp 20 were also at Poplar Hill to assist in the installation of a gravestone for Pvt. Wallace Goodell, Co. B, 13th Michigan Infantry. Union soldier Goodell (1846-1926) enlisted in the 13th Michigan Infantry in January of 1864 at the age of 17 and served until the war's end. He is the ancestor of Camp 20 Brother Rick Leber (center left).

CAMP ACTIVITIES

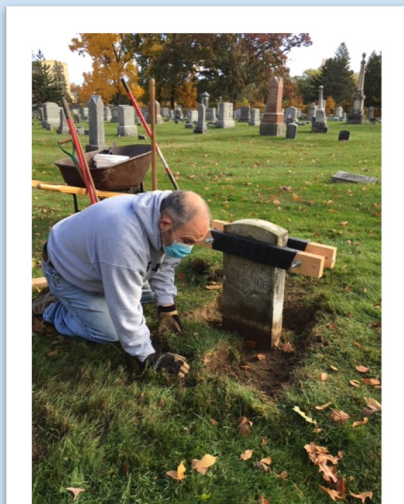
Eagle Scout Veteran Gravestone Project

Vicksburg Cemetery, Schoolcraft Twp, Kalamazoo County

St. Monica Scout USA Troop 211 Eagle Scout candidate John B. recruited a team of volunteers on a mid- October Saturday to clean and preserve veteran gravestones in the Vicksburg Cemetery. They successfully cleaned and preserved 54 veteran gravestones and reset 10 others that had fallen or sunken.



Below are a few of the Vicksburg Cemetery Civil War veteran gravestones in various stages of repair.



In Memoriam

Ed Bearss

1923-2020

CIVIL WAR HISTORIAN Ed Bearss passed away in September at the age of 97. He was a decorated WWII veteran of the Marine Corps in the Pacific Theatre and a passionate military historian and preservationist. For many years, he was the historian at Vicksburg National Military Park and later the Chief Historian for the national Park Service. He was instrumental in the development of Pea Ridge National Military Park and Wilson's Creek National Battlefield as well as the discovery and raising of the ironclad USS Cairo.



Bearss was also a tireless and immensely popular speaker and battlefield guide. His distinctively gravel voice and dramatic delivery were instantly recognizable. He continued to conduct battlefield tours and speak to large groups as well as Civil War Roundtables well into his 90's. In fact, he spoke to the Kalamazoo Civil War Roundtable in October of 1995 on the topic of *Lee and Grant-A Contrast of Leadership*.

USDA Damages Headstones

Oklahoma historians and politicians have accused the USDA of gravestone “desecration” after their recent power washing of over 130 historic gravestones, including the stones of Civil War veterans at Fort Reno located in El Reno, OK. Critics of their work accuse the USDA of causing irreparable damage to the gravestones. They claim that many gravestones were broken or, due to the excessive force of the power washer, had much of the surface of the gravestone removed.



Today, most professional gravestone preservationists recommend that we avoid high-pressure water washing as well as sandblasting, acidic cleaners, metal tools, wire brushes or any household chemicals like bleach or common detergents because of the long term damage that can result. As a reminder readers of the Pritchard Press can obtain a free copy of our brochure ***Cleaning and Preserving Gravestones*** by simply responding to our newsletter and requesting a copy and providing your mailing address.

EAGLE SCOUT UPDATE

MATT WALSH

In October of 2019, Camp 20 worked with Eagle Scout candidate Matt Walsh in a project to clean, repair and preserve the Spanish American War section of Kalamazoo's Riverside Cemetery. Matt recruited a crew of volunteers and supervised this patriotic project to a very successful conclusion. The gravestones of Spanish American War veterans, the true sons of Union veterans of the Civil War, were preserved and will continue to honor the deceased patriots for another generation.



Eagle Scout candidate Matt Walsh supervising his crew of volunteers in Riverside Cemetery, October 2019

Matt successfully completed his project and was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout at the Court of Honor in June of 2020. Upon achievement of this award and graduation from High School Matt chose to continue to serve his country and enlisted in the Navy. He has already successfully completed his basic training at Great Lakes Navy Station and will continue his training to become a Fire Controlman where he will operate, maintain and repair the major weapons systems on a ship.

The Navy recognizes the value and leadership abilities of recruits who are Eagle Scouts, so Matty earned an advanced enlistment rank prior to leaving for basic training. Attainment of Eagle Scout is considered a positive factor in determining service academy appointments as well. Congratulations, Matt!



SN Walsh, Matthew J.

OUR CIVIL WAR ANCESTORS

Pvt. Thomas C. Carrico

By Gary Swain

Thomas C. Carrico, my great-great-uncle, enlisted as a private in Company G, 122nd Infantry Regiment Illinois on Sept. 4, 1862. He was a couple of months short of his 37th birthday which was an advanced age for the foot infantry where the average age was between 20 and 21. Back on the farm, in Virden, Illinois he left his wife Mary (34) and daughters Amy (10) and Mary (8). His only surviving son, Leander, had already left home the year before at the age of 13, to join the 1st Missouri Cavalry Regiment, Company D and fought until the end of the Civil War.

It must have been difficult for Thomas to leave a wife and two young children who would run the farm. Certainly the corn crop would not have been harvested by early September. The motivation to join must have been enormous.

Thomas' family originally immigrated to America in 1685 and settled in Maryland. His father left Maryland in the early 1800's moving first to Kentucky and then settling in Southern Illinois. Ironically, Thomas had two first cousins with the same name (one in Maryland and one in Kentucky) who were both slave owners.

Thomas had an older brother Dennis Carrico,

He was a republican in politics, an earnest advocate in the cause of temperance, and a consistent Christian...The History of Jersey County, Il.

my great-great-grandfather, who also lived and farmed in southern Illinois at the start of the Civil War. After the South succeeded the U.S. congress was finally able to pass the Homestead Act in 1862. This was designed to expand farmers throughout the west by giving them 160 acres of land for free. Dennis chose to take advantage of the free land, sell his Illinois farm, pack his wife and nine children and emigrate to Oregon via covered wagon. Dennis and his family left for the Oregon Trail in the spring of 1862 and his brother Thomas volunteered for the Infantry in September of the same year.

The 122nd Regiment of Illinois Infantry Volunteers was organized at Camp Palmer, Carlinville, IL and was mustered in with 960 enlisted men. Company G included 97 men and nearly all were from the tiny farming community of Virden, Illinois. A

comparison of the muster rolls and the 1860 census indicate that several of Thomas' immediate neighbors joined the same company. Given the small community that they all came from it must have seemed like every able-bodied man in the area enlisted.

The 122nd Illinois remained in camp and drilled until October 8th, 1862. They were then ordered to Columbus, KY. and finally on to Jackson, TN, in December to guard the Ohio and Mobile Railroad from the cavalry raids of the tactically brilliant, but barely literate, former slave trader Nathan Bedford Forest's Cavalry.

OUR CIVIL WAR ANCESTORS

Here they skirmished twice with Forest. Then in late December the 122nd Illinois, along with then 50th Illinois and three pieces of artillery from the Wisconsin 7th, a total force of 1540 men, engaged Forest's 6000 men and fought them for three hours until Forest left the field. The Union troops captured 8 pieces of artillery and 500 prisoners including Major Strange, Forest's Adjutant General.

Next, they were sent to Corinth, Mississippi on February 17th, 1863. Private Thomas C. Carrico had emerged unhurt from the skirmishes and battles with Forest. However, like many farm boys from the rural north, he had developed little resistance to disease and his health suffered from the unsanitary conditions they lived under. He contracted dysentery. He died in Corinth on March 14, 1863, just six months and a week after his enlistment.

Thomas' body was eventually returned to Virden, Illinois where he was buried in the village cemetery. Sixteen years later on Nov. 29, 1879 a headstone was provided by the U.S. government in a program to assure that all Union veterans that lost their lives during the war had proper headstones. His headstone read: Thomas C. Carrico, Private, Co. G, 122 Regt, Ill. Inf., Died March 14, 1863.

It is not known how Thomas' widow and young daughters survived immediately after his death. However, his wife Mary remarried eight years later to Daniel Betis. Daniel was a widower, a Civil War veteran (130th Ill. Inf.) and a life-

long member of the Grand Army of the Republic. They remained in southern Illinois and Mary passed away in 1906. All three of their children, who had survived infancy, lived well into the 20th century.

The "History of Jersey County" (Illinois) said of Thomas, "He was much esteemed in the community where he lived. He was a republican in politics, an earnest advocate in the cause of temperance, and a consistent Christian, holding connection with the Baptist church at Virden, IL." Most importantly, he was also one of over 400,000 Americans who gave the "Last Full Measure" in the cause of the Union.



1908 SOLDIERS AND SAILORS REUNION

PULLMAN, (UPPER SCOTT LAKE), MICHIGAN



Photo Courtesy of Bill Brennan

Camp 20 Brother Bill Brennan shared a photo of the flyer to the left announcing the 16th reunion of the Soldiers and Sailors Association of Western Allegan and Van Buren Counties. The event was held in 1908 at Upper Scott Lake which was a mile east of Pullman.

Free transportation from the train station and free dinners for veterans and their wives was provided. Entertainment included a "Stirring addresses by Henry Augustine of Normal, Ill." and others as well as music of various types including vocal music, choirs and a cornet band. The day's festivities were capped off with a baseball game between Holland and Pullman.



Pullman, Michigan 1905



Upper Scott Lake Today

Gettysburg 125th Anniversary Reenactment

June 25, 1988-Gettysburg, PA



Left to Right: Bill Brennan PCC & PDC, Mike Culp PCC, Gary Gibson PCC & PDC

Gettysburg 1988

General Benjamin Pritchard Camp 20

Department of Michigan

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Camp Officers 2020

Commander: John Keith

Sr. Vice Commander: Len Shaeffer

Jr. Vice Commander: Doug Gilchrist

Camp Secretary: Gary Gibson

Camp Treasurer: David Conklin

Guard: Charles Keith

Guide: Robert Townsend

Patriotic Instructor: Mike Culp

Eagle Scout Coordinator: Gary Swain

Memorials and Monuments: Gary Swain

Graves Registration: Gary Swain

Color Bearer: Glenn Hall

Historian: Gary Gibson

Chaplin: Bill Brennan

Asst. Chaplin: Jeffry Baker

Council: Bill Costello, Robert Townsend, Jeffry Baker

Signals Officer: John Keith

Pritchard Press Editor: Gary Swain

Join the Sons of Union Veterans

If you had an ancestor who fought to preserve the Union during the Civil War 1861-1865 or simply share our values and would like to join with other like-minded members in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, **please call Camp 20 Commander John Keith at 269 720-5251 or email to hardtackcw@aol.com**



SUVCW Department of Michigan

Endorses **Kalamazoo Lincoln Institute**

The SUVCW Department of Michigan has endorsed the project to bring a statue of Abraham Lincoln to Kalamazoo's Bronson Park. Check out the link on the Departments web site home page.

